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RUSSIA ON THE WAY TO EMERGENCE OF GLOBAL (CIVILIZATIONAL) GEOPOLITICS

The global trend towards emergence of a multipolar world order unfolds right before our eyes. What is happening will take years to acquire its real contours, but even today the signs of multipolarity are becoming more and more visible. Just recall S. Huntington's concept of local civilizations, thanks to which the classical (power, military) geopolitics gradually began to become global (civilizational).

Now not only states, but also local civilizations, international unions and organizations (for example, the United Nations, the European Union and the Eurasian Economic Union, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Collective Security Treaty Organization, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Organization of Turkic States) are seen as actors in global geopolitics.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, there was a trend toward establishing of a unipolar world headed by the United States, but as years go by, world politics and international relations experts are ever more confidently speaking of the coming multipolar world order.

One example of this is the speech by I. S. Ivanov³ at the 20th Annual Conference of the Baltic Forum "USA, EU and Russia – a new reality" (2015). Here are his words on the *decline of the Greater Europe*: "It has become fashionable

to claim that Greater Europe from Lisbon to Vladivostok is being replaced by Greater Eurasia from Shanghai to Minsk. Although the contours of Greater Eurasia remain shaky and unclear in many respects, one cannot fail to see the objective and long-term nature of the processes of establishing a new transnational economic and political structure. Euro-Atlantic and Eurasia are emerging as new centers of global gravity, and the relationship between them is becoming the main axis of future world politics...

Our task is to determine the rules of the game between the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasia, which would minimize the risks of uncontrolled confrontation, create opportunities for dialogue and cooperation in solving common problems and restoring manageability of the international system."⁴

Four years later, V. A. Chizhov – Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the European Union, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, who took part in the 17th Rhodes Forum "Dialogue of Civilizations" (conference "Global (dis)order: Towards dialogue-based world-views") – delivered a report entitled "Global (dis)order and European (in)security," in which he said that the European Union was founded "not on values, but on interests, as an instrument to prevent a new war in Europe... Now the EU has, in a sense, returned to its original purpose and has again turned into an instrument to align the interests of its member states. In less than three weeks, the new European Commission will begin its work. Its head Ursula von der Leyen defined it as "geopolitical." Let's see how geopolitics performed by the newly elected European Commissioners will help overcome the crisis phenomena I listed above and to preserve the global position of Europe in the broad sense, both in economy and politics, in a changing multipolar world...

But I would like to point out the obvious. The only way for the European Union not to turn into a run-down "backyard" of the world economy and politics as early as this century is the unification of Europe or even Eurasia from Lisbon to Vladivostok... As for a more general "recipe" for the unification of Eurasia – in our opinion, it fits into a simple phrase: integration of integrations. I mean conjunction of the economic potentials of the two largest integration projects that coexist on our continent – the EAEU and the EU.

Notably, this recipe was first documented at the Russia-EU summit in Moscow in 2005, in the Roadmap for Common Space of External Security: "Russia and the European Union recognize that the processes of regional cooperation and integration in which they participate and which are based on the sovereign decisions of states, play an impor-

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³ Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia (1998–2004), President of the Russian Council on International Affairs.

⁴ Иванов И. С. Закат Большой Европы: [выступление на XX ежегодной конференции Балтийского форума «США, ЕС и Россия – новая реальность». Рига, 12 сентября 2015 г.]. URL: <https://globalaffairs.ru/global-processes/Zakat-Bolshoi-Evropy-17680> (date of address: 10.04.2022).

tant role in strengthening security and stability. They agree to actively promote these processes in a mutually beneficial way through result-oriented close cooperation and dialogue between Russia and the European Union, thus effectively contributing to creating a Greater Europe without dividing lines based on common values.

In my opinion, it is hardly arguable that “Greater Eurasia” with its linkage of the investment and technological potential of the EU and the resource base of Russia and its EAEU partners will be able to compete with the rapidly developing Asia-Pacific Region (APR).¹

Meanwhile, the power policy that the European Union is pursuing today does not aim at overcoming the crisis phenomena in Western politics, taking into account the formation of a multipolar world and other global changes. On the contrary, since the start of the special military operation in Ukraine, EU policy has become even more odious.

Moreover, it should be remembered that the strategic objective of Russia’s relations with the EU was clearly formulated in the Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (approved on October 30, 2016), which mentions three regions of the Eurasian continent – Euro-Atlantic, Eurasian and Asia-Pacific: “Creating a common economic and humanitarian space from Atlantic to Pacific on the basis of harmonization and coupling of European and Eurasian integration processes.”²

It is obvious that the Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation will undergo certain changes and will be adopted in a new version after completion of the special military operation and rethinking of global geopolitical shifts in the world.

In the course of discussions on Greater Eurasia, the Greater Eurasian Partnership and Russia’s place in it, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, speaking in the Federation Council of the Russian Federation on December 1, 2021, defined the current status of our state as follows: “Russia is a great Eurasian, Euro-Pacific power.”³

This reminds of the proud words addressed by Chancellor A. M. Gorchakov to the European governments after the

Crimean War: “Russia isn’t getting angry – it’s getting focused” (“La Russie ne boude pas – elle se recueille”). Thus continues the tradition of Russia’s open and clear policy. However, this policy updates with time: today it is in line with V. Putin’s statement about the need to keep the West in tension (“a certain tension has arisen there”⁴).

This Russian position clearly expresses one of the key trends of our time: mutual isolation of states and their resistance to attempts to exert external influence on their behavior after the end of the “thirty-year transition” that followed the Cold War.⁵ The need to keep the West in tension is a natural response to the hybrid (including cognitive) warfare waged against Russia, which has defined the global political and military agenda in recent years.

Today, Russia is perceived by Europeans as an empire, as Hélène Carrère d’Encausse, a well-known French historian and political scientist, permanent secretary of the French Academy, wrote in her book “Eurasian Empire.” Based on a detailed review of the political intricacies of life in post-Soviet Russia, she asks: Since the idea of Eurasianism has once again become popular in Russia under the influence of nationalists who are nostalgic for the empire and see this idea as a means to realize the imperial dream, should we conclude that “the importance the Russian government attaches to Islam and Asia today is the last manifestation of an imperial mentality that survived the Empire’s demise? Or is it, simply, the pragmatism of a state that is learning to live without an empire and trying to replace it after its collapse with a zone of special influence based on a kind of a ‘Monroe Doctrine a-la Russe’? Will Russia, inspired by the American example, eventually be transformed into a republic-empire?”⁶

The answer can hardly be unambiguous. Still, Eurasia, as the center of geopolitical and other interests of many countries, is seen differently by the states – of the Eurasian continent itself, be they great powers or limitrophe states, and of those who observe from the shores of other continents. Russian geo-civilization, in turn, should be seen as one of the poles of a polycentric world order.

¹ See: Кефели И. Ф., Шамахов В. А. Геополитические и геоэкономические аспекты взаимодействия ЕАЭС и ЕС в формате Большого евразийского партнерства // Евразийская интеграция: экономика, право, политика. 2019. № 4. С. 17–25. URL: <https://www.ejournal.ru/jour/article/view/247/230> (date of address: 16.06.2022).

² Указ Президента РФ от 30 ноября 2016 г. № 640 «Об утверждении Концепции внешней политики Российской Федерации» // Гарант : [информ.-правовой портал]. URL: <https://base.garant.ru/71552062> (date of address: 21.06.2022).

³ Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov’s speech on “Russia’s foreign policy priorities” at the “government hour” and answers to questions in the RF Federal Council of the Federal Assembly. Moscow, December 1, 2021. URL: https://www.mid.ru/foreign_policy/news/-/asset_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/4977054 (date of address: 10.04.2022).

⁴ Speech by President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin at an expanded meeting of the board of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Moscow, November 18, 2021. URL: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/deliberations/67123> (date of address: 19.11.2021).

⁵ Эпоха пандемии: год второй. Возвращение будущего : ежегод. докл. Междунар. дискус. клуба «Валдай» / О. Н. Барабанов [и др.]. 2021. Октябрь. С. 21. URL: <https://ru.valdaiclub.com/files/39314> (date of address: 16.06.2022)

⁶ Каррер д’Анкокс Э. Евразийская империя. История Российской империи с 1552 года до наших дней. М. : РОССПЭН, 2010. С. 330.