

RUSSIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES  
RUSSIAN ACADEMY OF EDUCATION  
ST. PETERSBURG INTELLIGENTSIA CONGRESS

ST. PETERSBURG UNIVERSITY OF THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

under the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation



## BRICS AS THE NEW SPACE FOR DIALOGUE AMONG CULTURES AND CIVILIZATIONS

The 22nd International Likhachov Scientific Conference  
April 12–13, 2024



The Conference is held in accordance with the Decree of President of the Russian Federation V. V. Putin  
“On perpetuating the memory of Dmitry Sergeyevich Likhachov”  
No. 587, dd. from May 23, 2001

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# **BRICS AS THE NEW SPACE FOR DIALOGUE AMONG CULTURES AND CIVILIZATIONS**

## **The 22nd International Likhachov Scientific Conference**

April 12–13, 2024

*The conference, originally called “The Days of Science in St. Petersburg University of the Humanities and Social Sciences” is the 30th in number and the 22nd in the status of the International Likhachov Scientific Conference*

*The Conference is held in accordance with the Decree of President of Russia V. V. Putin “On perpetuating the memory of Dmitry Sergeyevich Likhachov” No. 587, dated from May 23, 2001*



**St. Petersburg  
2025**

*Scientific editor*

**A. S. Zapesotsky**, Chairman of the Organizing Committee of the International Likhachov Scientific Conference, Rector of St. Petersburg University of the Humanities and Social Sciences, Corresponding Member of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Academician of the Russian Academy of Education, Dr. Sc. (Cultural Studies), Professor, Scientist Emeritus of the Russian Federation, Chairman of the Executive Committee of St. Petersburg Intelligentsia Congress

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The Proceedings of the 22nd International Likhachov Scientific Conference held on April 12–13, 2024 in St. Petersburg University of the Humanities and Social Sciences were published in the present collection in accordance with the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation V. V. Putin No. 587, May 23, 2001 “On perpetuating the memory of Dmitry Sergeyevich Likhachov”. Representatives of 18 countries took part in the 22nd Conference.

The 63 authors of the collection include prominent national scientists, members of the Russian Academy of Sciences and Russian Academy of Education (RAE): President of the RAE, Academician of the RAE O. Yu. Vasilyeva; A. A. Akayev, Al. A. Gromyko, A. A. Guseynov, A. S. Zapesotsky, V. A. Lektorsky, A. G. Lisitsyn-Svetlanov, V. V. Naumkin, A. D. Nekipelov, R. I. Nigmatulin, Zh. T. Toshchenko, T. Ya. Khabrieva, V. A. Chereshnev and others; the heads of academic institutions and research centres, university professors, well-known state and public figures, representatives of mass media: Member of the State Council of the Russian Federation, Chairman of the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia M. V. Shmakov; Chairman of the Committee on Science and Higher Education of the State Duma of the Russian Federation S. V. Kabyshev; First Deputy Chairman of the State Duma Committee on Culture Ye. G. Drapeko; First Deputy Chairman of the State Duma Committee of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation on CIS Affairs K. F. Zatul'in; Deputy Head of the “United Russia” party faction in the State Duma A. K. Isaev; Director of the Information and Press Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation M. V. Zakharova; Rector of the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation A. V. Yakovenko; Director of the Higher School of Translation and Interpreting at Lomonosov Moscow State University N. K. Garbovsky; First Deputy Director General of the Russian News Agency TASS M. S. Gusman; Chairman of the board of directors of the newspaper “Komsomolskaya Pravda” V. K. Mamontov; Chairman of the Committee on Science and Higher Education of the Government of St. Petersburg A. S. Maksimov and others.

Foreign authors of the collection include Deputy Minister of Information of Belarus I. I. Buzovsky, Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Russian Federation P. Bülbüloğlu, Director of the Analytical center Conflicts Forum A. Crooke (United Kingdom), Dean of School of International Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Iran M.-R. Dehshiri, Director of Information Technology of the Sing Alliance B. Desgardins (Switzerland), Director of Centre for Central Eurasian Studies of the Russian University of Mumbai S. Deshpande (India), Vice President of the Marmara Group Strategic and Social Research Foundation C. Okray (Turkey); professors: S. Atlagić (Serbia), N. El-Sheikh Egypti Ch. Goddard (United Kingdom), O. Roqueplo (France), J. Sapir (France), T. Türker (Turkey), C. Varga (Hungary) and others.

President of Russia Vladimir Putin highly appreciates the role of the Likhachov Conference: “This scientific forum, dedicated to the most pressing topic – the place and role of BRICS on the world stage, provides a good opportunity for meaningful and constructive discussions at a high expert level, and the ideas and initiatives expressed will allow us to outline new areas of multilateral cooperation in the interests of building a more just, secure and prosperous world order.”

ББК 72



**DECREE  
OF PRESIDENT OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION  
“ON PERPETUATING THE MEMORY  
OF DMITRY SERGEYEVICH LIKHACHOV”**

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Given D. S. Likhachov's outstanding contribution to the development of the home science and culture I enact:

1. the Government of the Russian Federation should:
  - establish two personal grants in honour of D. S. Likhachov at the rate of 400 roubles each for university students from the year 2001 and to define the procedure of conferring them;
  - work out the project of D. S. Likhachov's gravestone on a competitive basis together with the Government of St. Petersburg;
  - consider the issue of making a film devoted to D. S. Likhachov's life and activities.
2. the Government of St. Petersburg should:
  - name one of the streets in St. Petersburg after D. S. Likhachov;
  - consider the issue of placing a memorial plate on the building of the Institute of Russian Literature of the Russian Academy of Sciences (Pushkin's House);
  - guarantee the work on setting up D. S. Likhachov's gravestone in prescribed manner.
3. According to the suggestion from the Russian Academy of Sciences the Likhachov Memorial Prizes of the Russian Academy of Sciences should be established for Russian and foreign scientists for their outstanding contribution to the research of literature and culture of ancient Russia, and the collected writings of the late Academician should be published.
4. **According to the suggestion from St. Petersburg Intelligentsia Congress the International Likhachov Scientific Conference should be annually held on the Day of the Slavonic Letters and Culture.**

**VLADIMIR PUTIN,**  
**President of the Russian Federation**  
Moscow, the Kremlin  
May 23, 2001, No. 587



# GREETINGS OF VLADIMIR PUTIN TO THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL LIKACHOV SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE

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**Dear friends!**

I greet you on the occasion of the opening of the 22nd International Likhachov Scientific Conference.

Your meetings that annually bring together in St. Petersburg famous scientists, cultural and artistic figures, politicians and diplomats from various countries, provide a good opportunity for meaningful, constructive discussions. Moreover, the Conference agenda invariably includes a wide range of issues related to the main trends in developing modern society, both at the national and international levels.

The current Conference are dedicated to the place and role of BRICS on the world stage. The choice of the theme is especially relevant in light of Russia's chairmanship in this authoritative and influential association that ensures the participating states' effective joint work in many areas, based on the principles of equality, respect and mutual consideration of the interests.

I hope that you will thoroughly, at the high expert level, discuss the prospects for developing BRICS, and that your ideas and initiatives will help us realize new forms and areas of mutually beneficial multilateral cooperation, for the good of our countries and peoples, in the interests of building the fairer, safer and more prosperous world order.

I wish you fruitful communication and all the best.

*President of the Russian Federation*

**V. PUTIN**

*April 12, 2024*



**Dear friends!**

I congratulate you on the opening of the 20th International Likhachov Scientific Conference.

Holding your meetings at the St. Petersburg University of Humanities and Social Sciences has already become a good tradition. I would like to point out that Likhachov Scientific Conference are distinguished by a rich agenda, the interested participation of famous scientists and politicians, public figures, representatives of culture and art. This allows us to conduct a productive dialogue on the most important problems of our time, substantive discussion of ways to solve them, taking into account the full range of opinions. And that is why the Likhachov Scientific Conference attract the unfailing attention of experts and the widest possible audience.

I hope that this forum, dedicated to international issues, will serve to develop fruitful humanitarian ties and strengthen mutual understanding between countries and peoples. And, of course, it will be another contribution to the preservation and further study of the richest creative and spiritual heritage of Dmitry Sergeyevich Likhachov, whose humanistic ideas are especially relevant and in demand today.

I wish you productive communication and all the best.

*President of the Russian Federation*

**V. PUTIN**

*June 9, 2022*

**Dear Friends!**

I'd like to welcome you on the occasion of the 19th International Likhachov Scientific Conference that opens today.

Academician Dmitry Sergeyevich Likhachov paid a lot of attention to St. Petersburg University of the Humanities and Social Sciences, he was an Doctor honoris causa of this renowned higher educational establishment. And because of that it is symbolic that your meetings take place exactly here, in SPbUHSS, and they are rightly regarded as a significant event in the life of the Northern capital and the whole country.

I'll mention that well-known scholars and politicians, prominent figures in the fields of culture and arts, representatives of mass media traditionally take part in the forum. Their rich in content and sometimes fierce disputes invariably evoke a massive public response, serve to develop Dmitry Sergeyevich Likhachov's ideas, that have not stopped being urgent today.

I'm sure that the Likhachov Scientific Conference will carry out its lofty mission in future as well, aimed at expansion of humanitarian cooperation, strengthening friendship and mutual understanding by people.

I wish you success, interesting and useful communications.

*President of the Russian Federation*

**V. PUTIN**

*May 23, 2019*

**Dear Friends!**

I'd like to welcome you on the occasion of the 17th International Likhachov Scientific Conference that opens today.

Your meetings have become an important, expected event in the public life of St. Petersburg and the whole country. It's encouraging that in all those years organizers and participants of the Conference have been keeping alive the established traditions, paying most serious attention to important, basic issues referring to civilization development and dialogue of cultures. They follow the precepts of the great humanist and educator Dmitry Sergeyevich Likhachov.

I'm sure that this forum will work creatively and constructively, will be remembered for interesting, productive discussions, informal and really friendly atmosphere.

I wish you every success.

*President of the Russian Federation*

**V. PUTIN**

*May 18, 2017*

**Dear Friends!**

Greetings to you all on the occasion of the opening of the International Likhachov Scientific Conference, which has been held in our Northern Capital for many years now.

Your authoritative forum, bringing together the elite of the Russian and global intelligentsia, prominent scientists and cultural figures, has truly become a cornerstone event and grand tradition in the country's public and spiritual life. Importantly, the meeting agenda always tackles the most pressing humanitarian and civilizational problems that are of such critical importance to Russia's present and future.

Today, you have convened to discuss such a fundamental topic as "Modern Global Challenges and National Interests", share your experience, and tally the results of joint projects. I am confident that the proposals and recommendations formulated in the course of the Conference will further the careful preservation of our national cultural heritage and the advancement of the humanitarian ideas of Dmitry Sergeyevich Likhachov.

I wish everyone productive, mutually-beneficial discussions, much success and all the very best.

*President of the Russian Federation*

**V. PUTIN**

*May 16, 2016*



**Dear Friends!**

I am happy to welcome you in St. Petersburg and to congratulate you on the opening of the 12th Likhachov Conference.

Your forum is an important event in the social life of Russia and of a number of foreign countries. It traditionally brings together representatives of scientific and artistic communities and competent experts.

Under globalization, the issues of extending the dialogue of cultures, preventing ethno-confessional conflicts are of paramount importance. There is compelling evidence that the humanistic ideas of academician D. S. Likhachov, an outstanding Russian enlightener and public figure, are still up-to-date.

I am convinced that the suggestions and recommendations drawn up in the course of your meeting will be sought after in practical terms.

I wish you new achievements and all the best.

*President of the Russian Federation*

**V. PUTIN**

*May 17, 2012*



**Dear Friends!**

I would like to welcome participants, hosts and guests of the 11th International Likhachov Scientific Conference!

Your forum, traditionally gathering the cream of the Russian intellectual community, prominent scientists and public figures from all over the world in St. Petersburg is an outstanding and remarkable event in the international scientific and cultural life. It is crucial that the topics of the Conference precisely reflect the most urgent and acute humanitarian issues, the main of them being promotion of the dialogue of cultures and civilizations in the modern world, establishment of moral and spiritual foundations of the society. And certainly, one of the priority tasks for you is preserving the invaluable legacy of Dmitry Sergeyevich Likhachov, which is as relevant and significant as before.

I wish you fruitful and constructive discussions, interesting and useful meetings.

*Chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation*

**V. PUTIN**

*May 5, 2011*



**Dear Friends!**

I am sincerely pleased to see you in Saint Petersburg and open the 10th Anniversary International Likhachov Conference.

This reputable forum is always notable for the substantial membership, comprehensive and effective work, and wide spectrum of issues to be discussed.

I am sure that the today's meeting devoted to the dialogue of cultures and partnership of civilizations should be one more step forward in promoting interconfessional and international communication to bring people closer to each other. And, certainly, again we can see so many prominent people together, among which are scientists, public figures, intellectuals, representatives of arts community, everyone who shares notions and opinions of Dmitry Likhachov.

I wish you good luck and all the best!

*Chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation*

**V. PUTIN**

*May 11, 2010*



I want to extend my welcome to hosts, participants and guests of the 8th International Likhachov Scientific Conference.

Holding this scientific forum has become a good and important tradition. It helps not only to realise the value of humanistic ideas of Dmitry Sergeyevich Likhachov, but also to understand topical issues of the modern world.

That is why the agenda of the Conference involves problems vital for everyone, like personality and society in a multicultural world; economics and law in the context of partnership of civilizations; mass media in the system of forming the worldview; higher education: problems of development in the context of globalization and others.

I am sure that a lively discussion closely reasoned and utterly transparent in its exposition and logic will contribute to the development of the humanities, steadfast and righteous moral norms.

I wish the hosts, participants and guests fruitful cooperation and all the best.

*Chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation*

**V. PUTIN**

*May 22, 2008*



I should like to welcome the guests, participants, and the organization that is holding the 6th International Likhachov Scientific Conference.

I note with satisfaction that for many years this forum has been carrying out a very noble and important mission of preserving, analyzing and popularizing Likhachov's scientific works.

The International Likhachov Scientific Conference has become a very important forum where people can exchange ideas and discuss the topical issues of the present time. Likhachov's spiritual legacy is an integral part of our science, of the science all over the world. And we are proud to see Likhachov's 100th anniversary, this memorable event, being celebrated on a great scale in Russia and abroad. I wish a successful discussion to all the participants and guests of the conference.

*President of the Russian Federation*

**V. PUTIN**

*May 25, 2006*



I should like to welcome the guests, participants, and the organization that is holding this remarkable event, the International Likhachov Scientific Conference.

The most influential and outstanding representatives of intellectual elite – scientists, artists, political figures – participate in this conference to keep up with the tradition. It affords me deep satisfaction to see this forum acquire an international standing. I note with pleasure that its agenda contains the most significant and topical issues of our time. This year you are discussing one of the fundamental problems – impact of education on humanistic process in the society.

The fact that this forum is organized regularly is a great tribute to the memory of D. S. Likhachov, an outstanding scientist, citizen and patriot. His spiritual legacy, scientific works dedicated to the problems of intellectual and moral development of younger generations, has great significance. I wish you a fruitful discussion.

*President of the Russian Federation*

**V. PUTIN**

*May 20, 2004*



I should first like to welcome the participants of the International Scientific Conference “The World of Culture of Academician D. S. Likhachov”. The most prominent scientists and political leaders come together to discuss at this conference the most important issues of the scientific, moral and spiritual legacy of the remarkable Russian scientist D. S. Likhachov. I strongly believe that this tradition will be followed up in the future and the most distinguished successors will develop Likhachov’s humanistic ideas and put them into practice while creating the Universal Home for all people of the 21st century.

I should like to express my hope that the Likhachov scientific conferences will be held in all regions of this country as well as in St. Petersburg, and we will feel part of this remarkable tradition.

I wish you a fruitful discussion and a good partnership that will bring many useful results.

*President of the Russian Federation*

**V. PUTIN**

*May 21, 2001*

# **WELCOME ADDRESS TO THE PARTICIPANTS AND GUESTS OF THE 22nd INTERNATIONAL LIKHACHOV SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE**

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**To participants and organizers of the 22nd International  
Likhachov Scientific Conference**

**Dear friends!**

I am glad to welcome the participants and organizers of the 22nd International Likhachov Scientific Conference!

The large-scale forum is once again a popular discussion platform for considering current humanitarian issues that are significant for Russia's present and future. It has thoroughly taken its place in the calendar of socially significant events of our city and the country, annually bringing together over one and a half thousand domestic and foreign researchers – specialists of the highest professional level.

Holding the Conference is a wonderful long-term tradition to be carefully preserved and developed by St. Petersburg University of Humanities and Social Sciences.

This year, everyone's attention is focused on the important role of the BRICS interstate association in the modern world order. In this regard, the statements of the outstanding scientist and educator Dmitry Sergeyevich Likhachov about the role of the Russian culture in the global space gains special value and resonance.

I am confident that the Likhachov Conference 2024 will become an effective tool for maintaining the broad humanitarian dialogue and continue the important educational mission.

I wish you successful and fruitful work!

*Governor of Saint Petersburg*

**A. D. BEGLOV**

*Saint Petersburg, April 12, 2024*



# ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL LIKHACHOV SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE

## Information

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The International Scientific Conference at St. Petersburg University of the Humanities and Social Sciences first took place in May, 1993. It was timed to the Day of Slavonic Letters and Culture. It was initiated by academician Dmitry Sergeyevich Likhachov. Since then the conference has been held every year. After academician Likhachov had passed away this academic forum received the status of International Likhachov Scientific Conference from the government (by the Decree of President of the Russian Federation V. V. Putin No. 587, May 23, 2001 "On perpetuating the memory of Dmitry Sergeyevich Likhachov").

The co-founders of the Conference are the Russian Academy of Sciences, St. Petersburg University of the Humanities and Social Sciences, St. Petersburg Intelligentsia Congress (founders: Zh. I. Alferov, D. A. Granin, K. Yu. Lavrov, D. S. Likhachov, A. P. Petrov, M. B. Piotrovski, A. S. Zapesotsky). Since 2007 the conference has enjoyed the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.

Traditionally, the most universal debatable challenges of the present time are put on the agenda of the conference: "Dialogue of cultures under globalization", "Education in terms of the new cultural type formation", "Culture and global challenges of the world development", "Humanitarian issues of the contemporary civilization", "Contemporary global challenges and national interests", "Global world: system shifts, challenges and contours of the future", "Global development: challenges of predictability and manageability", "Global conflict and the contours of a new world order", "Dialogues and Conflicts of Cultures in the Changing World", "BRICS as the new space for dialogue among cultures and civilizations" and others.

Every year the greatest figures of the Russian and foreign science, culture and art, public and political leaders take part in the conference. The following members of the Russian Academy of Sciences have taken part in the conference in recent years: L. I. Abalkin, I. O. Abramova, S. A. Afontsev, A. A. Akayev, G. A. Arbatov, N. P. Bekhtereva, O. T. Bogomolov, V. N. Bolshakov, V. A. Chereshev, A. O. Chubarian, A. V. Dmitriyev, S. Yu. Glazyev, M. K. Gorshkov, R. S. Grinberg, An. A. Gromyko, A. A. Guseynov, R. U. Khabriev, T. Ya. Khabrieva, M. P. Kirpichnikov, M. I. Kleandrov, G. B. Kleiner, A. A. Kokoshin, A. B. Kudelin, V. A. Lektorsky, A. G. Lisitsyn-Svetlanov, I. I. Lukinov, D. S. Lvov, V. L. Makarov, V. A. Martynov, V. V. Mironov, N. N. Moiseyev, V. V. Naumkin, A. D. Nekipelov, R. I. Nigmatulin, Yu. S. Osipov, A. M. Panchenko, N. Ya. Petrakov, V. F. Petrenko, M. B. Piotrovski, E. I. Pivovarov, N. A. Plateh, V. M. Polterovich, Ye. M. Primakov, B. V. Rauschenbach, Yu. A. Ryzhov, N. P. Shmelyov, N. N. Skatov, A. V. Smirnov, V. S. Styopin, V. A. Tishkov, M. L. Titarenko, J. T. Toshchenko, Yu. S. Vasilyev, V. L. Yanin, B. G. Yudin, A. S. Zapesotsky, T. I. Zaslavskaya, and others. Academicians of the Russian Academy of Education who have taken part in the conference are the following: S. A. Amonashvili, V. I. Andreyev, G. M. Andreyeva, A. G. Asmolov, A. P. Beliaeva, M. N. Berulava, I. V. Bestuzhev-Lada, A. A. Bodalev, E. V. Bondarevskaya, G. A. Bordovsky, V. P. Borisenkov, A. V. Darinsky, Yu. S. Davydov, E. D. Dneprov, Yu. U. Fokht-Babushkin, N. K. Garbovsky, V. G. Kineliyov, I. S. Kon, A. S. Kondratyev, V. G. Kostomarov, V. V. Krayevsky, O. Ye. Lebedev, A. A. Likhanov, G. V. Mukhamedzianova, V. S. Mukhina, V. A. Miasnikov, N. D. Nikandrov, A. M. Novikov, O. A. Omarov, A. A. Orlov, Yu. V. Senko, A. V. Usova, O. Yu. Vasilyeva, G. N. Volkov, G. A. Yagodin, S. F. Yegorov, V. I. Zagvyazinskiy, I. A. Zimniaya, Yu. P. Zinchenko, V. Mitter (Germany) and others. Such public and state figures as P. Bülbüloğlu, V. Ye. Churov, A. I. Denisov, Ye. G. Drapeko, G. M. Gatilov, Al. A. Gromyko, M. S. Gusman, G. A. Hajiyeve, A. K. Isaev, S. V. Kabyshev, S. L. Katanandov, K. I. Kosachov, A. M. Kramarenko, S. V. Lavrov, Ye. I. Makarov, V. I. Matviyenko, A. A. Pankin, V. N. Pligin, H. M. Reznik, K. O. Romodanovsky, M. V. Shmakov, A. A. Sobchak, E. S. Stroyev, A. V. Yakovenko, V. A. Yakovlev, M. V. Zakharova, K. F. Zatulin have also participated in the conference. Among the figures of culture and art who have taken part in the conference are the following: M. K. Anikushin, N. V. Burov, N. M. Dudinskaya, I. O. Gorbachov, D. A. Granin, Z. Ya. Korogodsky, K. Yu. Lavrov, A. P. Petrov, M. M. Plisetskaya, E. A. Riazanov, M. L. Rostropovich, G. V. Sviridov, A. A. Voznesensky, and others.

Since 2007 in the framework of the Conference there has been held Likhachov forum of high-school students of Russia (since 2014 – International forum of high-school students), which gathers winners of the annual competition of creative projects entitled "Dmitry Likhachov's Ideas and Modernity" from all over Russia and abroad.

Supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, the Diplomatic Programme of the conference "International Dialogue of Cultures" has taken place since 2008. Ambassadors of foreign states present their reports and give their opinions on acute challenges of present time.

In 2001, 2004, 2006, 2009–2012, 2016, 2017, 2019, 2022, 2024 the hosts and participants were greeted by Presidents of the Russian Federation V. V. Putin and D. A. Medvedev, in 2008, 2010–2019 by Chairmen of the Government of the Russian Federation.

The collection of articles is published on the results of the Conference every year. The copies of the volumes are present in all major libraries of Russia, the CIS countries, scientific and educational centers of many countries in the world. The Proceedings of the conference are also available on a scientific website "Likhachov Square" (at [www.lihachev.ru](http://www.lihachev.ru)).

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Opening of the Plenary Session at the Petrov Theater and Concert Hall of SPbUHSS. April 12, 2024



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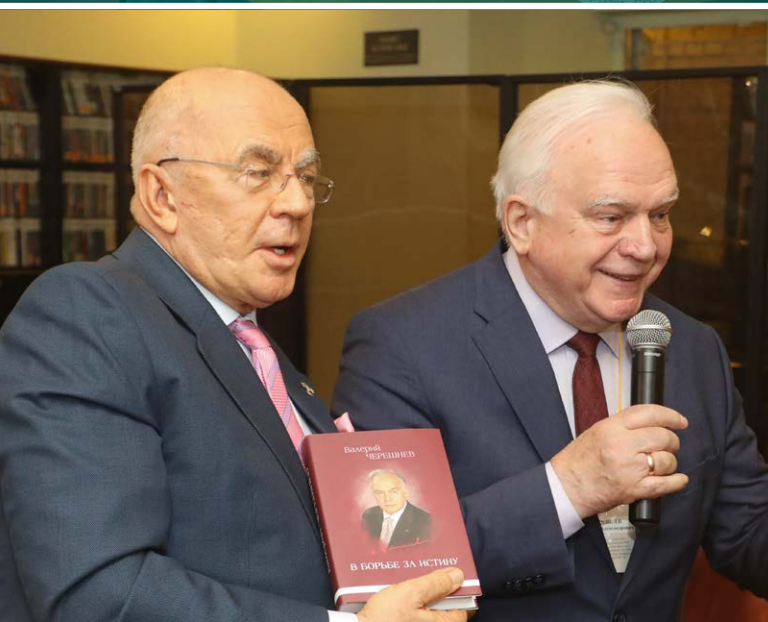


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Director of the Institute of Philosophy of the RAS, Honorary  
Doctor of SPbUHSS, Academician **A. A. Guseinov**



Honorary guests of the conference: Chairman of the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia **M. V. Shmakov** with wife, Corresponding Member of the RAS **Al. A. Gromyko**, Foreign Member of the RAS **A. A. Akayev**, Rector of the Belarusian State University **A. D. Korol**, Deputy Minister of Information of the Republic of Belarus **I. I. Buzovsky**, Honorary Doctor of SPbUHSS, Academician of the RAS **M. B. Piotrovsky**





First Deputy Chairman of the Committee on Culture of the State Duma of the Russian Federation **Ye. G. Drapeko**



Director of the Institute of Europe of the RAS, Corresponding Member of the RAS **Al. A. Gromyko**



Director of the Institute for African Studies of the RAS, Member of the Presidium and Corresponding Member of the RAS **I. O. Abramova**



Professor of Sorbonne University **O. Roqueplo** (France)



Deputy Director of the Primakov National Research Institute of the RAS, Corresponding Member of the RAS **S. A. Afontsev**



President of the Kyrgyz Republic (1990–2005), Foreign Member of the RAS **A. A. Akayev**



Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Republic of Tajikistan (1990–2001), Monetary and Full Ambassador **E. Rakhmatullozoda**



Chairman of the Committee on Science and Higher Education of the Government of St. Petersburg, Professor **A. S. Maksimov**



Writer **N. V. Starikov**





Scientific Director of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the RAS, Academician **V. V. Naumkin**



Corresponding Member of the RAS **Zh. T. Toshchenko**



Academician of the RAS, Academician of the RAE **V. A. Lektorsky**



Director of the Institute of Topical International Problems of the Diplomatic Academy Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation **A. M. Kramarenko**, Professor of the University of Belgrade **S. Atlagić** (Serbia), Vice President of the Marmara Group **C. Okray** (Turkey)



Ambassador of India to Jordan and Libya, High Commissioner to Malta (2012–2016) **A. Trigunayat**



Writer, President of Association Miracles **G. V. Naumova** (France)



Deputy editor-in-chief of the radio station "Govorit Moskva" **A. P. Binev**



The Prince of Sheriff, President of the Alliance for France party **M. Al-Khattab Al-Idrisi** (France)





Deputy Chairman of the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia  
**Ye. I. Makarov**



Deputy Chairman of the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia  
**A. V. Shershukov**



Deputy Chairman of the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia  
**N. N. Kuzmina**



Editor-in-Chief of the Moskovsky Komsomolets newspaper, Honored Journalist of the Russian Federation  
**P. N. Gusev**



First Deputy Chairman of the State Duma Committee of the Russian Federation on CIS Affairs **K. F. Zatulin**, First Deputy Director General of the Russian News Agency "TASS" **M. S. Gusman**



Deputy Director of the Institute for African Studies of the RAS  
**N. A. Zherlitsyna**



Director of the Analytical Center EcooM  
**S. G. Musienko** (Belarus)



Professor Emerita of SPbUHSS, Doctor of Art History  
**D. N. Katysheva**





Panel Discussion “‘Global West’ and ‘Global South’: paths of development”: Rector **A. S. Zapesotsky**, Director of the Institute for African Studies of the RAS **I. O. Abramova**, Academician of the RAS **V. V. Naumkin**, First Deputy Chairman of the State Duma Committee of the Russian Federation on CIS Affairs **K. F. Zatulín**, Chairman of the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia **M. V. Shmakov**, Ambassador of the Russian Federation **M. V. Zakharova**, Rector of the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia **A. V. Yakovenko**, Professor of Sorbonne **O. Roqueplo**



First Deputy Chairman of the State Duma Committee of the Russian Federation on CIS Affairs **K. F. Zatulín**



Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation (2005–2011), Rector of the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia, Professor **A. V. Yakovenko**



Moderator of the Discussion **A. S. Zapesotsky** with the participants of the Plenary Session of the Conference at the Petrov Theater and Concert Hall of SPbUHSS





Round Table “Challenges and Prospects for Forming a New Global Platform for Cultural Cooperation” (“Stasov/Ushakov” conference hall of the St. Petersburg Nevsky Royal)



Deputy Head of the “United Russia” party faction in the State Duma of the Russian Federation, Deputy Chairman of the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia, Professor of SPbUHSS **A. K. Isaev**



Writer, pianist, historian **J.-L. Bashle** (France), Leading researcher at the Institute of Africa of the RAS **D. A. Degterev**



Director of the Analytical center Conflicts Forum **A. Crooke** (United Kingdom), Scientific supervisor of the North-West Institute of Management of the Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration **V. A. Shamakhov**, Editor-in-chief of the Vlast magazine, member of the Council on Foreign and Defense Policy of Russia **S. A. Tsypliyev**

ЦЫПЛЯЕВ  
Сергей Алексеевич





Professor of the Department of International Relations and Foreign Policy of MGIMO (University) Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia **A. V. Manoilo**



Head of the Department of Legal Theory at Tver State University, Professor **V. I. Kruss**



Academician of the RAS, Academician of the RAE **V. A. Lektorsky**, Corresponding Member of the RAS **Zh. T. Toshchenko**, Director of the Institute of Philosophy of the RAS, Academician **A. A. Guseinov**, First Deputy Chairman of the Committee on Culture of the State Duma of the Russian Federation **Ye. G. Drapeko**, Associate Professor of St. Petersburg State University **I. V. Kuzin**



Session of the section "Values of the New Multipolar World: Universal and Special" (D. S. Granin Scientific Library of SPbUHSS)





Rector **A. S. Zapesotsky**, President of the Kyrgyz Republic (1990–2005), Member of the RAS **A. A. Akayev**, Deputy Director of the Primakov National Research Institute of the RAS, Corresponding Member of the RAS **S. A. Afontsev**, Member of the Presidium of the RAS, Academician **R. I. Nigmatulin**



First Vice-rector of SPbUHSS **L. A. Paseshnikova**



Corresponding Member of the RAE **O. Ye. Lebedev**



Head of the Main Directorate of the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation for St. Petersburg and the Leningrad Region **Ye. A. Orlovsky**



Students of SPbUHSS





Mrs. **B. Aisling** (United Kingdom), Ambassador of India to Jordan and Libya **A. Trigunayat**, The Prince of Sheriff **M. Al-Khattab Al-Idrisi** (France), Vice President of the Marmara Group **C. Okray** (Turkey)



Deputy Director of the Primakov National Research Institute of the RAS, Corresponding Member of the RAS **S. A. Afontsev**



The Prince of Sheriff **M. Al-Khattab Al-Idrisi** (France)



Participants of the 22nd International Likhachov Scientific Conference on guided tours at the Hermitage





Deputy Minister of Information of the Republic of Belarus **I. I. Buzovsky**, Rector of the Belarusian State University **A. D. Korol**, Rector of the Belarusian State Academy of Arts **M. G. Borozna** (Imperial Porcelain Factory)



Corresponding Member of the RAS **Zh. T. Toshchenko**



Academician of the RAS **A. G. Lisitsyn-Svetlanov**



Chairman of the board of directors of the newspaper "Komsomolskaya Pravda", Director General of the radio station "Govorit Moskva" **V. K. Mamontov**



Columnist of the RIA Novosti agency **D. O. Babich**





Concert for Participants of the 22nd International Likhachov Scientific Conference. On stage – Turetsky's Choir (Grand Hotel Europe)



Chairman of the Committee on Science and Higher Education of the Government of St. Petersburg **A. S. Maksimov**, Deputy Chairman of the Committee on Civil Service and Personnel Policy of St. Petersburg **Yu. Yu. Plysko**, Rector **A. S. Zapesotsky**



Writer, Chairman of the Russian Children's Fund **D. A. Likhachov**



People's Artist of Russia, Honorary Doctor of SPbUHSS **B. Ya. Eifman**



Satirical writer, Honored Artist of the Russian Federation **S. T. Altov**



Rector **A. S. Zapesotsky** with wife **A. I. Danilevich**, a 2030 SPbUHSS applicant **Yelizaveta Zapesotskaya**



Honored Artist of the Russian Federation **A. N. Asadullin**



## REPORTS

I. O. Abramova<sup>1</sup>

### BRICS AND AFRICA: NEW OPPORTUNITIES UNDER THE WORLD ORDER TRANSFORMATION

On January 1, 2024, the United Arab Emirates, Ethiopia, Iran, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia, invited to join BRICS at the 15th BRICS Summit held in Pretoria in August 2023, officially became full members of this organization gaining strength and enhancing international standing.

According to the President of Russia V. V. Putin, BRICS expansion is rooted in the objective process of the global multipolarity formation. "What is at the core of the expansion process? This process is based on objective reality. The multipolar world is creating itself, as a matter of fact. We can speed up this process or someone can try to slow it down and maybe even achieve some kind of reduction in the pace of building a multipolar world. Anyway, its creation is inevitable," Head of the Russian state said to a correspondent of the China Media Corporation.<sup>2</sup>

Today, as is known, the global center of economic power is gradually shifting from the West to the East or, depending on the coordinate system, from the North to the South. In the context of long-term global trends, the conditional West, perhaps for the first time in the last 500 (and certainly 300) years, is facing the prospect of a gradual transformation into a relative periphery. This means that even within the current market model, in the not-so-distant future the bulk of global production and the bulk of global consumption will shift from the northern Euro-Atlantic to the south and east – to Asia, Africa, and Latin America. In the market model, this means that the manufacturer will adapt not to the tastes and needs of the conditional European (including Americans, Canadians, and Australians) but to those of Asians and Africans, who are included because at present most representatives of the middle class, which supply the main demand for goods and services, live in the Asian region, but from around 2040, according to UN calculations, the growth of the middle class will occur not at the expense of Asia but

at the expense of Africa,<sup>3</sup> while the impoverishment of the middle class of Europe and the United States has already begun.<sup>4</sup>

Thus, BRICS expansion, in fact, implies the strengthening of resistance to the Western-centric world order, which retains little strength but is already being destroyed. The association, which expresses the interests of the world's majority countries and embodies the search for a more equitable and multipolar world order, is turning to the wider political, cultural, economic and geographical space of the Global South with admission of new members.

The BRICS organization has become an attractive magnet for other states in recent years. This statement was made by Russian President Vladimir Putin in a conversation with the participants of the World Youth Festival. According to him, the association has become serious and powerful. This can be seen by the desire of other countries to join the union.

"A magnet that attracts many countries of the world. Indeed, there are more and more of them," – stated the Russian leader.<sup>5</sup>

The interest in the BRICS membership is truly tremendous. Algeria, Bangladesh, Bahrain, Belarus, Bolivia, Venezuela, Vietnam, Cuba, Honduras, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Morocco, Nigeria, Palestine, Senegal, Thailand, and Pakistan have applied to join the association in addition to the members already admitted.

The weight of Africa and the Greater Middle East has increased significantly in BRICS after the expansion. Each of these regions is represented in the organization today by three states. Africa is now represented, in addition to the RSA, by Egypt, Africa's largest economy by GDP, and by Ethiopia, the second most populous country on the African continent. The BRICS also included Saudi Arabia, the largest Arab economy, as well as the UAE and Iran. There is a reason for that. These territories are the centers of modern geopolitical challenges, but, at the same time, they have enormous resource and human potential.

So why are Africans showing such tremendous interest in the BRICS despite their continued dependence on the US and its allies?

The first and most important reason is that African peoples do not want to live by the rules imposed on them

<sup>1</sup> Director of the Institute for African Studies of the RAS, Member of the Presidium of the RAS, Corresponding Member of the RAS, Professor of the Department of African Studies and Arab Studies of the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia named after Patrice Lumumba, Dr. Sc. (Economics). Author of more than 250 scientific publications, including 11 monographs: "The New Role of Africa in the World Economy of the 21st Century", "Islam, Global Governance and the New World Order" (co-authored), "Arab City at the Turn of the Millennium", "Emerging and Failed States in the World Economy and Politics" (co-authored), "African Migration: Experience of Systemic Analysis", "African Population in the New Global Economy", "Resource Potential of Africa and Russia's National Interests in the XXI Century", and others. Member of the editorial boards of the scientific journals "Asia and Africa Today", "Scientific Notes of the Institute for African Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences", "Conflictology", and "Contours of Global Transformation". Member of the Scientific Council under the RF Security Council, the Expert Council of the Federation Council Committee on International Affairs, the Russian Council on International Affairs. Awarded a Medal of the Order "For Merit to the Fatherland" II class, a Letter of Gratitude from the President of the Russian Federation V. V. Putin on the occasion of the 300th anniversary of the Russian Academy of Sciences, and the anniversary Medal "300 Years of the Russian Academy of Sciences".

<sup>2</sup> В. В. Путин: в основе расширения БРИКС лежит объективный процесс формирования многополярности // ТАСС. 2023. 16 окт. URL: <https://tass.ru/politika/19021549> (accessed: 01.09.2024).

<sup>3</sup> African Economic Outlook 2017 // African Development Bank, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, United Nations Development Programme. URL: [https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/development/african-economic-outlook-2017\\_aeo-2017-en#page30](https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/development/african-economic-outlook-2017_aeo-2017-en#page30) (accessed: 01.09.2024).

<sup>4</sup> Абрамова И. О., Фитуни Л. Л. Второй саммит «Россия–Африка»: от наследия колониализма к суверенитету и развитию // Мировая экономика и международные отношения. 2023. Т. 76, № 12. С. 35–48; Абрамова И. О., Фитуни Л. Л. Вопросы современной африканистики и проблемы развития. Избранные статьи и научные доклады (2012–2022 гг.). М.: Ин-т Африки РАН, 2022.

<sup>5</sup> В. В. Путин: БРИКС стала мощной и притягательной организацией для других стран // Аргументы и факты. 2024. 7 марта. URL: [https://aif.ru/politics/putin\\_briks\\_stala\\_moshchnoy\\_i\\_prityagatelnoy\\_organizatsiey\\_dlya\\_druzhih\\_stran](https://aif.ru/politics/putin_briks_stala_moshchnoy_i_prityagatelnoy_organizatsiey_dlya_druzhih_stran) (accessed: 01.09.2024).

by the West. And unlike the political decolonization of the fifties and seventies of the last century, the main impetus for change lies in the complex synergetic aggregate of the new qualities of modern African statehood in the areas of economy, maturation of sovereign nations and consolidation of the resources available for incremental advance.

African countries are no longer a broken set of fifty weak and poor political units forced to generally be in the wake of the decisive dominance of the former metropolises. Over the years of independence, they have developed modern national economic complexes, albeit with varying difficulty level, efficiency and self-sufficiency, and human capital has undergone an unprecedented evolution towards qualitative and quantitative growth.

The shifts in the global economy and politics have changed the global economic landscape and increased interest in the African continent, which is transforming from an object to a subject of international relations. After Russia's open challenge to the United States and its allies back in Syria and then in Ukraine, Africans realized that together with the countries of the Global South, as well as within the BRICS, they had a unique opportunity to achieve real sovereignty and free themselves from the legacy of colonialism not in word but in deed. Today, the richest continent in terms of its wealth continues to be the poorest in terms of living standards, as the West continues to shamelessly plunder its natural and human resources under a unipolar world.

The modern prosperity of the West is based, at its core, on essentially colonial methods of robbing peoples. Colonialism didn't go anywhere, it just moved from the political to the economic, information, and humanitarian spheres. The dominance of the dollar, the use of the sanctions mechanism, the preservation of technological dependence on the West, the destruction of national identity through the imposition of an anti-human perverted system of values, absolute dominance in the information space, through which false perceptions of events that occur in the modern world are formed, direct bribery and reformatting of national elites – these are the tools of the new colonialism. These tools apply today not only to Africa, but also to Russia and most states of the Global South. It was the BRICS countries, primarily Russia, that really challenged the “rule-based order”, offering Africans not a colonial but a mutually beneficial formula of partnership between sovereign states without imposing their own value system. In this sense, the words of Ibrahim Traoré, the leader of Burkina Faso, are very revealing: “Why does resource-rich Africa remain the poorest region of the world? African countries have suffered for decades from a barbaric and brutal form of colonialism and imperialism, which could be called a modern form of slavery. However, a slave who does not fight [for his freedom] is not worthy of any indulgence. The heads of African states should not behave like puppets in the hands of the imperialists. We must ensure that our countries are self-sufficient, including as regards food supplies, and can meet all of the needs of our people. Glory and respect to our peoples, victory to our peoples! Homeland or death!” – Traoré summed up at the second Russia-Africa Summit, quoting the words of Cuban revolutionary leader Ernesto “Che” Guevara.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Президент Буркина-Фасо считает, что роль России и Африки в борьбе с нацизмом замалчивается // ТАСС. 2023. 28 июля. URL: <https://tass.ru/>

The second reason for Africa's growing interest in the BRICS is changing economic balance of power in the world. Today, the bulk of real, not virtual, production is outside the West. The five BRICS countries already contribute more to global GDP than the industrialized G7 countries. According to the data of the British Company, Acorn Macro Consulting, published at the end of March 2023, the BRICS association now provides for 31.5% of global GDP, while the G7's share of the global economy has fallen to 30%. BRICS is expected to generate more than 50% of global GDP by 2030, and with the admission of new members, this figure could be reached much earlier.<sup>2</sup> But Africa, too, has its own definitive advantages in shaping the new world order. Africa accounts for about a third of the world's natural resources.<sup>3</sup> To this date, Africa is: 90% of the world's platinum reserves; 80% of the world's gold, diamond and chromium reserves; 61% of the world's manganese reserves; 60% of the world's cobalt reserves.<sup>4</sup> This should be added by water, forest and agricultural resources. And if the global GDP was not calculated according to the IMF methodology, but based on the real material wealth of nations, Africa's share in the world economy would not be 3%, but would be much higher. Under these conditions, it is advantageous for Africa and the BRICS countries to act not as competitors but as partners in the commodity and fuel markets, which will provide them with more favorable positions. At the same time, Africa is unwilling to be limited to the role of raw material appendages of old and new industrial giants, and, therefore, is interested in deep processing of these raw materials and growth in the production of value-added goods. On this way, the BRICS countries have a wide range of necessary technologies and Africa has a rapidly growing consumer market that doubles every 5 years and provides demand for both its own and foreign goods.

The third reason is to ensure security in the broad sense of the word. First of all, it concerns the prevention of military conflicts and the fight against terrorism, as these aspects are highly relevant to Africa today. Africans are well aware that the West is not only incapable of resolving these issues but, on the contrary, uses the tools of terrorism and military involvement in the internal affairs of sovereign states in its own vested interests. That's what happened with Libya, that's what's happening in West and Central Africa and other parts of the continent. The United States and Europe have literally flooded the African continent with military bases and troops, and conflicts have only increased, and terrorism has not gone anywhere. Recent events in West Africa, where a series of anti-French military coups have taken place, confirm that Africans are increasingly reluctant to rely on the West, particularly France, which is pursuing its mercenary aims of maintaining its influence and access to cheap African resources. CAR, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger,

[mezhdunarodnaya-panorama/18391511?utm\\_source=google.com&utm\\_medium=organic&utm\\_campaign=google.com&utm\\_referrer=google.com](https://mezhdunarodnaya-panorama/18391511?utm_source=google.com&utm_medium=organic&utm_campaign=google.com&utm_referrer=google.com) (accessed: 01.09.2024).

<sup>2</sup> Разделение мировой экономики // Коммерсантъ. 2023. 20 апр. URL: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/5915725> (accessed: 01.09.2024).

<sup>3</sup> Mapping Africa's Mineral Resources // Aljazeera. 2018. 20 Febr. URL: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/2/20/mapping-africas-natural-resources/> (accessed: 01.09.2024).

<sup>4</sup> African Natural Resources Center. Catalyzing Growth and Development Through Effective Natural Resources Management. URL: [https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/anrc/AfDB\\_ANRC\\_BROCHURE\\_en.pdf](https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/anrc/AfDB_ANRC_BROCHURE_en.pdf) (accessed: 01.09.2024).

Gabon have already turned away from France, and through it, from the collective West.<sup>1</sup> Similar processes are taking place today in Senegal, where the main opposition candidate Bassirou Diomaye Faye, who turned 44 on March 25, became the new president of the country following the results of elections on March 24, 2024. Faye presents himself as a proponent of “left-wing pan-Africanism” and advocates for the return of real sovereignty to Senegal. He proposes to “clean up the political class,” renegotiate oil and gas contracts, and abandon the CFA franc in settlements (a monetary unit introduced in 1945 in the then French colonies in West and Equatorial Africa).<sup>2</sup> Thus, the Sahel countries, like most other African states, see the BRICS countries, primarily Russia, as reliable guarantors of their security.

However, the concept of security is not limited to the military aspect. For Africans today, questions of struggle against famine are becoming more pressing than ever. According to FAO, the number of undernourished Africans in 2022 was 276 million, up 89.1 million from 2014. “About 44% of undernourished people in the continent live in East Africa, 27% in West Africa, 20% in Central Africa, 6.2% in North Africa and 2.4% in South Africa,” the paper reported. The number of people in the countries of West and Central Africa, which will experience food shortage, has reached 48 million by the middle of 2023. Experts of the World Food Program note that among the countries of this region, Mali, Burkina Faso and Nigeria are in the most difficult situation with food supply now.<sup>3</sup>

Egypt (44 million tons), Nigeria (31 million tons) and Ethiopia (26 million tons) remain the top grain consuming countries in the African continent, accounting for 37% of Africa’s total grain consumption. It is quite remarkable that Egypt and Ethiopia have become the members of BRICS. These countries are followed by Algeria, Morocco (BRICS candidates), South Africa, Tanzania, Mali, Sudan, Kenya, Niger and Tunisia – which together accounted for additional 38%. Each year, countries on the African continent import approximately 70–80 million tons of grain crops, of which about 50 million tons is accounted for wheat.<sup>4</sup> In this regard, African countries are hoping to establish new institutions, including in the area of food security under the BRICS authority.

It is quite noteworthy that African countries are traditional major buyers of Russian food products, primarily wheat. It is imported annually from Russia by 30–35 African countries, and for some of them it is the only or the largest foreign supplier of wheat. The dependence of African countries on wheat supplies from Russia in 2021 was 100% for Benin, more than 70% for Sudan, more than 60% for Egypt, Tanzania, Rwanda, Madagascar, Republic of Congo, more than 50% for Burkina Faso, Senegal, Burundi and Uganda. Russia also dominates the wheat imports of such countries as RSA, Togo, Namibia, Cabo Verde, and Malawi. The five largest importers of Russian wheat and

meslin (a mixture of soft wheat and rye in the ratio of 2:1) in 2021 were (in thous. tons): Egypt – 1552, Nigeria – 253, Sudan – 203, Cameroon – 137 and Libya – 108.<sup>5</sup>

Most African countries experience a severe shortage of fertilizers. According to the 2022 UN Development Program, fertilizer use in Africa’s agricultural sector remains at a relatively low level. By comparison, East Asia and the Pacific Region use an average of 300 kg of fertilizers per 1 ha, South Asia and Latin America use 170 kg/ha, Europe and Central Asia use 75–80 kg/ha, and Sub-Saharan Africa uses only 20 kg/ha.<sup>6</sup> Meanwhile, Africa is critically dependent on fertilizer import.<sup>7</sup> Out of the 7 million fertilizers consumed in the continent, 5.7 million or 81% are imported. In the structure of African fertilizer import, 16.6% is accounted for by Morocco, 11% – by Russia, 9.3% – by Saudi Arabia, 8.1% – by RSA and 6.6% – by China, 4.6% – by UAE and 3.1% – by Egypt.<sup>8</sup> Thus, in the current enlarged composition, the BRICS countries supply 42.3% of all fertilizers imported to Africa. It is quite remarkable that Russia is the second most important fertilizer exporter to the African continent.

In addition to supplying food and fertilizers to African countries, the BRICS countries, including Russia, are ready to share their advanced agricultural technologies that will allow Africans to independently increase agricultural productivity and provide the population with food by intensifying their own agricultural production.

And herein lies another reason for African countries’ interest in the BRICS. Unlike the West, which preserves the technological underdevelopment of not only Africa but also other nations of the world, the BRICS countries are ready to share their technologies in order to build together a modern economy for the benefit of the people.<sup>9</sup>

The energy sector has become another critical area of Africa’s cooperation with the BRICS countries. To this day, more than half of the African population still has no access to electricity.

“Energy is a key enabler of industrialization. If you don’t have it, you are out. I don’t know if you have noticed, but BRICS will become an energy superpower if we combine our capabilities,” said Brazilian expert Marco Fernandes, a researcher at Tricontinental Institute for Social Research. The expert explained that 45% of the world’s oil reserves, as well as almost 56% of gas reserves are accounted for by the BRICS countries. “As far as nuclear power is concerned, Russia produces half of the enriched uranium that goes to the plants. 18% is accounted for by China. That is, together Russia and China produce two-thirds of the world’s enriched uranium,” he said.<sup>10</sup>

Another important issue of concern to the Global South countries, including Africans, is the use of independent financial instruments in our mutual settlements.

At the 2023 BRICS summit, they spoke about creating a working group to create their own currency, it was

<sup>1</sup> Абрамова И. О., Фитуни Л. Л. *Op. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> Президентом Сенегала избрали дублера главного оппозиционера страны // РБК. 2024. 25 марта. URL: <https://www.rbc.ru/politics/25/03/2024/6601ba2d9a79471dab4f1a7e?ysclid=luhlshsgqg162507013> (accessed: 01.09.2024).

<sup>3</sup> FAOSTAT. Suite of Food Security Indicators // FAO 2023. URL: <https://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/FS> (accessed: 01.09.2024).

<sup>4</sup> Потребление зерна в Африке продолжает расти // Агровестник. 2020. 13 июля. URL: <https://agrovosti.net/lib/industries/cereals/potreblenie-zerna-v-afrike-prodolzhayet-rasti.html> (accessed: 01.09.2024).

<sup>5</sup> UNCTAD data. URL: [https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/osginf2022d1\\_en.pdf](https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/osginf2022d1_en.pdf) (accessed: 01.09.2024).

<sup>6</sup> Towards Food Security and Sovereignty in Africa. URL: <https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2022-09/Towards%20Food%20Security%20and%20Sovereignty%20in%20Africa.pdf> (accessed: 01.09.2024).

<sup>7</sup> Абрамова И. О., Фитуни Л. Л. *Op. cit.*

<sup>8</sup> TradeMap. ITC, 2021. URL: [trademap.org](https://trademap.org) (accessed: 01.09.2024).

<sup>9</sup> Абрамова И. О., Фитуни Л. Л. *Op. cit.*

<sup>10</sup> Эксперт назвал объединение БРИКС мировой энергетической суперсилой // РИА Новости. 2024. 1 апр. URL: <https://ria.ru/20240401/briks-1937081724.html?ysclid=lugxk3z3bh746208355> (accessed: 01.09.2024).

noted that BRICS members would enter into agreements based on their national currencies. It is also planned to develop the necessary payment systems to ensure cheap and secure flow of money between participants. In this context, the BRICS summit to be held in Russia in 2024 will prioritize three issues: enhancing the role of BRICS in the international financial system; increasing cooperation between the banks of the BRICS member countries and the use of member countries' currencies; and promoting tax and customs cooperation among the BRICS member countries.

Since BRICS economies have their own peculiarities, a single currency may not be as practical at this stage, but a cryptocurrency or gold-based currency that could be used in international trade could be a potential competitor to the dollar. BRICS countries are currently discussing the use of digital currencies that will allow them to exchange financial data and transactions outside the global Swift system. The digital dirham issued by the Central Bank of the UAE can be marked as a pioneering development to date. China's cross-border payment system offers clearing services for RMB transactions between banks of different countries. Russia's fast payment system, India's single payment interface, Pix, a fast digital payment system developed by the Central Bank of Brazil, and mobile money (M-Pesa) used in many African countries are examples that can contribute to the development of the BRICS digital payment systems.<sup>1</sup>

Few people know that the world's first online payment was made in Kenya. Today, online payments are prevalent in most African nations. Rwanda, for example, has declared the abandonment of the cash use. In Nigeria, which is the largest African country by population, calculations are already being done in e-naira. Cryptocurrencies are spreading rapidly in the continent. In fact, a recent report by Chainalysis blockchain data platform revealed that between July 2020 and June 2021, Africans received cryptocurrency payments amounting to 105.6 billion dollars, up 1,200% from a year earlier.<sup>2</sup> It is worth noting that Chainalysis ranks Kenya, South Africa and Nigeria in the top 10 countries for cryptocurrency use.<sup>3</sup> Digital currencies make it easier to offer and control money, transfer money quickly and keep full track of it. Thus, a single digital currency could be an important step towards de-dollarization,<sup>4</sup> and therefore, towards greater financial independence for countries of the Global South, including Africa.

Today, we are witnessing a truly tremendous shift in politics and economy, as the recent periphery countries become significant players in the new emerging world.

Modern Africa is gradually becoming both a significant consumer market and a supplier of labor for the global economy. Africa's population already exceeds 1.3 billion and is growing at the fastest rate in the world. According to UN forecasts, in 2050 more than a quarter of the world's population will live in Africa. Today, 60% of this population are young people under the age of 25, and it is young people who provide the demand for modern goods and services. According to the United Nations, from 2040, two-thirds of the growth in global labor will come from the African continent. The consumer market in Africa doubles every five years, and the growth rate of the middle class, which forms the basis of demand for modern goods and services, already exceeds the corresponding indicators of Asian states.<sup>5</sup>

Under the transformation of the world order and changing the role of countries and regions in world development, the countries of the Global South need to combine forces in the struggle for more equitable and free world, where every nation and people have the right to decide their own destiny and make their own choices. With the addition of new members, the total population in the BRICS countries has exceeded 3.5 billion people, and GDP has approached \$30 trillion, or one-third of the world output. Solving the problems of food and energy security, formation of own information sphere, development of technology, financial instruments, formation of knowledge and competence base, technological and human resource potential are only some of the possible areas of cooperation between the BRICS countries and the African continent.

There is no doubt that the next decade will see profound shifts in the political, military, economic, energy, technological and human potentials of the world, and the task of the BRICS countries is to become co-authors of these changes, strengthening the sovereignty of the countries of the world majority in the broadest sense of this word. This is the key priority around which we must pool resources and interests today. BRICS can become a center for protecting and promoting national interests of different countries and peoples and for building a new, more equitable world order.

African countries consider their interaction with the BRICS countries as an opportunity to consolidate their subjectivity in global politics and economy, strengthen their real economic, political, cultural, information and technological sovereignty, accelerate the process of qualitative development of their national economies and improve the social welfare.

<sup>1</sup> Anadolu Ajansı: Блок БРИКС расширяется против США // ИноСМИ. 2024. 14 янв. URL: <https://inosmi.ru/20240114/briks-267413274.html> (accessed: 01.09.2024).

<sup>2</sup> Абрамова И. О., Фитуни Л. Л. Пути повышения эффективности африканской стратегии России в условиях кризиса существующего правового порядка // Вестник Российской академии наук. 2022. Т. 92, № 9. С. 837–848.

<sup>3</sup> Ndemo B. The role of cryptocurrencies in sub-Saharan Africa // Brookings. 2022. 16 March. URL: <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2022/03/16/the-role-of-cryptocurrencies-in-sub-saharan-africa/> (accessed: 01.09.2024).

<sup>4</sup> Anadolu Ajansı: Блок БРИКС расширяется...

<sup>5</sup> World Population Prospects 2019 // UN, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. URL: <https://population.un.org/wpp/> (accessed: 01.09.2024).

S. A. Afontsev<sup>1</sup>

## ECONOMIC POWER OF THE BRICS COUNTRIES AND PROSPECTS FOR THE FORMATION OF A MULTIPOLAR WORLD

The expansion of the BRICS group in January 2024 through the accession of five new member countries (Saudi Arabia, Ethiopia, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt and the Islamic Republic of Iran) led to the intensification of academic and expert discussions on the issue of changes in the comparative economic power of countries blocs representing economically developed states, on the one hand, and countries with developing and transition economies, on the other. The fact that, in terms of the total gross domestic product (GDP), the BRICS countries after the expansion are ahead of the G7 countries, is rightfully considered as a landmark event in the world economy and politics. At the same time, the consequences of the BRICS expansion in terms of the possibilities of using the economic potential of the group members to influence global processes are more complex, and cannot be described by simply summing up the GDP indicators of the participating countries.

On the one hand, the total GDP of the group of countries as a measure of economic power has meaningful meaning only in a limited number of cases, which is determined by the very specifics of national GDP indicators. Firstly, they characterize the comparative sizes of economies, which determine the volume of national markets and the ability to withstand negative external pressure (in the form of trade wars, economic sanctions, etc.). Secondly, GDP provides an indication of the amount of resources that can be used to achieve foreign policy, defense and security goals. As a consequence, summing up country GDP indicators makes sense only for those international groupings that together form a single market, the scale of which may be attractive to potential partners, and are able to formulate common goals in the field of international politics, defense and security, to achieve which they allocate resources together. It is obvious that the BRICS group does not yet satisfy any of these conditions.

On the other hand, national GDP indicators of countries occupying leading positions in international groupings and their potential allies from among the member countries of the corresponding groupings are of great importance for assessing the prospects for forming the economic base of the emerging multipolar international order. In this regard, however, the most informative are not GDP indicators converted into US dollars at the current exchange rate of national currencies (fluctuations of which can cause significant "jumps" in GDP even if the physical volumes of national production remain unchanged), but GDP indicators at

purchasing power parity (PPP) of national currencies that provide the most objective measurement of the volume of economic resources in national economies, as well as in their associations that meet the criteria described in the previous paragraph. It is GDP indicators based on PPP that should be used when comparing the economic power of countries that claim to participate in the formation of a new economic and political world order.

In fact, a comparison of the size of the economies of the leading countries of the world calculated using the two specified methods, demonstrates cardinal differences. When calculated at current exchange rates, US GDP in 2022 was more than 1.4 times that of China, and was also higher (albeit by a fraction of a percent) than the total GDP of all other eight countries in the world's ten largest economies (Germany, Japan, India, Great Britain, France, Russia, Canada, Italy). On the contrary, when calculated using purchasing power parity, China's GDP already surpassed that of the United States in 2016, and in 2022, China's share of the global economy was almost 3 percentage points higher than that of the United States (18.4% compared to 15.5%). At the same time, neither Canada nor Italy (G7 countries) are in the top ten largest economies in the world, but representatives of the developing world – Indonesia (one of the most likely candidates for joining BRICS during the next waves of expansion) and Brazil (one of the founding countries of BRICS) are in 7–8 places in this top.

Additional information about the comparative economic power of participants in international interaction can be obtained by taking into account in international comparisons the summary measures of international integration associations, which in accordance with the criteria formulated above, together constitute a single market and are capable of formulating common goals in the field of international politics, defense and security. Such associations include, in particular, the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), the European Union (EU), ASEAN and MERCOSUR, but do not include country groupings that are based on free trade agreements and do not have common priorities in the field of foreign policy and security (such as USMCA, Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership, etc.). In order to ensure completeness of the comparisons, it is also necessary to take into account the fact that commonly international statistics list China's GDP without taking into account Hong Kong and Macau, gross regional product of which, however, meaningfully represents an integral part of the economic potential of the country ("Greater China").

Therewith, the ten largest subjects of the world economy are as follows. The undisputed first place belongs to Greater China (18.8% of global GDP), followed, with a noticeable distance, by the USA and the EU with 15.5 and 14.9% of global GDP, respectively. In fact, these three international subjects form the "cluster of leaders" of the world economy. Its closest pursuers are India and the ASEAN bloc ("cluster of pursuers"), whose share in the world GDP from 2001 to 2022 increased respectively from 4.1 to 7.3% and from 4.9 to 6.3%.

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The third cluster of subjects included in the ten largest economies in the world is quite heterogeneous. Firstly, it includes developed economies that in the period 2001–2022 experienced a decline in their share of global GDP, namely Japan (from 6.7 to 3.8%) and the UK (from 3.2 to 2.3%). Secondly, it includes two integration blocs of countries with developing and transition economies, whose positions during the period under study were in one way or another subject to erosion or stagnation, namely MERCOSUR (decrease from 4.0 to 3.2%) and the EAEU (decrease from 3.6 to 3.5%; data for 2001 are taken for the countries that were members of the studied associations in 2022). Finally, the top ten is closed by Turkey, which for 2001–2022 increased its share in the world economy from 1.3 to 2.1%.

The comparisons made allow us to draw a number of important conclusions regarding the economic prerequisites for the participation of leading countries with developing and transition economies in the formation of a new economic and political world order.

Firstly, today none of the relevant countries (including Greater China) and their integration groupings are able to secure an advantage over the coalition of economically developed countries (USA, EU, Japan, UK) without forming their own coalitions united by the tasks of reforming the existing world order. In this sense, the BRICS group (with the addition of new member countries and potential future rounds of expansion) represents a key platform for the formation of such coalitions.

Secondly, ASEAN and the states included in this bloc can be considered among the key potential partners of the BRICS countries in the future. The strong growth of the share of ASEAN countries in the world economy and their active role in shaping the global agenda of international cooperation and regulation give reason to expect that their positions will continue to strengthen, enhancing the potential for cooperation with them. In this regard,

the possibility of including countries such as Indonesia and Vietnam in BRICS should be considered as a priority when planning the next expansion of the BRICS membership.

Finally, the issue of the economic power of the Russian Federation as a factor of its participation in the formation of a new multipolar world order deserves priority attention. In 2022, the Russian Federation produced 2.9% of global GDP, the EAEU as a whole – 3.5%, which corresponds to the third cluster of leading international entities. In turn, the combined economic power of the leading subjects confronting the Russian Federation during the current geopolitical crisis (USA, EU, Japan and UK), despite a noticeable decline over recent decades (from 50.1% of GDP at PPP in 2001 to 36.5% in 2022), is an order of magnitude greater than the Russian one. Despite this, the Russian economy has been successfully withstanding sanctions pressure for more than 10 years, which over the past two years has reached unprecedented proportions. The main reasons for this situation, which is paradoxical for many Western observers (“David defeats Goliath”), is the successful mobilization of economic resources for defense and security purposes, as well as the creation of incentives for economic entities to be actively involved in solving nationally significant problems. At the same time, no matter how significant the country’s internal resources are, for the successful solution of strategic tasks of ensuring its national interests (including in relation to the issues of transforming the existing world order), its participation in coalitions with leading countries and regional associations of countries of the developing world becomes critically important in the medium and long term. The BRICS group is intended to be the main platform for the formation of such coalitions, and the Russian presidency therein in 2024 should give new impetus to its transformation into an effective instrument for ensuring effective representation of the interests of countries with developing and transition economies on the world stage.

A. A. Akayev<sup>1</sup>

### BRICS IS FORMING THE EXPANDING GEOPOLITICAL SPACE CAPABLE TO PROVIDE GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT BASED ON THE DIALOGUE AND PARTNERSHIP OF CIVILIZATIONS

After the disintegration of the USSR and the world socialist system, dangerous trends manifested themselves in the 1990s, they were the monopolization of the active forms of dialogue and exchange between civilizations in

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democracy of the richest countries from the “golden billion”, imposing the system of the Western values on the other states and civilizations, including with the widespread use of means of violence up to the armed forces. There was a threat of the clash of civilizations which was reflected in the acclaimed then monograph by the American political scientist Samuel Huntington *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*.<sup>2</sup> The UN announced the year of 2001 to be the Year of Dialogue Among Civilizations on the initiative of the President of Iran Mohammad Khatami as the answer to this threat. However, by a twist of fate

demy of Engineering, Member of the New York Academy of Sciences, Islamic Academy of Sciences. Awarded the Order of “Badge of Honor”, the Pushkin Medal, recipient of the Gold Medals of N. Kondratiev, S. Kuznets, V. Leontiev, the Gold Medal and the Order of V. Vernadsky. Recipient of the Lomonosov Prize.

<sup>2</sup> Huntington S. P. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. N. Y., 1996.

the confrontation between civilizations intensified sharply, and that was manifested in the tragic events on September 11, 2001 in the city of New York and the spreading of international terrorism. All that was a direct consequence of the attempt to establish the unipolar world order, with the United States enforcement and dictate, with imposing the Western system of values, including democratization of the state life according to the Western patterns, on the other countries and civilizations.

So, in the end of the 20th century, the world entered the era of the historical rift, long and deep global crisis stipulated by the change of the extra-long civilization cycles – the decline of the 200-year long industrial civilization and establishment of the humanistic noospheric integral global civilization, transition from the 500-year long fourth generation of local civilizations with the dominating West to the fifth generation with the dominating East.<sup>1</sup> One of the manifestations of the global crisis is a sharp escalation of contradictions between the rising civilizations and the leading powers with China and Russia at the head, laying the foundations of the integral civilization, and world powers with the United States and the European Union at the head, striving to preserve doomed to retire from the historical scene industrial civilization and establish the unipolar world order with the United States' hegemony.

However, the attempts to establish the unipolar world order were in contradiction with the course of the historical process and development of civilizations, and because of that they were destined to fail, and that was witnessed in the last decade. The United States were fairly aggressive in their relation to the rest of the world in connection with the beginning process of losing the status of the sole global leader that turned out to be so short-time. It is not surprising that the United States first of all turned against Russia and China that dared to challenge the adventurist domination of the United States in the world. Strengthening friendship and cooperation between Russia and China in every possible way is especially irritating for the United States. Because of that the United States and their European allies put unprecedented pressure on Russia and China. The proxy war in the Ukraine imposed on Russia by the collective West is aimed at weakening Russia in order to "push out" Russia from the list of the great powers. And the West launched real trade wars against China and imposed severe sanctions limiting access to the critically important technologies. However, all these measures of the collective West only accelerated Russia's and China's movement to economic and technological sovereignty.<sup>2</sup>

The history of mankind certifies that during the periods of civilization crises confrontation and clash of civilizations intensify, and dialogue and partnership of civilizations are predominant during the periods of sustainable development, and vice versa, when there is active dialogue and fruitful partnership of civilizations and the leading states get going, the sustainable world development is witnessed.<sup>3</sup> The partnership of civilizations becomes especially important during the periods of exit from the civilization crisis and trans-

fer to a relatively sustainable development. Today, the world is undergoing exactly such a period, which, most likely, will be going on for one more decade up to the early 2030s. All that put the necessity of the accelerated formation of a new just world order based on dialogue and partnership of civilizations, with their equality and taking into account their mutual interests, in front of the vanguard of the developing world. Creating inter-civilization and into-state associations of the new type – BRICS and SCO initiated by Russia and China – became the answer to these challenges.

It was demonstrated in papers<sup>4</sup> that, first, the 21st century is the century of local civilizations that are becoming the main actors on the political scene instead of the "concert of nations" that played the key role in the 19th and the 20th centuries. Currently, the number of nation-states is approaching 200, while there are only 12 local civilizations, this number may increase up to 15 or 18 by the middle of the 21st century, taking into account possible differentiation of the Moslem civilization.<sup>5</sup>

Second, the inter-civilization association BRICS is the center of crystallization of the new just global and regional multipolar world order, with the UN leading role. The relations of states inside the association are exceptionally democratic and equal. The BRICS countries are originally against interference in the internal affairs of other countries, they do not impose their ideological standards and they do not export colour-coded revolutions.<sup>6</sup> Exactly because of that BRICS as a global geopolitical association aimed first of all at the equal economic integration of the member states, providing just terms of trade without limitations and sanctions, is the most attractive format for emerging nations today. Because of that it is not surprising that there are over 30 states standing in line of those wishing to join BRICS.

Third, the increase of the middle class in the countries of BRICS+ will become the determining trend in the global economy for the next 30 year, with degradation and decrease of the middle class in Western countries as the background.<sup>7</sup> BRICS has become the global leader in the rates of economic growth, investments in the fixed productive capital, production of high-tech and high-quality products. Besides, it is exactly the BRICS countries that lay the foundations for the integral economic and socio-cultural social system based of equal dialogue and partnership of states and civilizations, and coming to replace the going down in history industrial civilization.<sup>8</sup> Thus, BRICS is becoming the natural Locomotive of the developing world.

In the 1990s and 2000s, the economies of the BRICS countries were strongly dependent on the import of the Western innovative technologies to produce high-quality consumer goods as well as on the consumer demand of the middle class of the developed countries for these goods.

<sup>4</sup> Яковец Ю. В., Акаев А. А. Ор. cit. ; Акаев А. А., Мусиева Дж. М. Ор. cit. ; Акаев А. А. Процесс зарождения справедливого многополярного мироустройства и перспективы его становления // Век глобализации. 2023. № 3. С. 3–18 ; Акаев А. А. Переход к новому многополярному мироустройству – точка бифуркации пройдена // Диалоги и конфликты культур в меняющемся мире : XXI Междунар. Лихачевские науч. чтения, 25–26 мая 2023 г. СПб : СПбГУП, 2024. С. 26–31.

<sup>5</sup> Яковец Ю. В., Акаев А. А. Ор. cit.

<sup>6</sup> Акаев А. А., Мусиева Дж. М. Ор. cit. ; Акаев А. А. Процесс зарождения справедливого многополярного мироустройства и перспективы его становления ; Акаев А. А. Переход к новому многополярному мироустройству – точка бифуркации пройдена.

<sup>7</sup> Акаев А. А., Мусиева Дж. М. Ор. cit.

<sup>8</sup> Яковец Ю. В., Акаев А. А. Ор. cit.

<sup>1</sup> Яковец Ю. В., Акаев А. А. Перспективы становления устойчивого многополярного мироустройства на базе партнерства цивилизаций. М. : МИСК, 2016.

<sup>2</sup> Акаев А. А., Мусиева Дж. М. БРИКС вступает в качественно новый этап развития // Мир перемен. 2023. № 3.

<sup>3</sup> Яковец Ю. В., Акаев А. А. Ор. cit.



In the recent decade, as we saw above, the state of affairs changed cardinally – the domestic demand in the BRICS countries increased sharply.<sup>1</sup> The vanguard BRICS countries, first of all China, convincingly demonstrated that they are capable to harness the basic technologies of the Fourth Industrial Revolution – digital technologies and the Artificial Intelligence, and to create a competitive and digital economy. And the main important thing is that the BRICS countries demonstrated that they are capable to maintain the long-term sustainable economic development even in the environment of geopolitical instability and geoeconomic fragmentation of the last decade. They demonstrated that both during the 2008–2009 world financial and economic crisis and during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In paper,<sup>2</sup> we presented the terms and conditions providing long-term global sustainable development at another long wave of Kondratyev's global economic development (2020–2050):

1. Social justice requiring just distribution of incomes in the society, decrease of inequality of incomes down to the socially acceptable level and provision of just access to basic social services.

2. Just harmonious globalization implying equal participation of states in globalization processes and just trade relations between developed and emerging countries, without sanctions, limitations, protectionism.

3. Stability of the financial system, providing sustainable investment of financial capital into real economy, in innovations. Effective state regulating is required in this most important field in order not to allow origination of financial bubbles, generating crisis phenomena and recessions in economy. It is inadmissible to use global currencies as weapons in geopolitical struggle.

4. Convergent development of the global economy calling for cooperative state measures for optimal placement of production forces and effective formation of the global demand for goods and services as well as investments into development of infrastructure and social sphere. It is required to provide emerging nations with a wide access to general-purpose technologies and direct foreign investments.

5. Ecological imperative requiring coordinated, active and efficient efforts of the whole global community for the balanced provision of the growing population of the Earth with all the necessary resources – drinking water, food, clean energy, etc. with no damage to the environmental ecology, with no further worsening of the Earth biosphere's condition and climate change.

In the 20th century, the world economy's development was determined by the most developed countries of the West with the United States at the head that in the past united into the G7 group. They also determined the long-term sustainable development at the global level. But now, in the second quarter of the 21st century, the leadership transfers to the BRICS association. It is also capable to provide all the above-mentioned conditions required for the sustainable global development. It is important that the economic potential of the BRICS countries is considerably growing in recent years at the expense of expansion of trade turnover and mutual investments between member states. This is extremely important in connection with the United States cre-

ating the “collective Western bloc” from its allies that fences off all emerging nations wishing to get rid of the tough American control and be guided by their own interests. Because of that the emerging nations joining BRICS are united by their wish not to depend on ideological and other whims of the United States and their allies in G7 dominating in the traditional international financial and trade organizations – the World Bank, IMF and WTO.

Thus, gradually, BRICS has turned from the informal international forum created on the sidelines of the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum in 2006 into a fairly authoritative inter-civilization association that is beginning to significantly affect the expanding processes of just globalization and establishment of the multipolar world order. BRICS has already become the firm basis for the formation of a new multipolar world order. Now, the task of BRICS is constructing the main load-bearing supports for the future just world order. As mathematicians say, the bifurcation point has been passed,<sup>3</sup> and after 2022–2023 this global process became irreversible. The role of BRICS as a global consolidating leader is also increasing, in particular in G20, opposing the United States and G7 attempts to preserve with crude force and aggression the global domineering of the West and its system of civilization values, not answering the further progressive development of humankind. In this environment, the emerging nations can only unite around BRICS more closely and take active part in formation of the just multipolar world order for the benefit of mankind. Then BRICS has every chance to become the locomotive of the sustainable global development in the second quarter of the 21st century.

The statements about BRICS given in the last paragraph are based on the following facts and suppositions:

First, 2022 became the turning-point year for the BRICS association – the share of the countries' GDP amounted up to 31.5% of the global GDP and for the first time exceeded the GDP share of the group of developed countries G7 that decreased down to 30.7%.

Second, in 2023, the second wave of 5 member states joined the group, and that considerably expanded the geopolitical potentialities of the association. The aggregate BRICS GDP rose up to 36% of the global GDP, and the total population of the member states already amounted to 46% of the global population. And the rapid growth of the number of countries wishing to join BRICS already amounting to 40 certifies that the BRICS authority has incredibly increased on the international scene, and that it is attractive for emerging nations.

Third, 2024 chaired by Russia may become the historic milestone in BRICS history as expected by the global expert community. Russia organizes the summit under the motto of strengthening the versatility for the just global development. Russia plans to do everything possible for the new BRICS members to feel its advantages in comparison with other international associations. Russia is getting ready to assist in every possible way for the third wave of states to join BRICS+. Russia also intends to deepen the dialogue and interaction in the fields of culture, sports and youth exchange.

In future, BRICS may turn into a global organization of the new age – the United Civilizations Organization!

<sup>1</sup> Акаев А. А., Мусиева Дж. М. *Op. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> Акаев А. А. Экономика XXI века – это неэкономика, или экономика справедливости и разума // Развитие и экономика. 2013. № 7. С. 92–101.

<sup>3</sup> Акаев А. А. Переход к новому многополярному мироустройству – точка бифуркации пройдена.

S. Atlagić<sup>1</sup>

## BRICS AS PLATFORM OF NEW MULTIPOLAR WORLD – ATTEMPT TO RETURN TO COMMON CIVILIZATIONAL VALUES

The modern world, as in the earlier stages of its development, is burdened with inequalities and various conflicts of interest. At the basis of these differences lie different values in which different goals find their expression and justification.<sup>2</sup> From the point of view of a society, what is considered valuable is what contributes to the survival and progress of that society, what is desirable from the point of view of the development of a given community. In the development of human society so far, several common civilizational achievements have crystallized, which highlight the most general goals of human practice. Speaking in the language of politics, we are talking about “epoch”, “historic”, “strategic”, that is, about the most general political goals or values (considering that goals are also something that is attractive and desirable) such as freedom, equality, well-being and justice. However, until the transition to the 21st century, with the evolution of liberal democracy, in the West, and consequently in other parts of the world, the possibility of bringing these values to people’s concrete interests was called into question.

In liberal democracies, they have always been concerned with developing a political process that would ensure the best conditions for capital accumulation. Dysfunctions in political systems in the West arose in connection with the demands of the masses – demands related to consumption and political participation. Since mass riots are not conducive to the development of capitalism, efforts were made to improve the material position of the masses and to expand the rights to participate in political life. However, the latter was followed in particular by the mass media’s involvement in distracting the masses from serious political issues and redirecting their attention to “warm human stories” and entertainment. This left room for the elites to conduct “high politics”. Since the fall of communism, the West has been working on the scenario of the so-called of great consensus – the position of the so-called the politics of the center, to which all mainstream parties agreed.

Conducting this policy entailed the following:

- Political performance (which is the basis of communication between politicians and citizens) is measured more by the ability to manage the economy than by the implementation of political principles.

- Economic management is adapted to the successful implementation of liberalism. This has become an ideological given.

- A series of discourses were promoted in the service of the economic interests of the networked economic elite. In this sense, the key words in social communication become:

globalization (which facilitates the flow of capital and trade and contributes to the exploitation of cheap labor, especially in Asia), feminism (which increases the workforce and reduces costs), multiculturalism (which contributes to the expansion of markets and the increase workforce), the nexus of cosmopolitanism, human rights and information channels and global warming (which has opened up many opportunities for investment in ecological production).<sup>3</sup>

By the turn of the 21st century, political processes in the West were managed in a way that it was difficult to distinguish between different political options. All these options agreed to the center’s consensus. The media, as an ideological institution *par excellence*, also supported the reproduction of the established order and foreign policy of Western countries driven by its hunger for material resources. By doing this, media contributed to “discursive closure”.<sup>4</sup> At the beginning of this century, this kind of hegemony caused serious problems in the functioning of mass democracies in the West (from cynicism towards politics in general and the absence of electoral participation to the development of anti-globalist and religious movements), as well as the response of Russia, which has proven to be the leader of that part of the world that opposes this hegemony. At the same time, Russia proved to be the only country strong enough militarily and economically independent to stand up to the West.

Opposing and limiting Western hegemony, Russia encouraged changes in the field of international relations that are directly related to the revitalization of politics based on the above-mentioned civilizational values. This is primarily related to the strengthening of BRICS, whose action carries a number of potentials. Financial and energy are key among them. The first one implies a strong political context, since financial tranches, as a rule (by the World Bank and the IMF) are conditioned by the transformation of the economy according to a model that forces the abolition of economic protectionism in client countries, and their integration into markets in which more developed Western countries have a dominant position. Demands for the transformation and opening of the economy are often accompanied by complementary political demands with the function of strengthening loyal comprador elites. The possibility of an alternative in the financing of current consumption and development can give wind to the political opponents of neoliberal globalism in the countries of the semi-periphery and periphery of the world capitalist system and offer a powerful lever for conducting a more independent (freer) policy.

When it comes to the energy potential of BRICS, in addition to Russia as the founder of BRICS, by accepting the oil-rich countries, BRICS can become an organization that will have great appeal in the future, both for developing countries and for more industrially developed countries interested in admission to it means a step closer to energy independence.

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<sup>2</sup> Slavujević Z. Političko komuniciranje, politička propaganda, politički marketing. Beograd : Grafocard, 2009.

<sup>3</sup> Lou E. P. Mediji i politički process. Beograd : Fakultet političkih nauka, 2013.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

The reflection of the terminal values mentioned in the introduction of this paper is also evident in other changes encouraged by BRICS' opposition to Western hegemony:

Cultural changes – Accelerated globalization, especially since the collapse of the Eastern Bloc, is characterized by the establishment of a kind of cultural imperialism, through the imposition of a Western way of life and worldview. Unipolarity in political power, accompanied by a practical monopoly in the means of global mass communication, has caused many traditional cultural patterns around the world to face drastic changes and/or extinction. Potentially, the positive effect of the return of multipolarity as a principle of international relations will lead to greater consideration for cultural differences, along with the loss of imposed narratives of “otherness” in relation to the collective West.

Completion of decolonization – BRICS can play an exceptional historical role in the final liberation of many peoples of the global South, especially those on the African continent, from the clutches of the domination of the metropolis, which in them continue, formally or informally, to achieve their centuries-old geopolitical and economic interests by exploitation of resources and control of politi-

cal circumstances. The bilateral activities that the two most powerful members of BRICS, China and Russia, have been conducting in Africa for two decades, on the economic and security front, can represent a good basis for further strengthening of true decolonial processes with the inclusion of other members and the admission of new ones from the ranks of former colonies.

Reforming/strengthening the role of the UN and overcoming its blockade – The return of multipolarity to the big door can potentially contribute to the reinvigoration of the role and power of the largest and most important international organization, which damaged its reputation by its inefficiency in actively defending itself against the onslaught of unilateral acts of the world's most powerful country and its allies. The principles of BRICS largely correspond to the original proclaimed principles of the UN in strengthening independence and mutual respect of differences between countries.

Information and communication changes – multipolarity can positively influence the diversification of information sources, i. e. further affirmation of national and regional media agencies, which contribute to the possibility of seeing events from “another perspective” at the level of international communication

**D. O. Babich<sup>1</sup>**

## **THE WEST AND THE ISLAMISTS: COOPERATION IN THE LATE 20th CENTURY AND EARLY 21st CENTURY**

### **Introduction**

The very topic of cooperation of the collective West and the Islamists was thought to be referring to “the conspiracy theory” and consequently not serious, unscientific and unworthy of study.

The glossy politicians from the United State and the European Union with their university diplomas looked very incompatible with illiterate fanatics from the anti-Soviet mujahedeen or the Taliban movement (prohibited in Russia).

However, the facts of the United States and West European countries cooperation with the Islamist monarchies of the Persian Gulf have been known for a long time as well as cooperation with the Saddam Hussein's regime at the time of fighting against Shiite Iran in the 1980s, relying on the slogans of radical Arab nationalism. But such a cooperation was listed as Realpolitik in the West (and later by many Russian authors as well). Well, what can you do? Savage people living in monarchies, making their women hide their faces but at least they do not kill and they also have a lot of oil... And Saddam is better than “bad Islamists” – Iranian Shiite fanatics under Ayatollah Khomeini. So, the West is cooperating with these “unsavory characters”.

Many people both in Russia and all over the world “bought” this story.

But already by the end of the 1990s, such “holes” appeared in this narrative that it became impossible to accept it. The US and EU went on financing the Islamists in Afghanistan openly and shamelessly even after the withdrawal of the Soviet troops in 1989, bringing the matter to the overthrow of a fairly humane Najibullah in 1992 and replacement of his power by endless mutual civil wars between various Sunni groups of the Afghan Islamists. In former Yugoslav Bosnia and neighbouring Kosovo, the US and EU unconditionally supported Alija Izetbegović's Islamic combatants first and the Kosovo Liberation Army later.

During the Syrian civil war in 2011–2019, the US and EU again openly played the Islamists game. Only they had real chances to come to power in Syria in case of overthrow of Bashar al-Assad, and people in Washington and Brussels could not fail to understand it. (If they are not fully detached from reality “hostages of ideology” of ultraliberalism there, believing in victory of “liberals” everywhere – such people in the West are also very influential.) But the fact remains: during the whole war, the West hit the Assad's troops first of all, thus objectively working for the Islamists.

And what is more, numerous independent mass media and observers noticed that Israel neighbouring Syria directly or indirectly helped the Islamists. They were cases of treating Syrian combatants in the Israeli hospitals. And the main thing is that the Israeli Air Force that periodically bombed Syria in 2011–2019, never hit the Islamists' bases. But the Israeli many times put out of action Assad's army

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aerodromes, again objectively working for the Islamists. The aircrafts of Assad's Syrian Arab Republic (SAR) that hit the Islamists from numerous extremist Islamic groups that fought against SAR in 2011–2019, took off exactly from the said aerodromes.

What pushes the West to cooperate with the Islamists?

### **Afghanistan: the tactical anti-Soviet Union of the West and the Islamists**

Military actions with the participation of the Soviet troops on the territory of Afghanistan in 1979–1989 were the first big proxy war of the West and Russia. A number of books and reminiscences including Brzezinski's<sup>1</sup> interview certify that the Americans started in-feeding the mujahedeen (i. e. Afghan Islamists) already in summer 1979 before the Soviet troops entered Afghanistan in December 1979.

American historian Conor Tobin and a number of his colleagues prove that the United States as if lured, drawn in the USSR in the conflict in summer-autumn 1979 by their military and financial assistance.<sup>2</sup> This became a typical feature of many following operations of the United States in favor of the Islamists. For example, they hoped very much that "Syria will become the second Afghanistan" for Moscow in 2015, when Russia sent its aerospace defense forces to Syria.

In September 2015, *Daily Mail*, *The Guardian*, *The New York Times*, *Le Monde* – practically all Western newspapers – wrote about that after the Russian aerospace defense forces appeared in Syria.

In 2015, the West did not manage to make Russia a hostage of the civil war in Syria – Russia mostly used aircrafts and military police in Syria, and the role of "infantry" in fighting the Islamists was played by the SAR army and to a lesser extent the legally invited to the country by President Assad Iranian armed forces and fighters from the Lebanese Hezbollah.

But in Afghanistan the United States and Western Europe did manage to make the USSR a hostage of the internal struggle between the forces of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan and the Islamists. Andrei Mikhailovich Alexandrov-Agentov, the assistant for foreign political issues of four Soviet leaders (Brezhnev, Andropov, Chernenko and Gorbachev), called Brezhnev (and the majority of the Political Bureau in 1979) exactly the hostage of ideology<sup>3</sup> because of his decision to send troops to Afghanistan.

It would seem that the difference of our today's approach from the approach in the time of the Afghan war is exactly the absence of the ideological bias in our actions today. We are not trying to build socialism or any other socio-political system in the countries where we are fighting the Islamists. First of all, we are helping the secular, legal authorities in Syria or Cyrenaica to deal with illegal Islamist rebellions – at the local government's request, according to the UN Charter.<sup>4</sup>

Life punished the United States for their helping the Islamists in Afghanistan. Saudi Osama bin Laden and other

Islamists supported by them in Afghanistan were not grateful in any way and in 2001 they took part in the biggest in the United States history terrorist act on September 11, attacking New York and Washington by hijacked airplanes.

### **The Islamists turn their weapons against sponsors: Libya and Syria**

In the two following conflicts, when the US helped Islamists – the war in Libya in 2011 and the war in Syria in 2011–2019 – the United States did not manage to attain their aims. The Islamists lost their power over the biggest part of Libya, and in Syria their influence is limited by the Idlib province, and the US did not succeed in dragging Russia into the conflict with significant human losses for the country.

Abraham Abrams, a representative of the non-systemic American journalism, pays attention in his book *The War in Syria* to the difference in the West's approach to the Afghan Islamists in the 1980s and the Islamists in Libya and Syria. Abrams writes that if in the 1980s the Islamists (including Afghan) could be openly glorified in the US media as heroes fighting for freedom against communist conquerors, in the 2000s and the 2010s, after the 9/11 attacks and other crimes in the name of Allah, glorifying the Islamists became indecent. As a result, Western media started describing the Islamist enemies of Assad and Gaddafi as abstract rebels, without providing details of their speeches and political platforms.<sup>5</sup>

Making an alliance with the Islamists in Libya and Syria, the West hoped to deceive them: to use them for the overthrow of the undesirable for Washington secular regimes (both Gaddafi and Assad) and after that to write them off to the dustbin of history. But the Islamists quickly guessed what the tactic was and in their turn easily deceived (and go on deceiving) their Western curators.

The acts of terrorism are often carried out in France and the United States by Islamist veterans of wars in Libya and Syria.

Incompetence of Western officials led to them "backing the wrong horse" in a number of key countries. Staking on the Muslim Brothers (prohibited in the Russian Federation terrorist organization) in Egypt did not justify itself. On the contrary, the old US loyalist Mubarak handed over to the Islamists turned out to be an example of the Americans betraying their allies. The today's authorities in Egypt are much more loyal to Russia than Mubarak, and the trust between Washington and the Egyptian Army elite has been broken for a long time.

The same may be said about the regime that formed in Iraq after the American occupation and numerous Islamic terrorist acts that took place there as a result of the American intervention. The today's Iraqi authorities let Russian military and civil aircrafts flying to Syria pass over their territory.

The attempt to finance the Muslim Brothers together with oil "sponsors" from the Persian Gulf led to the United States conflict with the Saudi authorities as well. Nevertheless, the United States and the EU staking on Islamists will still go on. They are used against demonized in the US Russia and China. There was an attempt to use them against Burma government, provocative acts against Serbia in Kosovo are going on.

<sup>1</sup> Le Nouvel Observateur. 1998. Jan. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Tobin C. The United States and the Soviet-Afghan War, 1979–1989 // Oxford University Press. 2020. P. 80–81.

<sup>3</sup> Александров-Агентов А. М. От Коллонтай до Горбачева. М. : Междунар. отношения, 1994. С. 167.

<sup>4</sup> S. V. Lavrov, speech at the UN General Assembly in 2017.

<sup>5</sup> Abrams A. B. War in Syria. N. Y. : Clarity Press, 2021.

### The recipe for victory

Experience shows that Russia and the moderate Muslim regimes are fairly capable to oppose the Islamists, even if the latter form the coalition with the West. It is possible taking into account mistakes made by the USSR in Afghanistan.

Russia need not send its infantry or feed the whole countries. Russia should support viable sovereign moderate secular regimes with Muslims at the head. And it is required to fight back against Islamophobes and racists in Russia. The worst anti-advertizing for us in the third world is the skinheads and Islamophobes-Navalists on a "Russian March".

V. S. Basyuk<sup>1</sup>

## ADOPTION OF TRADITIONAL SPIRITUAL-MORAL VALUES THROUGH ORGANIZATION OF EDUCATIONAL INTERACTION

Speaking about the human spirit, its adoption, personality development and upbringing as the main process involved in shaping personality of each of us, I would like first of all to rely on the scientific concept of "the great ideofield of public consciousness," which was coined by Valeria Sergeyevna Mukhina, Academician of the Russian Academy of Education, meaning by the term everything to have been accumulated by mankind over the period of its multi-millennial existence. Man, as a generic being, constantly improved himself, accumulated things to be the most important for his development, for formation of human self-awareness, which later became the basis for the human community to evolve. The Great ideofield of public consciousness is based on such important categories as good and evil, truth and lie, the sphere of ethics and judgment. The sign systems that are constantly improved are speech and writing. Our spiritual and moral values. These and the whole versatile world of human knowledge. Beauty, the sphere of creativity, cultural objects – all the great spiritual wealth to be possessed by modern humanity. Mukhina notes, "...the Great ideofield of social consciousness, which is the phenomenological entity of the result of mankind's practical and spiritual activity. <...> On the one hand, the Great field is the result of committed and not committed acts and actions of man. On the other hand, it is the independent entity that exists according to its own laws."<sup>2</sup>

At solemn events, the national anthem of Russia is often performed, in which there are wonderful words, "Ancestor-given wisdom of the people!" It is this "wisdom of the people" that forms the spiritual-moral component of our personal development.

Speaking about the human spirit and adoption of traditional spiritual-moral values through it, I want to turn to the scientific views of Andrey Karlovich Storch, a Russian economist, historian, bibliographer, academician, Vice-President of St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences, who wrote about the importance of both spiritual and – I emphasize! – material reproduction. He noted, "...values owe their origin to nature and labour. Interaction of these two primary causes that create values is called production."<sup>3</sup> And further, he pointed out that "production can be tangible and intangible <...>. These two kinds of production interact in such a way that one of them cannot exist without the other's assistance. It is obvious that the person will never be able to create wealth unless (s)he possesses inner benefits, that is, he has managed to develop his/her physical, mental, and moral abilities <...>."<sup>4</sup> Defining primary and secondary benefits, the scientist and economist emphasized, "Primary benefits consist of our abilities themselves and everything that directly serves their development and improvement."<sup>5</sup> "Secondary benefits are not directly related to our abilities, but are a necessary prerequisite for preservation and development, i. e. without them, primary benefits are impossible to exist <...>, health, skills, education, tastes, mores, customs, safety, leisure – everything we call the inner goods and elements of civilization. It is difficult to imagine such a tangible value that cannot be included in one of these categories."<sup>6</sup>

Studying the nature of inner goods in comparison with the nature of wealth, analyzing the relationship between external goods and the inner spiritual wealth of a person, Storch noted, "Wealth and inner goods have the following common properties: 1) they are values, i. e. our ability of judgment recognizes their usefulness in meeting our needs; 2) they are able to be an object of adoption, and 3) they come from the same sources, namely: nature and labour."<sup>7</sup> Interaction of inner goods and tangible production is as follows: "...the person produces inner goods to the extent that he possesses wealth, that is, food, clothing, housing, household utensils, means of transportation and all that contributes to his intangible production, such as books, works of art, scientific instruments, offensive and defensive weap-

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<sup>2</sup> Мухина В. С. Личность: Мифы и Реальность (Альтернативный взгляд. Системный подход. Инновационные аспекты). 7-е изд., испр. и доп. М. : Нац. кн. центр, 2020. С. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Шторх А. К. Курс политической экономии, или Изложение начал обуславливающих народное благоденствие ; Размышления о природе национального дохода. М. : Экон. газ., 2008. С. 99.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. С. 608.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. С. 608–609.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. С. 609.

ons. So, the richer a nation is, the better its civilization can develop.”<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, it is important to emphasize that we are a rich civilization, rich in the Russian spirit, culture, and scientific heritage. But it is necessary to solve the problem: how to pass this wealth on to next generations. This, in my opinion, is the purpose of the educational process. The Edict of the President of the Russian Federation on traditional Russian spiritual-moral values identifies 17 values, but, of course, the Russian people has many more.<sup>2</sup> However, to my mind, the mission of the Edict is to fix these values: in the contemporary world, they require to be defended as the Russian people’s traditional values.

Speaking about how the process of assigning these values is carried out, it is possible to rely on the most important for psychologists issues related to basics of personality development, which have been studied by philosophers, educators, anthropologists, and psychologists since ancient times. In the jubilee year since the birth of K. D. Ushinsky, one can refer to his definition of the factors of human personality development. Considering the problem of personality and character development, Konstantin Dmitrievich noted that this happens due to the body’s innate features, influences of life and upbringing, and man’s personal will, indicating that these factors “mutually affect each other. Because of these mutual influences of innate inclinations and gained in life beliefs and habits, the character forms.”<sup>3</sup> In my scientific beliefs, I belong to the scientific school “Phenomenology of Personality Development and Being” of Academician of Russian Academy of Sciences, famous scientist-psychologist Valeria Sergeyevna Mukhina. The methodological basis of the scientific concept is the postulate that personality is a unique phenomenon and a social unit, development of which is determined by three key factors: 1 – innate features (genotype)<sup>4</sup>; 2 – social conditions<sup>5</sup>; 3 – this developing person’s inner position<sup>6</sup>. The person’s inner position is a special value formation in each of us, which is formed due to the most important mechanism of reflection as a kind of perception phenomenon and the analysis of what is happening. It is very important to bear in mind that reflection is formed in three directions: at yourself, at people and at the surrounding reality. In matters of upbringing and organization of upbringing, it is the inner deep value reflection that is significant for us, because when we try to instill something in a child, (s)he must necessarily experience it, feel it and only then assign it as a kind of value basis.

Why is the inner position important? Because it is the basis for such significant built-up personality features as worldview, individual value system, civil identity, functional literacy. Philosophers define worldview as a system of views, estimates, and imaginative representations of the world and the person’s place in it. And what is the system of views? After all, it appears precisely as a result of

reflection. The system of estimates is also a result of human reflection and definition of the very value position, on the basis of which the person’s inner position is formed. The individual value system is a set of opinions to have formed by the person, which, in turn, develops as a result of deep internal reflection.

Civil identity is also defined as an individual sense of shared belonging. Whatsoever, the concept of sensory reflection is very important. Here I want to turn to Jan Amos Komensky, another founder of scientific pedagogy. When mentioning him, we most often recall his work “The Great Didactics”. But Komensky wrote another wonderful work – “Matetics”, dedicated to the art of learning, according to which the mechanism of learning is based on three important things – sensory perception, reason and faith. And sensory perception is the basis of pedagogical work. Let’s consider the usual situation: a teacher is giving a lecture in the auditorium where 200 students are listening to him. And in response to the same information, he surprisingly receives 200 different reactions. Why? This is the result of each student’s individual sensory perception, which depends on how important the information is to the student and how ready the student is to perceive the information right now. Therefore, when mentioning the processes of assigning spiritual-moral values, we must understand that only through wealth of the Great ideofield of public consciousness, through sensory perception and reflection, unique mechanisms of adoption and assigning work. Through the Great ideofield of social consciousness, through the process of development, due to our unique properties of consciousness and sensory perception, the person’s inner position is formed. And by itself, through the psychological mechanism of adoption, this inner position forms spirituality, morality, and ethics in the person, which, in turn, constitute the basis of the individual system of values and worldview, making each person unique and inimitable.

How can all these theoretical conclusions be used as the basis for organization of the educational process? We must clearly understand importance of three components: participants in the educational process, the educational environment and the educational event. A teacher – a teacher, educator, coach – as a participant in the educational process must first and foremost be a significant adult for his/her student. Is every teacher a significant adult? Of course not, because a significant adult’s peculiar property is that (s)he is primarily a person whom the student trusts. And it is very important that a teacher at a university or at school not only be a teacher-mentor, but become internally significant for a student or a pupil, so that the young person could begin trusting him/her. In this regard, mutual development without paternalism, as well as care, respect, and honesty in relationships, are rather important.

I would like to dwell on the role of the educational environment. The educational environment is everything that surrounds a young person in the space of an educational institution, purposefully organized conditions intended for strengthening basic attitudes towards positive personal development. The educational environment should make the basis for formation of fundamental values, and then it will influence the most important psychological mechanisms of identification and isolation, formation of value focuses and features of self-reflection. In this case, of

<sup>1</sup> Шморх А. К. *Op. cit.* P. 99.

<sup>2</sup> Указ Президента Российской Федерации от 9 ноября 2022 года № 809 «Об утверждении Основ государственной политики по сохранению и укреплению традиционных российских духовно-нравственных ценностей» // Президент России : [сайт]. URL: <https://www.kremlin.ru/acts/bank/48502> (accessed: 05.12.2023).

<sup>3</sup> Ушинский К. Д. О народности в общественном воспитании // Литература и жизнь : [сайт]. URL: [http://dugward.ru/library/pedagog/ushinskiy\\_parodn\\_vospit.html](http://dugward.ru/library/pedagog/ushinskiy_parodn_vospit.html) (accessed: 05.12.2023).

<sup>4</sup> Mukhina V. S. *Op. cit.* P. 46–47, 320–368.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. P. 45–265.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. P. 315, 368, 537, 739, 793–832, etc.

course, the special role is assigned to the teacher, who is the link between the entire social environment to be outside the educational organization and the educational environment that surrounds the young person in the educational institution and constantly brings him/her streams of new information.

Why is modern pedagogical work unique? Because, when the person receives various, and even contradictory, information, and sometimes from different sources, it is the teacher that, as a significant adult, is for the person the bearer of the very truthful (reference) information, which is so important at the stage of personality formation. The third component, the system of educational events, should be filled with such events featuring as follows: direct action and co-existence, that is, the joint existence of the teacher and the student, which will develop sensory perception aimed at formation of self-awareness through reflective practices. It is this co-existence that is special moments filled with vivid and exciting experiences, including anticipation, active expectation of tomorrow's joy. And, of course, any co-existence should be rich in values.

The system of educational work should be based on the goal of creating and strengthening the inner position of the personality of a child or a young person through the system of interaction between the adult and his/her ward, which is aimed at developing the young person's self-awareness. And then the task of the pedagogical process is organizing the program of such interaction so that, due to the system of conditions created by the educational organization, the ward could get experience and gain the ability to correctly identify with the best from the point of view of public and individual benefit, and then isolate himself, that is, defend and cultivate the best in his/her self and alienate his/her self from the worst not only in own self, but also in the surrounding reality. Thus, the key tasks of contemporary pedagogy based on psychological cognition will be: activation of development of consciousness and self-awareness, formation of motives for active behavior and independence in the ward's social behavior, timely identification and support of positive achievements, as well as identification and correction of negative attitudes that may appear in our young people or children at different stages of ontogenesis.

**M. G. Borozna<sup>1</sup>**

## **FEATURES OF HISTORICAL AND THEORETICAL COMPREHENSION OF THE ROLE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF HISTORICAL MEMORY IN THE VISUAL ART OF CONTEMPORARY BELARUS**

Apart from the creative spiritual content, activities in the field of culture and art cannot be considered as a strategic resource for society development. The spiritual dimension of the space of art and culture of contemporary Belarus in its meaning and understanding is in a deep search for harmonious and promising co-existence and interaction in the world of partnership.

In professional art, forecasts about the future are still quite dotted, despite the traditional desire of culture for openness, as well as the observed stability of cultural import substitution over recent years, and awareness of the prospects of the initiatives "One Belt, One Road", the BRICS in humanitarian collaboration and cultural exchange. The new cultural axis can be seen not only in magnetically attracting innovations, but also in generating progressive artistic trends by the new generation of artists. Herewith, it is appropriate to figuratively compare the current processes in culture and art with the discovery of a new island archipelago and establishment of effective links of internal in-

teraction. Existence of "local cultures" and their development has a fascinating art history. The example of Japan is expressive, but it is not unique either: many countries have preserved traditions and have mastered international platforms for creative experiments, subsequently joining wider cultural spaces and art scenes. Today opens for the BRICS a megaproject of new humanitarian consolidation.

The new period of development of culture and art draws attention to historical parallels. The best achievements of the artistic culture of Belarus of the recent past, which radically expanded the context of artistic culture in the 20th century, will remain a bright example for new generations of artists, architects and designers. Regardless of numerous modern trends, it is the culture of the last century that continues to play an essential role for creative experience of the coming decades, turning into the topical platform for searching an effective role of modern culture not only in the Eurasian space. In the 20th century, self-affirmation of national art schools took place, national features of the Soviet culture received expressive content.

It is not only the immediate relevance to be important. The issue of fair treatment of the historical memory of the past remains relevant, the comprehensive awareness of which will be a necessary condition for progressive development in future. It is important to show in works of art not only modern social reflection, but also the level of rethinking by contemporaries the historical experience of society, principles of human existence.

The processes that took place in the last century were difficult and often contradictory, but it is necessary to recognize the high ambition of the cultural space in the territory of the Soviet state. It was during this period that the prob-

<sup>1</sup> Rector of the Belarusian State Academy of Arts, Ph. D. in Art History, Professor. Author of more than 300 scientific and popular science publications, including monographs: "Belarusian Book Graphics of the 1960s–1990s", "Belarusian Painting of the 1920–1970s", "Book Art of Belarus of the 20th Century", "History of Visual Art of Belarus of the 20th Century", "Book Graphics of Belarus of the 20th Century", "Visual Art of Belarus of the 20th Century", "Fine Arts of Belarus of the 20th Century: Historical and Theoretical Concept", and others. Member of the National Commission of the Republic of Belarus for UNESCO, Honorary Member of Russian Academy of Arts; Full Member of National Academy of Arts of the Kyrgyz Republic. Recipient of the Special Prize of the President of the Republic of Belarus for Cultural and Artistic Figures (2001). Awarded the Order of St. Euphrosyne of Polotsk, the Medal of National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Belarus, the Medal "For Contribution to Art Development" of the Public Association "Belarusian Union of Artists", the Medal of Francysk Skaryna.

lem of training personnel was solved, and, on the basis of previously accumulated experience, artistic achievements, scientific experience and active interaction with the cultures of other peoples, the modern national art school of Belarus was formed. The historical and theoretical views of scientists and the practice of art criticism played a special role in the progressive vector of development.

Recent years have shown that we are once again at a turning point in historical time. The beginning of the 21st century represented a large-scale turn for our countries' art – integration with the Western art scene, resulting in the unbalanced growth in influence of Western values weakening domestic culture. Now there appeared opportunities for more efficient use of the scientific and creative heritage of the period preceding the new century.

In this context, it can be argued that the inextricable link with the past has become a feature of the best artists of Belarus at the turn of the 20th – 21st centuries. Of course, the contemporary's spiritual world reflected in an artistic image in professional art refuses to put up with things to cause loss of its integrity. In recent years, the concept of "historical memory" has been updated, a lot is being done to preserve it. In this process, secular culture and religious community act in common approaches. Visual arts, design and architecture are more relevant than ever in the ideological and educational process of patriotic education. The objects of monumental art reflecting the people's heroism and suffering during the Great Patriotic War are reconstructed, put in order, and restored. In recent years, many new monumental works have appeared (the memorial "Ola", "Trostenets", the memorial sign "Operation 'Bagration'", the monument to the families of border guards in the Brest fortress, etc.), where, along with venerable authors, young artists and architects perform.

Multilevel aspects of developing the population's artistic and aesthetic taste are considered as the most important factor of the large-scale influence of professional art achievements. It seems relevant to support the forms of professional art and design, to improve the material and technical base and organizational support for the types of art that are effective in counter-propaganda work (graphic design, easel types of fine art, screen arts, monumental art, composing and performing arts, drama, theatrical and screen-writing skills).

It remains true that creativity contributes to efficient interaction of various national cultures. These processes are ongoing, and their analysis is significant in terms of not only theory, but also practice. The in-depth and comprehensive analysis of the processes that took place in art at the present stage and in the 20th century in the context of the inevitable loss of previous interest in the current Western art world will contribute to successful formation of progressive trends in the art of Belarus.

Artists' works have a great emotional and aesthetic impact on the person, influence his/her formation as a personality with the holistic civic worldview. A distinctive feature of fine art is that, in addition to objective laws, artists' subjective ideas and emotions, but verified in public utility, play an essential role in its functioning. Here, it is important to refer to expert assessments that differ in scientific ideas in the interpretation of historical facts.

There are many trends in the world of contemporary art. It is necessary to take into account expansion of the types of

modern artistic practice. Video, computer, and telecommunications are actively used for creative purposes as a means of expression that complement traditional forms of visual arts. The interactive relationship between the author and the viewer determines the nature of new trends in art. But today's generation of artists displays not only forms of actionism and technoid synthesis, many want to master secrets of academic literacy.<sup>1</sup> And we are obliged to provide the opportunity for such training. Young authors need to be more actively involved in the work of art councils and expert commissions. Young people's exhibitions are needed, but they should not be spontaneous, with insufficient organizational elaboration. There are still few works by young authors devoted to historical and social themes. Creative unions and educational institutions of culture and art need to work more closely. It is necessary to take stimulating measures to attract creative youth to carry out significant art projects. Young people need established competitions for scholarships, grants for implementing an individual or collective project, sometimes even a small one in form.

It seems important to give consistency and dynamism to the processes of forming proposals for thematic plans for creating new works of art of a counter-propaganda orientation. Philosophers and art historians who have influence in the scientific and youth creative environment should play a significant role in implementing this task. It is important to exclude from the administration of creative processes persons who do not have the appropriate level of qualifications and work experience in the creative environment, sometimes expressing superficial judgments about the place and role of professional art in development of modern society.

It is necessary to agree with the opinion that "Along the entire perimeter of the problems, Belarus faced the *challenge* of modernity – as a nation with rich spiritual tradition and high human capital, as a society seeking freedom and justice for all, as a state that had yet to assert itself. The civilizational pro-Western projects of reforming the country, based on an appeal to universal values of liberal democracy, have revealed their ineffectiveness outside of a specific place of development or national ground. Equally, futility and danger of ethnocentric focuses was revealed. The solution lies in transformation of universal human experience and values in the context of unique cultural and civilizational features of Belarus."<sup>2</sup>

Today, the high level of education in the field of art remains an essential element ensuring our confident presence on the world art scene. We need highly qualified personnel capable of solving the most difficult creative and scientific art criticism tasks. Preserving the traditions of academic excellence remains a strategic feature of the national art school, but at the same time, based on the requirements and tasks of the new time, young authors need first of all to rethink the experience of their predecessors. Forms of relationship between creative youth and masters of art can be very different. The goal is always the same – to help a young artist master not so much the heights of professional skill, but have a decisive impact on formation of the spir-

<sup>1</sup> Безопасность Беларуси в гуманитарной сфере: социокультурные и духовно-нравственные проблемы / О. А. Павловская [и др.] ; под ред. О. А. Павловской ; Нац. акад. наук Беларуси ; Ин-т философии. Минск, 2010.

<sup>2</sup> Лазаревич А. А., Левяш И. Я. Беларусь: культурно-цивилизационный выбор / науч. ред. И. Я. Левяш. Минск : Беларуская навука, 2014. С. 117.



itual world of the personality in the new conditions of international cultural exchange.<sup>1</sup>

Interaction with scientific institutes of humanitarian profile plays a crucial role in development of trends and the quality of training. Scientific community should continue making attempts to understand the place and importance of Belarus (primarily in terms of culture and history) in the cultural space of the modern world.

Returning to the aspects of art criticism, we note the special role of evaluating works and phenomena of creative life. The aspect of perception of the period of formation of the statehood of the Republic of Belarus and its current state is important. The indissoluble connection with the past has become a feature of the fine art of Belarus at the turn of the 20th – 21st centuries. Comprehending the previous epochs through the expressive means of fine art is far from complete. Screen arts, theater, fine arts, design, modern artistic practices not only figuratively reflect the life of the country, its role in modern social transformations, but also directly participate in building the spiritual-moral atmosphere that allows implementing tasks of the state's socio-economic development.<sup>2</sup> For strengthening and developing artistic cul-

ture in the new vector of the world culture space, it is necessary to create conditions for popularizing the best achievements of professional art of both today and the distant past.

Scientific support within the framework of the theoretical construct relevant to the historical period is seen as an important factor in designing positive trends in developing professional art. Formation of new provisions of the historical and theoretical concept of developing professional art is seen as the most important scientific and creative process in new conditions, it becomes the task of scientific institutions of the humanities and research units of educational institutions of culture and art.

Without high progressive spiritual content corresponding to the development strategy of the Belarusian society, the activity in the field of professional art cannot be considered as a strategic development resource. The subject of the public-state order should reflect topics relevant for moral education: displaying the most important historical milestones in formation of society and statehood, showing the role of the personality in the country's progressive development, reflecting the best character traits of a contemporary, being highly spiritual guidelines.

**P. Bülbüloğlu<sup>3</sup>**

## CONTINUITY AND INNOVATION IN AZERBAIJANI CULTURE

Continuity is an immanent sign of cultural development, the indicator that the new is not only formed on the basis of the past, but also retains a number of its essential features. Due to continuity, well-known, previously justified ideas, plots, and principles are transferred from already established areas of culture to newly emerging ones, and their use while implementing new goals. In fact, this is manifestation of the dialectical unity of tradition and innovation. Tradition gives culture fundamental, heuristic force, linking modernity and history, spiritual ups of past eras.

Herewith, continuity is a multifaceted and ambiguous phenomenon indicating that archetypal attitudes interact with varying intensity with modern trends, new scientific and artistic discoveries. Moreover, all this may be associated with socio-psychological and often political factors.

The continuity problem does not accidentally draw the attention of historians, culturologists, and science experts. Considering continuity in various fields of culture, it is possible to show evolution of cultural needs and recreate the history of society as a whole. This is in line with the approach of the French historical school of the Annals,

according to which universal history is generated primarily on the basis of identifying past socio-cultural ties, studying the genesis of people's lifestyle and way of life.

Historically, various forms of human activity, political arrangement, and beliefs have arisen, which have been replaced by others over time. If we agree with Academician Vyacheslav Stepin's opinion that, forming matrices of permissible and unacceptable, culture performs a certain programming function in people's lives, then the historical process really appears as co-evolution of culture and social forms.

In each field of culture, continuity is expressed in its own way, the relationship between the past and the present, the new and the old can be both explicit and implicit. In such a fundamental field of culture as science, at the beginning of the 20th century, when the problem of cognition of the microcosm and the mega-world arose, the phenomenon of continuity became the subject of special methodological research.

In this case, continuity was revealed through the so-called principle of conformity. This principle makes it possible to identify deep relationships between qualitatively different theories describing processes of the microcosm and the mega-world, and theories of classical physics reflecting phenomena at the macrocosm level.

Continuity is particularly significant in literature, music, and painting. Here it manifests itself in the context of a certain tradition, in the relevant space-time continuum. Without considering the cultural heritage, twists and turns of its development, it is difficult to understand modern cultural processes. This is essential for defining the comprehensive cultural policy that promotes harmonization of social processes and proper orientation of social development.

<sup>1</sup> Безопасность Беларуси в гуманитарной сфере...

<sup>2</sup> Борозна М. Г. Развитие культурных традиций Беларуси в контексте глобальной трансформации // Глобальный мир: системные сдвиги, вызовы и контуры будущего : XVII Междунар. Лихачевские науч. чтения, 18–20 мая 2017 г. СПб. : СПбГУП, 2017. С. 304–306.

<sup>3</sup> Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Russian Federation, Dr. Sc. (Art History), Professor, Azerbaijan SSR National Artist, People's Artist of Turkmenistan, Honored Art Worker of the Republic of Dagestan. Composer, singer, actor, educator. Minister of Culture of Azerbaijan (1988–2006). Author of the book "Cultural Policy in Azerbaijan" (co-authored) and other publications. Professor Emeritus of A. Huseinzadeh Azerbaijan State University of Culture and Arts, Full Member of the Europe-Asia International Humanitarian Academy. Awarded the Certificate of Honor of the President of the Russian Federation, the Orders of Friendship and Honor (Russia), "Independence" and "Honor" (Azerbaijan), Honor (Georgia), and received many other foreign awards.

Peculiarities of Azerbaijani culture and its diversity are determined by the multinational and multi-confessional composition of the country's population. Besides its ethnocultural, axiological significance, preservation of national cultures is unambiguously associated with issues of respect for human rights. For national culture, as Professor Vadim Mezhuiev justifiably believed, is primarily realization of rights of a person for his/her own world.<sup>1</sup> Provisions of the national policy fixed in the Constitution of Azerbaijan ensure equality of all citizens, regardless of their ethnicity and race. This creates in the Republic prerequisites for transition from syncretic culture to integrative one. If syncretism is a combination of cultural elements of different origins, which are often combined conditionally, then integrativity proceeds from the deep foundation ensuring integrity of the culture.<sup>2</sup>

The Azerbaijani people's historical memory that preserves in their minds stages of passing through three religions – Zoroastrianism, Christianity and Islam – is an essential factor for understanding the meaning and significance of transcultural communications, the synthesis of cultural values of peoples who have lived in the territory of Azerbaijan for centuries.<sup>3</sup> People unite on the basis of common historical, political, and religious components of culture. In this case, culture creates more favorable conditions for people to communicate, consolidate social groups, and spiritually unite representatives of various ethnic groups, which ultimately leads to formation of the stable structure of society.

In general, it can be noted that in Azerbaijan, culture ensures realization of the goals and ideals of various ethnic groups, and simultaneously contributes to growth and development of common national interests. It should be emphasized that this is happening in unison with implementation of the national-political concept of Azerbaijanism to be formed in the country at the end of the 19th century, and received the new justification by the country's national leader Heydar Aliyev.

It is quite obvious that in conditions of Azerbaijan, issues of interaction, mutual enrichment of the traditions of the peoples of Azerbaijan, as well as cultural factors, such as religion, moral values, aesthetic attitudes, etc., are of particular importance.

As a historical phenomenon, tradition plays in culture the role of universal mediator, connects its various fields, and contributes to the culture integrity. It links the past, the present and the future. Famous American anthropologist and culturologist Edward Sapir believed that tradition, or "the past, is of interest to culture only when it is still the present and can still become the future."<sup>4</sup>

It should be noted that historically Azerbaijan has been an arena of unprecedented cultural interaction. Relatively recently, the country covered territories far exceeding the borders of the modern Republic of Azerbaijan. And until the 19th century, cultural development of Azerbaijan

took place in close relation with culture of the countries of the Near and Middle East, in the context of Arab-Muslim culture.

When turning to the history of Azerbaijan, we can see the change of several cultural waves in this small territory. In the 4th – 3rd centuries BC, Caucasian Albania appeared in the north of Azerbaijan.<sup>5</sup> The advantageous geographical location with access to the sea, at the crossroads of trade routes, contributed to intensive cultural contacts of Caucasian Albania with Greece, Egypt, and Persia.

Starting from the 1st – 2nd centuries AD, Christian ideas gradually infiltrate the country, and in the 4th century Christianity was declared in Caucasian Albania the state religion.

In the seventh century, as a result of the Arab conquests, there happened the religious turn to Islam. Azerbaijan has become part of the Muslim world. Accordingly, Azerbaijani culture began developing in the context of Arab-Muslim culture, which absorbed the ancient heritage, having modified them in accordance with the values of Islam.<sup>6</sup>

Arab-Muslim philosophy had a significant impact on formation of humanistic values of the Renaissance. Azerbaijan played an important role in this cultural dialogue. It is enough to mention such poets-thinkers of Azerbaijan as Nizami Ganjavi (1141–1209), Imadeddin Nasimi (1369–1417), Shah Ismail Khatai (1487–1524), Muhammad Fuzuli (1494–1556); philosophers Bahmanyar al Azerbaijani (1001–1065), Nasereddin Tusi (1201–1274), whose names are well known to the philosophical and scientific community of Europe.<sup>7</sup>

Since about the 11th century, a special layer of Turanism emerged and started increasing in the culture of Azerbaijan. Here it is justified to talk not so much about influence as about something that came from outside, but about the very essence of Azerbaijani culture, since Turanism changed the original fabric of culture – its language. After all, it is language that determines the essence of culture, the psychological mindedness of the people, its mentality.<sup>8</sup>

Essential features of the modern Azerbaijani culture are associated with Turanism. It is important to note that Turanism defines the deep foundations of interaction of Azerbaijani culture with the culture of Slavic peoples, which also has a Turanian element. Actually, it was this cultural relationship between the Turks and the Slavs that eventually gave rise to the Eurasian type of culture. The famous linguist, philosopher Nikolai Trubetskoy, who studied ethnopsychology of the Turanian peoples, believed that "the Turanian psyche imparts to the nation cultural stability and strength, strengthens cultural and historical continuity, and creates conditions for saving national forces, which is favorable to any construction."<sup>9</sup>

The history of cultural exchange with the Slavic world has been going on for about two centuries, which resulted in the modern Azerbaijani culture to have been formed, with its organically incorporating components of European and Eastern cultures.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Межуев В. М. Как возможна философия культуры? // От философии жизни к философии культуры. М., 2000. С. 22.

<sup>2</sup> Эволюция государственного управления в странах постсоветского пространства. Азербайджанская Республика / У. К. Алакбаров, Н. М. Мамедов, З. З. Габизова, Р. З. Рагимли // Государственная служба. 2021. Т. 23, № 2. С. 97–118.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Сэпир Э. Избранные труды по языкознанию и культурологии. М., 1993. С. 485.

<sup>5</sup> Мамедов Т. М. Кавказская Албания. Баку, 1993.

<sup>6</sup> Эволюция государственного управления...

<sup>7</sup> Мамедов З. Д. Азербайджанские философы и мыслители Средневековья. Баку, 1993.

<sup>8</sup> Эволюция государственного управления...

<sup>9</sup> Трубецкой Н. С. История. Культура. Язык. М., 1995. С. 155.

<sup>10</sup> Эволюция государственного управления...

At the beginning of the 19th century, Azerbaijan was divided between Iran and tsarist Russia. After that, Azerbaijani culture begins interacting directly with Russian and Western European cultures. This was clearly reflected in new traditions to be formed in literature, fine arts, music, and architecture. However, new trends did not eliminate manifestations of Islamism and Turkism in Azerbaijani culture. Together, these diverse traditions, which have been formed over many centuries, determine the qualitative originality of Azerbaijani culture, the grounds of its multicultural nature even in our time.

The political events that took place in the early 20th century in the Russian Empire, which led to the fall of the tsarist monarchy in February 1917, then to the October Revolution, created the conditions for declaration of the independent Azerbaijan Democratic Republic on May 28, 1918. However, its existence was interrupted on April 28, 1920, by the 11th Red Army and establishment of the Soviet power. The Soviet period in the history of Azerbaijan lasted until the collapse of the USSR. On October 18, 1991, the state independence of Azerbaijan was restored.<sup>1</sup>

The positive factor of the Soviet period was the struggle for general literacy, for availability of culture and arts to all segments of the population. The slogan "art to the masses" was a guide to action. During the Soviet period, composers *Uzeyir Hajibeyov*, *Gara Garayev*, *Fikret Amirov*, singer *Bulbul*, who mastered the art of "Bel Canto" in Italy and created a new professional vocal singing school based on the synthesis of European, Russian and Azerbaijani vocal schools, poet *Samad Vurgun*, scientists *Heydar Huseynov* and *Yusif Mamedaliyev*, sculptor *Fuad Abdurakhmanov*, as well as worldwide recognized artists *Tahir Salakhov* and *Sattar Bahlulzade*, created and made significant contribution to the world culture.<sup>2</sup>

After June 15, 1993, when Heydar Aliyev came to power at the people's insistence, the new stage in development of Azerbaijan began. Cultural policy has got a different attitude. Along with education in terms of achievements of the world culture, it continued strengthening values and traditions of its national culture. Herewith, the past achievements of the Soviet period of cultural development were not devalued, but were considered as a particularly important stage in the history of Azerbaijani culture. It is hard to question that, despite ideological limitations, Azerbaijani literature, poetry, music, and fine arts flourished in the 20th century, based on deep national values. In framework of my report, I will focus only on some illustrations.

**Continuity in Azerbaijani literature.** Historically, Azerbaijani literature is divided into two traditions, which began to unite since the 19th century. One of them is folk tradition, another – written tradition. The folk tradition was oral and almost unaffected by Persian and Arabic literature. The bearers of this tradition were Ashugi, i. e. folk singers, and the most common of all the poetic forms of Azerbaijani folklore were the lyrical quatrains "Bayati". One of the brightest representatives of the Ashug school was the poet Mehseti Khanom (12th century). Folk poetry of Azerbaijan was always associated with folk music and most of this poetry could be sung.

Since the beginning of the 12th century, the foundations of the Azerbaijani literary school have been formed in

the environment of Arab-Muslim culture. Nizami Ganjavi (12th century), Nasimi (14th century), Fuzuli (16th century) laid the groundwork for this school.

Like in Western European and Russian literature, the main factor that determined the grounds of realism in Azerbaijani literature since the beginning of the 19th century was the Enlightenment philosophy. During this period, under the influence of Russian and Western European culture, Mirza Fatali Akhundov and Abdurrahim-bek Akhverdiyev founded Azerbaijani drama.

However, in drama and literature in general, deep traditions had an impact even in the 20th century. So, at various times, a number of outstanding poets of Azerbaijan invariably turned to the heroic-romantic love story. The sublime, romantic description of love in the conditions of the triumph of rigid socialist realism seems to remain in history. But in 1941, one of the brightest Azerbaijani poets of the Soviet period, Samad Vurgun, who considered his main "creative task to reveal the poetry of modernity," presented his drama "Farhad and Shirin" written in verse form. The play is created in the 12th century, after Nizami Ganjavi's poem "Khosrow and Shirin". It's hard to believe now, but the play was staged in difficult wartime and was awarded the Stalin Prize.

Considering the issues of continuity in literature, one involuntarily recalls the female images created in the 20–30 years of the 20th century by the talented Azerbaijani playwright Jafar Jabbarly, especially his play "Sevil", in which a woman of the East fighting for her liberation from darkness was shown for the first time. This tradition was continued by Ilyas Afandiyev in the 70s and 80s: he managed to show in his plays what life of "Sevils" in Azerbaijan had become, just a few decades after Jabbarly. In Afandiyev's works the woman's emancipation is no longer understood only as liberation from the chador and the husband's dictate, but as her right to remain free in her beliefs, actions, and lifestyle choices.

**Continuity is clearly manifested in Azerbaijani music,** due to which genres, performance forms and manners are transferred from generation to generation. Poetry and music are the most common types of art in Azerbaijan, they are in demand by various segments of the population. Azerbaijan would probably agree with the writer Kurt Vonnegut, who believed that "music is a necessary and sufficient proof of God's existence."

Music often evokes in a persona a favorable emotional response. Lovers of high music can confirm that harmonious rhythms seem to cleanse a person from worries and everyday fuss. I agree with the writer Viktor Astafyev that "music may be the most wonderful creation of man, his eternal mystery... it returns to man all the best in him, and will remain on earth."<sup>3</sup>

However, music does not live outside of a person, outside of time, it carries not only the individual's spiritual world, but also the world of the epoch, features of its spiritual atmosphere. As Mark Aranovsky noted, musical creativity allows finding "the new in the old or the new through the old."<sup>4</sup> Many Azerbaijani composers turn to folk music, modify its sound, make its new arrangement, and quote certain phrases. In this regard, the work of the founder of Azer-

<sup>1</sup> Эволюция государственного управления...

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Астафьев В. Пролетный гусь // Новый мир. 2001. № 1.

<sup>4</sup> Арановский М. Г. Музыка. Мышление. Жизнь. Статьи, интервью, воспоминания. М., 2012. С. 150.

baijani classical music Uzeyir Hajibeyov can be considered as a model. At the beginning of the 20th century, he created the opera "Leyli and Majnun", based on mugham, a medieval oriental genre of music. Following the traditions, already in Soviet times, Fikret Amirov showed that mugham monody is possible to be developed with European principles of end-to-end composition and timbre variation, creating a new genre "Symphonic mughams", or the Azerbaijani jazz pianist Vagif Mustafa-zadeh, who used mugham in his improvisations, thereby creating a new type of jazz music – the style of "jazz-mugham". And now, in the modern musical works of Azerbaijani composers, the use of folk melodies and rhythms, the principles of mugham, improvisation are organically combined with variational and polyphonic development.<sup>1</sup>

**Continuity in fine arts.** Fine arts of the 20th century were largely related to previous traditions. It is known that at all times, artists turned to the art of their predecessors. So, in the Renaissance and in the Middle Ages, they turned to ancient masters' works. Turning to the origins is also typical for creativity of outstanding Azerbaijani painters – Sattar Bahlulzade, Tahir Salakhov and Togrul Narimanbekov.

Bahlulzade is a "storyteller artist" who created in his landscapes the amazing world of diverse nature of Azerbai-

jan. His work embodies philosophical lyricism, optimism of the Azerbaijani miniature, refinement of the national carpet ornaments...

Tahir Salakhov is the major artist of the 20th century, one of the creators of such a trend in Soviet art as the "harsh style", his works are displayed at the best galleries over the world. In his works, Salakhov, however, not only turned to the daily life and ordinary people's concerns, but also transferred his artistic ideas to the medieval language of the carpet, thereby emphasizing his involvement in folk art.

Togrul Narimanbekov's works definitely present one of leading lines of modern national art development. The plots of almost all of the artist's famous paintings are associated with Azerbaijani everyday life and culture, but the technique of their execution, the form of presentation tend to impressionism.

Summing up, we can note that the Azerbaijani people's commitment to principles of humanism, tolerance, and mutual understanding is deeply rooted in the history of Azerbaijani culture. The centuries-old history of Azerbaijan is an important source for revealing the twists and turns of the spiritual life of not only the Azerbaijani people, but also the neighboring peoples of the Near and Middle East.

I. I. Buzovsky<sup>2</sup>

## INTERNATIONAL CONSOLIDATION IN TERMS OF CIVILIZATIONAL CHALLENGES AND THREATS

Economy is the spirit's work on the world matter, which the very existence of people in this world depends on.

N. A. Berdyaev

The modern era of aggravation of global problems and the state of the world order stimulate significant destructive processes to be described by society as threatening the very existence of humanity. Social problems are escalated, with simultaneous increase in frequency of emerging social upheavals. Society is at the stage of searching for answers to questions in the global reconstruction of the world, with the need for choosing new development strategies.

The economy of the 20th century is a kind of capitalism in economically dominant countries, based solely on principles of consumption. The more it is consumed by socie-

ty, by a person, the better it affects the economy. Demand, which generates supply, stimulates new rounds of economic development. At present, the global market economy has emerged, which is largely characterized by the pursuit of profit by private companies all over the world. The global economy has increased at least by a hundred times since the beginning of the industrial era. Due to annual growth of world production by 3% on average, the global economy eventually continues doubling approximately every twenty years.

Such significant indicators have practically led to the complete elimination of extreme poverty in the regions where growth of economic development is most significant. For 50 years, modern civilization has consumed as many goods and services (at constant prices) as all previous generations together.<sup>3</sup>

The US dollar, acting as an intermediary for the exchange, has become a source of profit. By increasing issuance of the dollar, as well as government securities, the United States lent itself, constantly increasing consumption. Financial dominance in the global community has allowed the United States to emerge as a superpower with enormous military strength, but also with its huge external debt of \$34 trillion, which is about 120% of GDP.

<sup>1</sup> Пазычева И. Вариантная генетика симфонического мугама (На примере «Шур» и «Кюрд-овшары» Фикрета Амирова) // Musiqi Dünyası. 2012. № 1 (50). С. 122–126.

<sup>2</sup> Deputy Minister of Information of the Republic of Belarus, Ph. D. in Sociological Sciences. Held executive positions at the National State Television and Radio Company of the Republic of Belarus. Was the second, and then the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Belarusian Republican Youth Union. Worked in the Main Ideological Department of the Presidential Administration of the Republic of Belarus. Former Deputy Head of the Presidential Administration. Former Head of the Administration of the Central District of Minsk. Former Deputy Chairman of the Standing Committee on Education, Science, Culture and Social Development of the Council of the Republic of the National Assembly. Member of the National Children's Rights Commission, the Commission on Juvenile Affairs under the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus, the Interdepartmental Working Group on Improving State Policy in the Sphere of National Relations, and others. Awarded the Order of Honor.

<sup>3</sup> Ласло Э. Макросдвиг (К устойчивости мира курсом перемен). М., 2004. С. 70.

Herewith, in global community, income inequality and class stratification have emerged and rapidly increase. Along with global prosperity, extreme poverty persists, and the gap between the rich and the poor increases. It is clear that this system can develop only if there are pervasive environmental pollution and ever-increasing amount of absorption of natural resources. Ignoring the obvious means being not just a silent contemplator, but, to some extent, a participant in destructing the world community.

The crisis tendency of the current situation imposes new requirements on the level of awareness of nonlinearity and interconnectedness of processes. Radical constructive changes are possible in case of applying innovative ideas, realizing meanings that can provide new formats for both international relations and domestic political processes of countries' development, under broad international cooperation.

In this regard, emergence of the SCO, the CSTO and the BRICS in the geopolitical space, which have united communities of like-minded states, is quite logical. Formation of the just multipolar world order is one of major tasks of the BRICS. The instrument of consolidation of the member states was initially aimed at developing cooperation, strengthening security, promoting development of all the humanity and taking all possible measures for creating the equal and just world.

The engine of cooperation within the BRICS is economy. And this is UNDERSTANDABLE: by the end of 2022, the combined GDP of the 5 BRICS member states (China, India, Brazil, Russia and South Africa) exceeded the GDP of the so-called "Group of Seven" countries (the G7: USA, Japan, Germany, Great Britain, France, Italy and Canada). So, the BRICS countries provided 31.5% of global GDP, and the G7 – 30.1%. And this is without considering the richest Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, powerful Iran and the largest African countries to have joined the BRICS this year! And by 2028, the BRICS countries' indicators will achieve 36.6%, while the G7 – 27.8%. But after all in 1992, the situation was radically different: the Group of Seven produced 45.7% of global GDP, while the countries currently in the BRICS – less than 20%. These data were cited by Russian President Vladimir Putin in his Address to the Federal Assembly, stressing that these changes are the objective reality. "There's no getting away from this. It's the objective reality. And so it will be. No matter what happens, including even that in Ukraine."<sup>1</sup>

Despite the clearly positive results and prospects for cooperation between the BRICS countries in economic terms, the ideological component, which should act as the foundation and goal – setting for the member states' strategic development, is extremely relevant, with determining this component development as a priority task.

The faster the economic development of our countries, the deeper and closer economic and political interaction, the more obvious the issue of forming the common humanitarian space, the cultural exchange. And ultimately, the issue of forming a common axiological matrix distinguishing us from the opposing bloc of the collective West with its overwhelming liberal value system, which is primarily adopted by today's global capitalism. Intensification of

this confrontation in any vector is obvious. This is caused by the incitement of armed conflicts in different parts of the world, incessant attempts to break established economic ties and logistics routes, etc. The reason is clear: today, the West cannot win in fair competition, and is not ready for equitable cooperation. Therefore, various hybrid forms of influence come to the fore – from direct military intervention to imposition of their ideological models through a wide range of information and communication, cultural tools. Even the "co-religionists" – the EU and its economy – are ready to be sacrificed. And all this is purposed at preserving the imperialist elites' dominant position at any cost. When achieving their strategic and even tactical goals, the Establishment of "the powers that be" ignores the interests of third countries – from Ukraine to the Middle East, the interests of their peoples.

The policy of the countries of the collective West, its hypocrisy, was very clearly highlighted by the President of the Republic of Belarus A. G. Lukashenko during his speech in Dubai, at the World Summit on Combating Climate Change. In his speech at the forum, the Belarusian Head of State stressed that it was about the future of our common home – the planet Earth: "We have never had and will never have another home." Speaking about climate change and scientists' gloomy forecasts, A. G. Lukashenko first and foremost drew attention to the actions of those who provoke and ignite hotbeds of war in various parts of the world. According to the President of Belarus, the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, Ukraine, and the Middle East amount to trillions of dollars, not to mention irretrievably ruined human lives. It is these funds that should be used to solve problems of the humanity. And another vital issue was touched upon by the Head of Belarus in his speech: significance of the just world as a necessary basis for solving global problems. "It's time to admit: the green agenda is meaningless in the face of confrontation. It requires respecting for the sovereignty of countries and unconditional justice."<sup>2</sup>

Will the collective West, and most importantly, the current planetary hegemon, listen to this conviction, by the way, shared by the absolute majority of humanity? Unfortunately, it is hard to hope for a positive answer to this question today. Therefore, the confrontation along the lines: the collective West – Russia, the collective West – China, the collective West – the global South is a long-term trend, considering which we must be ready to jointly defend our positions in all areas. And here the field of confrontation is not only the security sector and the economic one as a basis, but also creation of our own cultural and value paradigm, which is not even a superstructure, but a necessary condition for survival in the global confrontation.

Entering into civilizational confrontation with clear awareness of urgency of the panhuman problems to have arisen, such as overpopulation of the planet, environmental pollution, lack of natural resources, we must distinctly understand that accepting the game rules imposed on us is the way to nowhere. Cultivating the "economic man", a consumer attitude towards civilizational development and, as a result, the "golden billion", child-free, eating in-

<sup>1</sup> БРИКС обгонит страны G7 по доле ВВП по ППС, спрогнозировал Путин // РИА Новости : [сайт]. URL: <https://ria.ru/20240229/briks-1930297933.html> (accessed: 25.03.2024).

<sup>2</sup> Общий дом. Где Лукашенко предложил взять триллионы долларов на спасение планеты // БелТА : [сайт]. URL: [www.belta.by/president/view/antivoennaja-rech-lukashenko-v-dubae-mezhdunarodnyj-marafon-zabota-o-ljudjah-i-god-kachestva-itogi-602915-2023/#part8](http://www.belta.by/president/view/antivoennaja-rech-lukashenko-v-dubae-mezhdunarodnyj-marafon-zabota-o-ljudjah-i-god-kachestva-itogi-602915-2023/#part8) (accessed: 25.03.2024).

sects, etc., – up to cannibalism – is something to be horrified, condemned, but simultaneously part of the process and its components, possible to solve panhuman global problems. This process will be accompanied by the exculpatory, for many a sympathetic and acceptable phrase that destroys all moral obstacles, “Nothing personal. Just business.” It’s not about military confrontation, they say. But what is this but a war of minds, the ideology of life and the ideology of the future?!

For building the axiological model common to the BRICS countries, the conceptual change in goal-setting approaches is necessary, in accordance with our historically established perception of the world, which allows us to exist as a civilization. At present, the dominant goal-setting in social development is that the future continues the past, it is formed in the past. Our spiritual, moral, and religious concepts postulate that the future is more defined than the past, the future exists to a greater extent than the past, the present, and our historical past is more unexplored and incomprehensible, because their true meaning, which is predetermined by the future, is hidden.

It is important to understand that those who lose concepts of the future do not know, or use completely different algorithms explaining the current state, analyze the situation in the format that fails to provide clear answers to major questions of modernity to be set by humanity. The chaos and misunderstanding of development prospects is due to the lack of axiological models, ideology, and meanings capable of ensuring development of society. We need to return to the origins, appropriately assess and analyze the existing situation in terms of the eternal question: what is primary – spiritual or material, being or consciousness. The concepts of happiness, comfort and more mundane categories, such as level, life quality, etc., have variants in their achievement and their very interpretation. Not comprehending this means silently accepting alien models and principles of development.

The globalist model that currently dominates presupposes its unconditionality and unambiguity. As a result, society strives for getting and having the material means to live, but it is lost in determining what to live for. Not to mention spirituality or moral categories.

Substituting goals with means is a characteristic feature of the process of the dominant ideology of modern life. The economic, technological, and material component, of course, should be attributed to the means, not the goals of life. Goals of human life and means to be used to achieve them have a gap between them and may often be unrelated. The modern dominant ideology, in which cause generates effect, is, in fact, abnormal, a kind of destruction in social development.

American economist W. W. Hines describes this situation as follows, “The problem of the West is that, having learned to find a solution to most of our problems through economic activity, using natural resources to meet physical needs, we’ve turned into slaves of labor for centuries for the sake of living. Having got used to solving all our problems with money, we are tired. We ‘buy’ our friends (even wives) with lavish parties and expensive cars. We achieve political power by investing money in the ‘right’ parties, in the favor of voters, even bribery... We’re tired. But this is usually not noticed. Despite all the wealth of the United States, despite the environment of the middle class’ exist-

ence, the majority of people are dissatisfied with their lives. The national income grows, but the life satisfaction curve slides down.”<sup>1</sup>

There is a crisis in the concept of personal success, the meaning of life, based on the priority of achieving a certain level of material prosperity, financial and economic criteria. The alternative to this approach postulated by liberal globalism should be the idea of the primacy of the spiritual, moral principle in civilizational development. It is this concept that should be laid at the foundation of the BRICS member states’ axiological matrix.

In geopolitical terms, the old concept of the capitalist world order and liberal strategies turned in reality into the dictatorship of one part of the world over another. This is not a reasonable scheme of life and arrangement of society, but only an opportunity for accumulating wealth by a certain group of people. Behind this scheme, which is fundamental to Western thinking, there is a clearly defined psychology, ideology, and philosophy of building social relations.

However, denying existence of ideological concepts, values that determine the way of life in the interests of the currently dominant elites, does not correspond to reality. Having paid attention to the strategy for the European integration development, we can see it was initially ideological in its nature with clearly defined value guidelines. The Lisbon Treaty, which today is actually a conceptual document of the European Union, postulates the ideology of European values, defining them as binding for all EU members. So, Article 2 “Values of the Union” states, “The Union is based on values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of minorities. These values are common to the totality of the Member States to be characterized by pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men.”<sup>2</sup>

According to I. T. Frolov, at the present stage, it becomes increasingly obvious, “the need for the new synthesis of science and humanism, formation of a new type of science, in which research approaches would not be separated from value, from their socio-ethical grounds, and the outcomes of the research and their very areas still received ‘human dimension’.”<sup>3</sup> V. S. Stepin emphasizes that the way out of the crisis of technogenic civilization “does not consist in abandoning scientific and technical development, but in giving it a humanistic dimension, which, in turn, poses the problem of a new type of scientific rationality, which explicitly includes humanistic guidelines and values.”<sup>4</sup> Increasing the role of humanistic values in implementing information and scientific-technological processes is recognized as one of major challenges to the modern world development.

Today, the BRICS is the platform of the unique international dialogue format of countries representing Eurasian,

<sup>1</sup> Хайнс У. В. Свобода, свободные рынки и человеческие ценности // Свободная мысль. 1994. № 4. С. 53.

<sup>2</sup> Treaty of Lisbon amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty establishing the European Community, signed at Lisbon, 13 December 2007 // European Union : [website]. URL: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A12007L%2FTXT> (accessed: 25.03.2024).

<sup>3</sup> Фролов И. Т. К постижению человека разумного и гуманного // Многомерный образ человека. Комплексное междисциплинарное исследование человека. М. : Наука, 2001. С. 233.

<sup>4</sup> Степин В. С. Цивилизация культуры. СПб. : СПбГУП, 2011. С. 100.

Indian, Islamic, Chinese, Latin American and African civilizations. Each of them has its own unique path of historical, political and cultural development.

In framework of the BRICS, transcultural communication has been actively developed since the mid-2010s. Today, it is organized on the basis of a conceptually new approach to interacting in the field of culture. If traditionally all unions were united according to the territorial or substantive principle, now there is an association of countries with their unique cultures, located in different parts of the world.

In August 2023, at the BRICS summit in Johannesburg, Russian President Vladimir Putin called in his on-line speech for preservation and enhancement of this unique cultural heritage and the active and serious dialogue in this area. "Cultural and civilizational diversity is one of supporting pillars of the new multipolar world order, which implies creation of the integral free space for cultural exchange, art, and creativity. There is an overdue serious conversation with the BRICS partners – by the way, with SCO partners and other countries too – about the future of culture in the world, about saving and multiplying the world cultural heritage," he noted.<sup>1</sup>

What should this value matrix be, what grounds is it built on? If we mean an alternative to the ideology of global liberalism, global capital, then perhaps we should keep in mind the world order, the state and social organization based on principles of social justice, with a large share of the socialist component. For, if we are still based on capitalism, we must clearly realize that the center of capital is there, in the West, at the hegemon's. Guided by its interests, capital will strive there, and its managing center is there. Everything else is subordinate territories, peripheries with different levels of autonomy and standard of living, but not sovereign actors of the world process, independently managing their own destiny.

In 2021, speaking at the plenary session of the Valdai Discussion Club, Russian President Vladimir Putin stated that the existing model of capitalism has exhausted itself. According to him, uneven distribution of wealth leads to aggravation of inequality. In framework of this model, "there is no longer a way out of the tangle of increasingly confusing contradictions. Everywhere, even in the richest countries and regions, uneven distribution of material goods leads to worsening inequality, primarily inequality of opportunities both within the societies and at the international level."<sup>2</sup>

However, it is important to understand that the cultural and value alternative should extend not only to the system of moral values, preservation of traditional cultural codes, but also to construction of a political model alternative to the Western one, both in its very essence and in terms of the tools used. So, both liberalism and conservatism are Western paradigms within the global capitalist system. The same can be said about the models of political parties and the main electoral systems. An alternative to these systems in the BRICS framework is represented by Chi-

na with its unique political tradition, which has incorporated both elements of the socialist way of life and millennial canons of national philosophy and culture into its development system. The Islamic monarchies of the Persian Gulf and Iran with their own special Islamic democracy and legal system are also declared in the line of alternative development ideas.

The other BRICS countries also seem to move along the path of sovereignization, turning to national traditions and experience in the very foundations of state and social construction. Such progress will be the key to strengthening our positions in the global world, since it is much easier and more effective to defend our positions in global competition on the solid basis of our own identity and civilizational self-sufficiency.

But who will carry out this work, develop and promote this value matrix, introducing it into public consciousness and principles of public administration and interaction? Obviously, this should be done by the elites of the member states of the association.

As for the today definition of the elite itself, it has been revised since the 1990s. This was explicitly stated by the President of the Russian Federation in his Address to the Federal Assembly. "You know that the word 'elite' has discredited itself in many ways. Those who, having no merit to society, consider themselves some kind of caste with special rights and privileges, especially those who in previous years filled their pockets at the expense of all sorts of processes in the economy of the 1990s, they are definitely not the elite. The true elite are all those who serve Russia: hard workers and warriors, reliable, experienced, worthy people, who proved their loyalty to Russia."<sup>3</sup>

In this activity of the elites, we believe that the following aspects are important.

The first point. Interaction of three social segments – the government, the people, and the elite.

In the first model of the state's socio-political organization, the elite is together with the people against the government (this model of social relations is a harbinger of a revolutionary situation).

In the second model, the elite, together with the government, are against the "dark popular majority" (the elite-reformist or oligarchic model, with controversial approaches to formation and provision of social justice. But herewith, with the biggest prerequisites for effective social development in the case of mandatory compliance with high moral and spiritual requirements).

And in the third variant, the government together with the people against the elite (the fundamentalist model aimed at the concept of social justice, but with lost potential for vigorous development based on capacities of the best representatives of society – the elites).

However, none of the models provides a 100% guarantee of positive development; the second model is the most efficient if the most successful, brightest, most active part of society, represented as the elite, is endowed with appropriate moral and spiritual potential. At the same time, no matter which model the country's political system is based on, the elites' role in development and implementation of axiological paradigms will be decisive.

<sup>1</sup> Путин призвал страны БРИКС и другие государства к серьезному разговору о будущем культуры // ТАСС : [сайт]. URL: <https://tass.ru/politika/18567567> (accessed: 25.03.2024).

<sup>2</sup> Путин заявил об исчерпании существующей модели капитализма // Ведомости : [сайт]. URL: <https://www.vedomosti.ru/politics/news/2021/10/21/892399-putin-zayavil-ob-ischerpanii-suschestvuyuschei-modeli-kapitalizma> (accessed: 25.03.2024).

<sup>3</sup> Участников СВО Путин назвал подлинной элитой // Интерфакс : [сайт]. URL: <https://www.interfax.ru/russia/948380> (accessed: 25.03.2024).

The second point. If our goal is developing the common axiological model for the interstate association, which the BRICS is, then general comprehension of values is extremely important here, both by the elites headlining this process and by the whole society. More simply, in this sense, it is necessary for everyone to speak the same language and to have the common and clear understanding of “what is good and what is bad,” both among the elites and the society of the member states of the association and cooperating with it.

Bright evidence of cognitive dissonance in social processes can be the results of the work of Belarusian researchers and the direct sociological survey conducted in the education system of Belarus, according to which 42% of respondents that are parents understand key value categories differently than the categories are translated to their children in the educational institutions.

Thus, today the agenda includes tasks of forming the consolidated policy in the field of cultural diplomacy, interpenetration of cultures, development of common approaches with access to the value plane, development of common value guidelines to ensure their comprehension by both political elites and civil society of the member states of the association.

For changing something for the better, it is necessary to understand fundamental processes of the world history, their philosophical meaning. Without this, efforts will be useless, because getting knowledge requires serious work.

The ideological justification of the world dictate is rooted in Western liberalism. This ideology is based on the belief in complete superiority of the Western liberal-capitalist civilization and its all-encompassing nature. According to liberal concepts, liberal democracy and capitalism should be prescribed to the whole world, and traditional values, national sovereignty, religion, culture and ethical systems should be rejected. The Anglo-Saxon countries, which are pioneers of this ideology, naturally claim a dominant position. Anyone who resists these ideas is subject to aggression.

For achieving their goals, liberals use various ideologies to their advantage, including Nazism, Salafi Islamism, etc., which makes it easier to solve local problems and strengthen their positions. However, despite these strategies, our main goal is to defeat liberalism, which is the more dangerous ideological movement than any other.

In this concept, diversity of civilizations is the objective reality. As an international platform, the BRICS association will contribute to debunking the mythical theory of West-centrism, and constructing the multipolar world order. It is important to consolidate confidence in one's own civilization, to present the example of cultural partnership between world powers, to create the constellation of world civilizations united on the grounds of true value categories that ensure harmonious development of the human community and ecosystem.

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## **RUSSIAN-CHINESE STRATEGIC SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION IN THE MODERN EMERGING MULTIPOLAR WORLD**

In today's geopolitical environment, the evolving dynamics of international relations highlight the emergence of strategic partnerships as key forces shaping global or-

der. At the forefront of this transformation is deepening cooperation between China and Russia, a partnership that goes beyond traditional bilateral ties and creates a multifaceted alliance poised to redefine the contours of global power.

It is expected that in 2024, when China and Russia celebrate the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations, their cooperation will be intensified, focusing on economic interaction, solidarity in international forums and resolving regional crises. This partnership is critical to navigating the complexities of today's international politics and economics, serving as a beacon of cooperation in a rapidly changing world. This multifaceted cooperation not only serves the interests of both countries, but also contributes to global stability and development, embodying a partnership model that goes beyond traditional alliances and promotes a balanced, multipolar world order.

<sup>1</sup> Deputy President and Member of the Presidium of the RAS, Academician of the RAS, Scientific Director of the Institute of Immunology and Physiology of the Ural Branch of the RAS, Dr. Sc. (Medical Sciences), Professor. Founder, director of the Institute of Immunology and Physiology of the Ural Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences (2003–2018). Chairman of the Ural Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences (1999–2008), Deputy of the State Duma of the Russian Federation of the V and VI convocations, Chairman of the Committee on Science and High Technologies (2007–2016). Author of more than 900 scientific publications, including 75 books and monographs: “Immunophysiology”, “Alpha-Fetoprotein”, “Immunological and Genetic Factors of Reproductive Dysfunction”, “Biological Laws and Human Vitality. Method of Multifunctional Restorative Biotherapy”, “Physiological and Hygienic Concept of Speleo- and Salt Therapy”, “The Influence of Drug Addiction on the Socio-Economic Development of Society”, “Social and Demographic Security of Russia”, “Demographic Policy of the Country and the Health of the Nation”, “Introduction to Simulation Issues and Managing the Dynamics of HIV Infection”, and others; a number of manuals on the study of combined radiation injuries and clinical immunology; 15 textbooks, 12 teaching aids, 5 guidelines; 2 atlases; 44 patents and 2 discoveries. President of the Russian Scientific Society of Immunology. Editor-in-Chief of the “Russian Journal of Immunology”, “Bulletin of the Ural Medical Academic Science”. Awarded a Letter of Gratitude from the President of the Russian Federation, the Orders of Friendship, “For Merit to the Fatherland” IV and III class, Alexander Nevsky, the Medal “For Distinguished Labor”, Academician V. D. Timakov Gold Medal of the Russian Academy of Sciences, and the Russian Academy of Sciences Gold Medal “For the Development of Nanoscience and Nanotechnology” UNESCO. Recipient of Russian Government prizes in the field of science and technology (twice) and in the field of education. Honorary Doctor of SPbUHSS.

<sup>2</sup> Head of the Laboratory of Immunopathophysiology of the Institute of Immunology and Physiology of the Ural Branch of the RAS, Dr. Sc. (Biological Sciences). Director of the Scientific and Educational Russian-Chinese Center for Systemic Pathology of the South Ural State University (National Research University), Expert of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Author of 110 scientific publications, including: “Sars-Cov-2-Specific Immune Response and the Pathogenesis of COVID-19”, “Elevated Exhaustion Levels of NK and CD8+ T Cells as Indicators for Progression and Prognosis of COVID-19 Disease”, “Psychological Distress and Post-Traumatic Symptomatology among Dental Healthcare Workers in Russia: Results of a Pilot Study”, and others.



Sanctions imposed against Russia, coupled with turbulence in international diplomacy, have pushed Moscow and Beijing towards closer economic, military and technological cooperation. This alliance is not just a response to external pressure, but a strategic realignment towards mutual reinforcement in the face of Western hegemony. The partnership symbolizes a new era in international relations, in which science and technology become critical areas of cooperation, stimulating innovation and providing competitive advantages on the global stage. In doing so, the goal is to develop mechanisms through which China and Russia are forging a new path in international relations that not only challenges the existing global hierarchy, but also emphasizes the vital role of scientific and technological cooperation in overcoming the complexities of the modern world. This article attempts to explore the scientific landscape of the Chinese-Russian alliance in the dynamics of the emerging multipolar world. Through this lens, we will consider the current situation and prospects for the Chinese-Russian scientific alliance as the cornerstone of a more balanced and equitable global order, where innovation and cooperation are the key to solving the most pressing problems of our time.

Analysis of the scientific results and dynamics of joint research of the BRICS countries – Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa – for the period from 2018 to 2024 allows us to draw key conclusions and highlight the quantitative indicators that determine these trends (data from the Scopus database as of February 23, 2024).<sup>1</sup> China stands out as the leading country in the BRICS consortium, with a total scientific publication output of 5,273,107 publications, representing a growth of 69.7%.<sup>2</sup> The country's academic community has expanded significantly over the past five years, with the total number of authors reaching 5,901,050, up 83.2% from 2018. The average number of citations per publication in China is 10.4, with the Field Weighted Citation Impact (FWCI) equal to 1.10, indicating that Chinese scientific papers are cited more often than the world average. Following China, India made significant scientific contributions, publishing 1,482,662 publications each being cited on average by 7.1 people. The FWCI for India is 0.99, slightly below the global norm. At the same time, the Russian Federation shows 731,581 publications and a modest growth rate of 7.8%.<sup>3</sup> The number of authors in Russia has increased by 14.1% over 5 years. Russian publications receive an average of 4.7 citations, and the FWCI citation index is 0.67, that is, the citation rate is below average. Brazil showed 10.7% growth in scientific output with an average number of citations of 8.0 per publication and FWCI of 0.88, which is below the world citation average. Interestingly, South Africa, with the lowest scientific output among the BRICS countries (198,255 publications), showed a significant increase in the number of publications by 28.9% with high citation rates per publication (10.3).

At the same time, international cooperation, which accounts for 21.8% of the total volume of publications of

the BRICS countries, is a decisive factor stimulating highly effective scientific work, allowing for articles with 15.6 citations per publication. The FWCI index for international collaborative research is 1.63, national collaborations account for 40% of output with FWCI of 0.94, and institutional collaboration accounts for 33.3% of output with FWCI of 0.76. Single-authored papers, representing 4.8% of the scientific output, demonstrate limited impact of independent research efforts, with the lowest FWCI score of 0.5.

For Russia, international cooperation is a catalyst for increasing recognition and research productivity, while the level of citations and impact from such cooperation is noticeably higher than that of national collaborations. In particular, international collaborative efforts account for 21.9% of Russia's scientific output, which ensures a high level of citations and exceeds the world average citation rate by 39%. The cooperation between China and Russia, although not the largest compared to China's cooperation with Western countries, highlights a significant strategic alliance on the global scientific stage. Analysis based on the All Science Journal Classification (ASJC) system shows the partnership characterized by 22,112 co-authored publications during this period, representing a significant increase of 69.5%. This cooperation is not only large-scale, but also deeply effective, as evidenced by the participation of 21,012 co-authors from the Russian Federation (an increase of 79.3%) and 64,195 co-authors from China (an increase of 118.6%). The Field Weighted Citation Impact (FWCI) for this collaborative effort is impressive, namely 2.47, with an average of 25.3 citations per publication.

The areas of cooperation between Russia and China are diverse, but some disciplines stand out due to the large number of co-authored papers and the strategic importance of their research.<sup>4</sup> Physics and astronomy is the leading area of collaboration, with 7,498 co-authored publications. The area of "nuclear physics and high energy physics" is particularly notable, representing 1,825 co-authored publications out of the total volume of publications in Russia (11,308) and China (24,013) in this subcategory. Engineering shows a strong partnership with 4,658 co-authored papers, especially in the area of "electrical and electronic engineering", which accounts for 1,410 publications. Materials science is another major area of collaboration, with 1,855 co-authored publications in the subcategory of general materials science, making a total of 4,419 publications in this field. General chemistry leads the way with 1,475 co-authored publications out of 3,097 publications in the chemical sciences.

However, it must be taken into account that cooperation between the two countries amounts to 3% of the total scientific development of Russia and less than 1% for China, which emphasizes the asymmetric nature of the partnership. In Russia, 4.27% of authors collaborate with China, compared with 1.09% of Chinese authors working with Russian colleagues, highlighting the disparity in collaboration and pointing to a faster expansion of China's scientific base.

Within the future projections, it is also necessary to remember that China's strategic aspiration to become a global leader in science and technology (S&T) has been a defining characteristic of its policy direction since the turn of

<sup>1</sup> BRICS – Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa // SciVal : [website]. URL: <https://www.scival.com/overview/collaboration/overall?uri=CountryGroup%2F12> (accessed: 27.04.2023).

<sup>2</sup> China // SciVal : [website]. URL: <https://www.scival.com/overview/collaboration/overall?uri=Country/156> (accessed: 27.04.2023).

<sup>3</sup> Russia // SciVal : [website]. URL: <https://www.scival.com/overview/collaboration/overall?uri=Country/643> (accessed: 27.04.2023).

<sup>4</sup> BRICS – Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa // SciVal : [website]. URL: <https://www.scival.com/overview/collaboration/overall?uri=CountryGroup%2F12> (accessed: 27.04.2023).

the millennium.<sup>1</sup> This journey began with the government implementing several initiatives aimed at stimulating innovation and accelerating the country's scientific and technological development. The adoption of the Medium and Long-Term Science and Technology Plan (2006–2020), or MLP, in 2006 was a key step towards making China an “innovation-driven society” by 2020, with the main goal of becoming a global leader in science and technology by 2050. The MLP program was aimed at promoting commercial innovation, meeting society's needs through technology, strengthening national defense, and improving the quality of research to retain homegrown talents.

China's science and technology growth has been characterized by strong government leadership, significant investment in research and development (R&D), and a focus on sectors such as artificial intelligence, biotechnology, and renewable energy. The Made in China 2025 initiative highlights China's transition to high-end manufacturing, aiming to achieve significant self-sufficiency in core components by 2025.<sup>2</sup>

At the same time, despite the progress made and participation in international cooperation, there are still some issues in China, such as the need for greater creativity and innovation in research, integrity and ethical standards in technology. Initiatives such as the Thousand Talents Program aimed to counteract brain drain by attracting expatriate scientists and professionals to contribute domestically. However, challenges remain, including a shortage of top talent and inconsistencies surrounding recruitment strategies. The departure of leading scientists from the country compounds the challenge of building an innovation-focused nation, potentially undermining the goals of the MLP. Despite the prestige and benefits of the TTP, it did not fully achieve its goals as many participants did not return to China after their studies. This situation has been exacerbated by international controversy and increased control, especially by the US government. China's recent suspension of U. S. talent recruitment programs and difficulties in sending students and scientists abroad, especially those in high-tech fields, pose significant risks to its technological advancement efforts.

It should be noted that the phenomenon of “brain drain” versus “brain circulation” is a global problem, and countries are striving to balance the inflow and outflow of talent. Emphasizing transparency, research integrity, ethics and intellectual property protection when recruiting talent overseas is paramount to prevent the phenomenon of “double dipping”, where people benefit from multiple sources without being employed full-time. Moreover, keeping overseas-educated Chinese students in their countries of studies, especially highly talented ones, highlights the difficulty of international cooperation. Though such collaboration is critical, it requires careful institutional arrangements to prevent conflicts of interest and ensure commitment, highlighting the delicate balance between global participation and national development goals.

Since 2019, China has been developing a new medium- and long-term plan (MLP) for the period 2021–2035.<sup>3</sup> AI-

though the details of this plan have not yet been disclosed, the general provisions of the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021–2025) for national economic and social development and the long-term outlook up to 2035 provide insight into its direction and potential impact on China's science and technology landscape.<sup>4</sup> This upcoming plan reaffirms China's commitment to innovation as the core of its modernization and development strategy.

The 14th Five-Year Plan highlights self-reliance in the scientific and technological sphere as the basis of national development and modernization. It posits the key role of S&T, self-reliance and self-improvement (*zili ziqiang*) as fundamental elements of national development and outlines China's ambition to become a world leader in innovation by 2035 by building the country's strategic scientific and technological capabilities, enhancing enterprises' capabilities in technological innovations, development of the innovative potential of talented specialists and improvement of institutions for the implementation of scientific and technical innovations.

Based on this, there is an urgent need to develop detailed plans for the development of collaboration with China, taking into account S&T programs, which will add additional significance to this cooperation for the Chinese side.

One of the areas to strengthen cooperation between scientists from the Russian Federation and China is to increase the competitions held by the Russian Foundation for Basic Research, the Russian Science Foundation and the State Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC), which are characterized by a multiple increase in the number of applications over the past three years. These grants, in addition to solving the assigned scientific and technical problems, also form the basis for further expansion of cooperation, including through the creation of joint research centers. In this vein, we can mention, as an example, our creation by us in 2020 of the Joint Russian-Chinese Center for Systemic Pathology on the basis of the Federal State Autonomous Educational Institution of Higher Education “South Ural State University (Research University)” (Chelyabinsk, Russia). Initially, the development plans for the center included the creation of three mirror laboratories (in Russia and China) together with representatives of the Ural Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences and the expansion of the range of interaction from scientific research to the implementation of educational programs in the field of higher education. However, despite the successful launch and staffing with highly qualified personnel, the lack of ongoing targeted funding, direct support from ministries, and changed funding conditions for the university forced a significant reduction in the center's activities to one laboratory. Undoubtedly, despite the impressive indicators (more than 15 articles were published in high-impact journals and one international project was completed, a cooperation agreement was signed between Wuhan University (China) and SUSU (National Research University)), almost stopped activities of the center not only prevented the implementation of ambitious joint plans, but also quite surprised the Chinese side, which was accustomed to relying on long-term planning and support from the state.

In this regard, the proposal to create a specialized department at the Russian Academy of Sciences aimed at

<sup>1</sup> Sun Y., Cao C. Planning for science: China's “grand experiment” and global implications // *Humanit. Soc. Sci. Commun.* 2021. T. 8, No. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Poo M. Innovation and reform: China's 14th Five-Year Plan unfolds // *Natl. Sci. Rev.* 2020. Vol. 8, No. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Sun Y., Cao C. Op. cit. P. 93.

promoting cooperation with China through the coordination of research, the creation of project and research databases, the creation of parallel or mirror laboratories (inter alia in third countries to reduce geopolitical risks and sanctions pressure), is based on several strategic considerations. First, this initiative recognizes the growing global importance of Chinese-Russian scientific and technological cooperation, which promises to yield significant dividends in innovation, economic development and geopolitical influence. Also, collaborative efforts and synergistic pooling of resources, expertise, and infrastructure can accelerate research and development, spurring innovation that may not be achievable alone. This synergy is particularly relevant in sectors such as information technology, biotechnology, renewable energy and space exploration, where both countries seek to carve out a niche independent of Western technological paradigms. Finally, the institutionalization of cooperation will give additional incentive to Chinese partners to consider it as a permanent and active factor.

In a changing geopolitical landscape, strengthened Chinese-Russian scientific cooperation can serve as a basis for expanding strategic partnership. This enhanced cooperation plays an important role in strengthening mutual trust and understanding, laying a strong foundation for confronting common challenges and defending common interests in the international arena. By combining their scientific achievements, Russia and China can make significant contributions to global solutions, thereby raising their status as responsible global players aimed at overcoming common human problems.

The creation of a dedicated department could also pave the way for cultural and educational exchanges between the scientific communities of both countries, promoting not only research collaboration but also strengthening long-term ties between future generations of scientists. The establishment of parallel/mirror laboratories could leverage the complementary strengths of both countries to create cutting-edge research centers, attract world-class talent, and further improve the scientific foresight of both countries.

ting-edge research centers, attract world-class talent, and further improve the scientific foresight of both countries.

In general, in the context of a changing global landscape, the growing Chinese-Russian partnership goes beyond traditional geopolitical alliances, embodying the potential of joint scientific and technological developments to solve the problems of the 21st century. By leveraging each country's strengths and capabilities, this partnership promises to promote sustainable development, technological innovation and geopolitical balance. As the world faces unprecedented challenges, strategic cooperation between China and Russia illustrates the urgent need for joint efforts to create a balanced, multipolar world order, thereby paving the way for a more inclusive, sustainable and prosperous global community.

Despite the fact that each civilization has its own unique cultural code, today we live in a global information space dominated by the English language, which puts the world under the influence of the Anglo-Saxon information paradigm. At the same time, China stands out as a special civilization characterized by a value-semantic structure and a unique rationality that seeks a middle path. It is this aspiration that is a symbol of China's self-description as the Middle Kingdom, emphasizing the principle of harmonious co-existence of its diverse population. In this vein, in order to ensure a harmonious existence, individual countries should also strive to offer positive verified development models not only for themselves, but also for others. At one time, the United States demonstrated the concept of a society of opportunity, while the Soviet Union championed the ideal of social justice. Likewise, Russia should uphold the principle of equal cooperation, including in the scientific field, and strive to be a beacon of stability and prosperity. This endeavor requires recognizing and integrating the diverse development models, cultures and traditions of all peoples, building on scientific advances, and bringing a unique perspective to the global dialogue on progress and cooperation.

A. Crooke<sup>1</sup>

## IS A PEACEFUL ACCOMMODATION BETWEEN BRICS AND THE WEST POSSIBLE?

It is a paradox, of course: You have generously invited someone from 'the lecturing hegemon' to speak on BRICS and multipolarity! However, as the Italian philosopher Julius Evola said of himself, surveying the early 'ruins of western modernity', he was – so to speak – 'in modernity', but not *of* modernity. I would claim the same.

In Rome, there still exists – just – the *Domus Aurea*, the golden house. This was a vast complex built by Emperor Nero on the Oppian Hill after the great fire of 64 CE. Strikingly, it was based on the Architecture of an ancient Egyptian temple and was magnificently decorated with birds, panthers, lotus flowers and divine entities – again, all nature, in the Egyptian mode.

Indeed, Nero modelled himself as a Pharaoh in the shape of Ra, (or Apollo, if you prefer). And as the bridge between the material world and the immaterial.

Long story short, within 70 years, all trace of the *Domus* was gone. It had been 'cancelled (in today's parlance): stripped, and simply filled-in with earth; built over and completely forgotten.

The shift to the one dimensional 'world' was at the doorstep. But then, in 1480, a young Roman walking on the Oppian Hill, fell into a hole and found himself in a strange cave floating with beasts, plants and figures. He had fallen unwittingly into Nero's palace. Romans had completely forgotten even it had existed.

Soon, the great artists of Rome were having themselves lowered on knotted to ropes, to see for themselves. When

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Raphael and Michelangelo crawled underground and were let down shafts to study them, the effect was electrifying, instant and profound.

This is the world we in the West have lost: The ancient world's diversity and its metaphysical excitement.

After this momentary 'flicker' as the Renaissance took hold, the text of the *Corpus Hermetica*, known to antiquity, and thought to reach back to the ancient sage, Thoth, serendipitously arrived and was translated in 1471.

This too, swept through Europe. It seemed to hold the allure of a possible defusing of the looming civil war between Protestant and Catholic.

The point here was that the Hermetic understanding of society and history – the world – was that of an integrated totality. It offered a more holistic perspective; one which can account for – rather than annul or strike out – the contradictions within the fabric of reality.

Contradictions and oppositions within history and understanding were, and are today, regarded as dangerous and signs of a threat to established order. The *Corpus Hermetica* offered a very different perspective. The contradictions were but multiplicity working itself out. Seen correctly, they underlined organic unity.

It was all too late: The multivalent revolution was still-born. A radical Calvinist, Isaac Casaubon, was paid by James I of England to write in 1614 a 'hit piece' arguing that his philological analysis proved the *Corpus* to be 'fake news', largely authored by Christians in Alexandria.

Egyptian primordial philosophy was wholly de-bunked as heretic and magical. It never recovered. And by 1478, the Spanish Inquisition was afoot.

We know now that the *Corpus* did indeed reflect elements of the oldest Egyptian teachings, dating back 4,500 years, or more, and certainly to the early Old Kingdom.

The bubble anyway had burst. The Hermeticists were discredited; some were burnt alive, and Europe duly was wracked by Inquisition dogma and burnings. It is estimated that between the Inquisition and the Great Witch Scare, some 10,000 Europeans were burnt at the stake or drowned.

Today, western Europe is seized again by enforced dogma: an eschatological dogmatism, just to be clear. Just as Israel today sees itself as a redoubt against the 'end of all things', and accordingly militarises and is willing to dispense military violence to preserve its vision of itself, so too, Europe though less plausibly is taking a 'secular eschatological stand' (if that is no oxymoron) to crush Russia's refusal to embrace the 'new moral revolution', and for its leading a global counter-revolution.

Western Europe today is as if it were St. Petersburg of early 1917, after the February Revolution, though our 'Bolsheviks' have long since arrived at Finland Station (since the 1970s at least).

We, in western Europe, are in a period of revolution and civil war: History tells us that civil war tends to be extended with peak episodes that are viewed as 'revolution' (i. e. BLM street protests), but which in reality are alternate modes of the same; the long toggling between revolution and cultural war.

One cannot but notice how bad-tempered Americans and Europeans generally have become. Calm, reasoned discussion of issues is gone; Yelling, emotivism and 'othering' is commonplace. These are dark omens for the future.

The premonitions are a gut feeling, Tucker Carlson says: "There are angry people who feel like they have no recourse, who don't think elections are real..."

Why has western society been so supine, so unreflectively supportive to the sheering away of its civilisational ethos? It is truly paradoxical that half of western society sees a revolution, yet the other is too distracted, or simply does not notice. There is no simple answer to this paradox.

Yet, it was thus also in St Petersburg. General Wrangel (a Tsarist officer and commander) wrote in his memoirs about arriving in St. Petersburg in February 1917 (after having thrashed a man on the train with a red ribbon for insulting a woman). He was appalled, on arrival, to see the widespread disorder and profusion of Communist paraphernalia – and most of all, the red ribbons and flags.

He wrote of his shock that the people as a whole, and the upper classes in particular, acted as if everything was normal: They paid "no heed to the approaching storm."

Put bluntly: the appearance of normalcy, it seems, says nothing about whether a society is about to founder.

Today, our élites too, sport a ribbon – not red, but *Rain-bow*.

The late American thinker Christopher Lasch (d. 1994), near the end of his life, concluded that the American upper class had essentially seceded from the American nation and emigrated into a separate reality in which they envisaged the disassembly of the existing western Order, in the name of justice and retribution.

The contemporary French philosopher, Emmanuel Todd, concurs; suggesting, in *La Défaite*, that America, is no longer a nation-state, but a nihilist empire, in constant revolt against its own past and with a ruling élite determined to break the preponderant hold of the white, blue collar and middle classes over American society.

Todd notes that this secession has given birth to "a breath-taking dogmatism across the spectrum of Western élites, a kind of ideological solipsism preventing them from seeing the world – as it actually is."

Nonetheless most in the West still just 'don't see it'; they cannot admit that the Revolution's objective (though it is not hidden) is that these well-to-do, ribbon-wearing members of the middle classes are precisely the ones (not the technocratic-élites) that the cultural revolution targets; seeks to displace, to subordinate – and to sanction.

To sanction them as redress for historic discrimination and racism; not for who they *are* now, but for who or what their ancestors may *have been*. To further this aim of 'rotating out' the predominantly 'pale, male and stale' western Middle Class from their 'privileged positions', the Revolutionaries injected their ideological opposition to national borders and the embrace of something like open-door immigration.

Adjunct to this has been the revolutionary 'transition' from a real manufacturing economy – the mainstay source of employment for 'deplorables' – to a new high-tech, 'Climate' focussed and AI-driven economy, which these new diverse élites would find easier and more amenable.

Meanwhile, in this scenario, blue-collar 'deplorables' – as the real economy inevitably atrophies – become economic outliers, an 'expendable' sector.

Just to be clear, when an ideology – in open revolt against its own past – claims 'a man can become a woman, and a woman a man' in such an explicit affirmation of

falsehood, it has a direct purpose: It is obviously intended to draw the line under the western (Latin) Christian tradition. This is also Emmanuel Todd's prime conclusion.

What might be the lessons here for the BRICS?

Firstly, these cumulative 'transitions' clearly require mammoth money-printing. This was just about manageable when the project could be financed at zero cost interest rates; but the scheme's Achilles' Heel of inflation and spiking interest rates has arrived. The exponential western debt explosion to fund 'transitions' now threatens to take the entire 'revolution' into financial crisis and collapsing standards of living.

The tool of 'free money' facilitated many things, but has proved lethal. It created inequality of a kind not seen for generations (though familiar to Russians who recall the 1990s), a polarised politics, and huge financial bubbles.

However – and secondly – the flood of fresh money opened the door to new media: Platforms that previous had relied on selling the news were replaced by entities beholden to advertisers that only cared about grabbing people's attention and selling it to the highest bidder. A new economy of attention arose.

The Power Strata 'got it'; they were delighted. So, thirdly then, words no longer needed to have objective meanings. Everything is about 'attention' – however achieved. True or false. That's what the advertisers wanted. Words could mean what those in power say they mean. The 'truth' behind the narrative was irrelevant. They could lie freely.

Fourthly, the West – in wilfully propagating and imposing a morally vacuous ideology that has no appeal in most countries and cultures of the world – simply has no clue as to how much of the world rejects the value system of contemporary globalist neoliberalism. It repels, rather than appeals to them. So, the western Nomenklatura doubles-down on enforcement.

*The question on the table before us then, is how will the global, multi-polarity bloc manage a West edging towards moral, political, and possibly financial collapse? Is a peaceful accommodation between the BRICS and the West possible?*

Will the West come out 'the other side' of their cultural revolution as a more amenable potential BRICS partner? Or will the West come apart with prolonged in-fighting? The post-war history is not encouraging: It is that of the West attempting to keep itself whole through creating a Manichean enemy, around which it can gather and unify.

History suggests too that even with some accord, the Revolutionaries seldom agree fully to revert back to the Old Constitutional Order. There will be a new one, perhaps some return to confederation in the US and Europe. This, for now, is pure speculation.

The cold reality is the 'Blue Revolutionaries' in the US own the wealth, the key institutions in society and the levers of enforcement. To be plain, they hold the 'Commanding Heights'.

Yes, a nascent counter-revolution – mainly in the US (and somewhat in Europe, too) – is building; they are (rightly or wrongly) defiantly unwilling to recant traditionalist moral values, nor are they prepared to assume 'guilt' by submitting to the demands for 'reparations' for historic injustices.

The point here is obvious: Is this counter-revolution going to be enough? Whilst Emmanuel Todd believes that

the situation is so far gone that there is no hope of saving Western civilization, and turning back the clock, others hope that there is still time to salvage something. Let us see.

What then is the 'tiny' fulcrum around which some common ground betwixt BRICS and the West eventually might be found?

The schism has arisen with BRICS partly because the non-West now sees only too clearly that the post-modern West is not a civilisation *per se*, but rather something akin to a mechanical 'operating system' (managerial technocracy). It does not fit the Multipolar blueprint, as it is no longer a civilisational state.

Europe of the Renaissance, in marked contrast, *did* consist of civilisational states – but subsequent European nihilism prevailed.

Today's western myth of being the inheritor of superior values from Athens – 'from Plato to NATO', if you like – has proved a fatal conceit. It undergoes various makeovers of narrative to claim that the West somehow is 'winning', but its new narratives lack conviction.

So, here we get to the the root of it: the biggest hurdle for the BRICS in trying to negotiate a peaceful *modus vivendi* with the western sphere is that by being 'a self'; in being an unique civilisational-state, is inseparable from *existing in a space of moral issues*.

It is not enough just to declare that 'one is multi-polar'. True non-alignment must mean what the Algerian writer Franz Fanon called '*disalienation*' – a commitment to action; an invitation to take real steps towards autonomy and sovereignty.

Is it possible for BRICS states to keep a foot in "a world, cut in two"? Likely not – at least until the US and European Cultural War arrives, at least, to some partial outcome. Being a participant in the western financial system – alone – becomes highly problematic because of its social toxicity; but the insurmountable obstacle, plainly put, is that the main impetus to western mechanistic epistemology is derived from a teleological anti-morality.

Put starkly, the 'new values' we are seeing are intended to drive a stake through traditionalism. Where is the stake thrust? It strikes at what BRICS members have in common on the plane of moral issues, which might be called a sensibility to the numinous. Much of contemporary western thinking simply ignores the dimensions of our moral consciousness and dismisses it, as either confused, or irrelevant.

The point of commonality is that all the BRICS civilisations employ 'strong evaluation'. That is, they all involve the ability to discriminate between right and wrong; justice and injustice; and of dynamics that uplift, and those drag society down.

Our ability to discriminate on these key issues lies deep within us. But it is precisely here where the BRICS might seek common cause with Europe. They could adopt a moral language that resonates within the vestiges of such moral sentiments that still linger on in the West.

With the rediscovery of the *Domus Aurea* and the *Hermetica*, the Italian Renaissance believed itself to have rejoined the ancients *in spirit* – a release, after the Middle Ages had brought barbarian repression and the closing of the European 'mind'.

Thus, when Florentine Neo-Platonism became the dominant view, it is understandable that those artists like

Michaelangelo, who had been lowered into the *Domus*, viewed its distinct beauty as connecting them to the wider world of earthly beauty. This experience was seen by the artists of the time to be the mortal veil through which we discern eternal human values, shining out through the veil.

Their moral reaction then, was so to speak, an assent, an affirmation of what it is to be human. It is over the latter experience that a dark epistemological cloud of subsequent empiricist or rationalist theories of knowledge has hung.

What makes any conjuncture of this nature so subject to fiery passions is simply that anything that was good and true about Western civilization is preserved and thriving in Russia. This is the unspoken insight that so infuriates the western élites. And it is also why, in part, BRICS states so evidently look to Russia for leadership.

In a sense, Russia fell into the hole on Rome's Oppian Hill when Russians flung open the doors to its churches after the Communist period, and people poured in. Ortho-

doxy – and traditionalism – somehow self-ignited. Russia was finding a new 'Self'.

This occurrence perhaps was impelled in part, by the fact that when Byzantium fell in 1453, bringing to an end the millennia-old Roman imperium, Russia found itself in a unique position. It was now the only Orthodox Christian power remaining in the world.

This fact created a sense of world-historic religious siege; surrounded on all sides by Islam, Roman Catholicism, and Turco-Mongol Khanates, Russia itself became a prototypical Eschatological Garrison State – the last redoubt of authentic Christianity and of meaning, beyond the literal world, in the wider Hartland.

As I have tried to indicate, Europe has the elements to multi-culturalism buried within memory. We do have common sources that reach far-back. That is the hope; but first, we in the Atlanticist West, must dispense with the charade of today's fabricated European values.

D. A. Degterev<sup>1</sup>

## FROM "PROVINCIAL" TO SOVEREIGN SOCIAL SCIENCE IN THE NON-WESTERN WORLD: THE ROLE OF THE BRICS

One of the instruments of hegemony of the Collective West is control over the "mechanisms of formation and dissemination of knowledge" – the so-called fourth structural power of the first level according to Susan Strange, the founder of international political economy.<sup>2</sup> By structural power she meant the power to create its own "rules of the game" by which others, including, not least, university professors around the world, operate. This element of structural power, she argued, was as important as the other three (security, production and finance).

In February 2023, the US Joint Chiefs of Staff presented the Joint Concept for Competing, which reflects the spaces of international competition,<sup>3</sup> which are roughly divided into four main groups: geographic, domain, thematic and cognitive. The cognitive spheres are ideology, education, information and innovation. The thematic ones are shaping the global agenda on the following topics: global order, international markets, climate, human security, medicine, technology and extremism.

The important role of control over the dissemination of knowledge is also emphasised by representatives of critical theories. For example, J. Galtung speaks about the formation of "false consciousness" and "the ability to suppress one's own genuine interests (, which) can be the main

part of socialisation in general and education in particular."<sup>4</sup> About cultural imperialism and hegemonic control of discourse writes A. Gramsci.<sup>5</sup>

Compared to other elements of structural power, control over the mechanisms of knowledge dissemination is perhaps the most unobvious, since knowledge is intangible. Nevertheless, it is possible to identify the main elements of structural power and hegemonic hierarchies of the Collective West in this sphere and to outline the main ways of building the relevant non-Western capacity in the context of BRICS development.

The title of this paper is based on the narrative of "provincial science", which is brilliantly described in the work of two anthropologists from St Petersburg, M. Sokolov and K. Titayev, entitled "Provincial and Indigenous Science."<sup>6</sup> For those who are not yet familiar with this work, I strongly recommend it! The authors managed to ridicule the most acute shortcomings of both "provincial" and "indigenous science" in a very subtle and ironic form of ethnographic observation.

By the former they mean those researchers whose discourse is secondary to the "capital", and the "capital" for most sciences before the Second World War was Germany, and afterwards – the USA and Great Britain, with a short "flash" of the "capital" of Paris in the 1960–1980s. I venture to suggest that after the end of the "power transit",<sup>7</sup> after cardinal international transformations, the intellectual "capital" of the world will change again. According to M. Sokolov and K. Titayev, "for provincial science it is the attendance of

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<sup>2</sup> См.: Strange S. States and markets. L.: Continuum, 1994. P. 119–138.

<sup>3</sup> См.: Joint Concept for Competing. Joint Chiefs of Staff document. 2023. Febr. 10. P. 13. URL: <https://news.usni.org/2023/03/09/pentagons-joint-concept-for-competing> (дата обращения: 15.02.2024).

<sup>4</sup> См.: Galtung J. A Structural Theory of Imperialism // Journal of Peace Research. 1971. № 8 (2). P. 82.

<sup>5</sup> Грамши А. Избранные произведения: в 3 т. М.: Изд-во иностр. лит., 1959. Т. 3: Тюремные тетради.

<sup>6</sup> Соколов М., Титаев К. Провинциальная и туземная наука // Антропологический форум. 2013. № 19. С. 239–275.

<sup>7</sup> Дегтерев Д. А., Рамич М. С., Цык А. В. США – КНР: «властный транзит» и контуры «конфликтной биполярности» // Вестн. Рос. ун-та дружбы народов. Сер. «Международные отношения». 2021. № 21 (2). С. 210–231.

intellectual salons of the metropolis that is the main marker of status.”<sup>1</sup> Formal “signs of personal proximity to metropolitan science” – long “metropolitan” internships and business trips, “the cult of... physical visits of metropolitan celebrities,” etc.<sup>2</sup> – are also at a premium. At the same time, there is a “chronic lack of importance that its representatives attach to each other’s work.”<sup>3</sup> Indeed, why, because “neighbours on the shop floor” are “provincials”!

The other extreme is the so-called “indigenous science”, which implies “the constant displacement of the fact of the existence of metropolitan science”<sup>4</sup> and the increasing tendency towards regionalisation and nationalisation of scientific communication. At the same time, in conditions of infrastructure-driven isolation, only local authors are recognised, the share of self-citations is high, there is an abundance of science-like vocabulary, many researchers “simmer in their own juice”, and there are no reliable mechanisms for verifying scientific knowledge. In the context of BRICS, we can also note the small share of studies published in the respective languages – this unfortunately applies to Russian, Portuguese (for Brazil), Arabic and Amharic. I. e. the effect of scale, the presence of international scientific communications of the non-Western world, which can be formed by the BRICS structures, is important here.

The existing international scientific environment is rather hierarchical, it is characterised by centre-periphery relations, and unfortunately, in the 1990s our country strengthened its periphery, while other BRICS member countries made not always successful attempts to overcome this periphery. At the same time, the countries of the so-called “Centre” are no longer leaders in a number of critical technologies, but are being overtaken, for example, by China and the Russian Federation.

However, their “centrality” is conditioned not only by objective factors, i. e. the level of development of scientific research in a particular field, but also by the very configuration of the network, the system of international academic cooperation. In the established system, the main part of contacts goes through the “Centre”, through journals, conferences, professional associations, bibliometric indices of the “Centre”.

“Power transit” (from Western countries to non-Western countries), the beginning of the NWO, the Middle East conflict and other events of the last three years call into question the whole architecture of the hegemonic “pyramid” of dissemination of “metropolitan” knowledge, because the “upper floors” of the above-mentioned hierarchies are occupied by representatives of unfriendly countries.

Moreover, the processes of so-called “decoupling” (i. e. rupture) are developing between the Western and non-Western worlds. This phenomenon has developed most of all in the technological sphere; it is also actively developing in the economic and political spheres, where competing international institutions with similar functionality are being formed.<sup>5</sup> But there is also fragmentation of the global information and, more widely, value<sup>6</sup> and academic space.

And, perhaps, for the first time in the post-Soviet history, the issue of formation of sovereign public knowledge is so acute. In the natural science environment, the role of the normative (i. e. ideological) factor is lower and the problem is not so acute. In addition, there is the task of partially reorienting the network of international co-operation, forming direct scientific ties between the BRICS countries and linking them to non-Western scientific infrastructure.

It is important not to fall into the already described extremes of both “provincial” and “indigenous” science. It is necessary to have a good command of foreign (Western and non-Western) discourse, to be able not only to adapt it, but also, if necessary, to deconstruct it in a reasoned way and to offer alternative meanings.<sup>7</sup> Even Western experts have long recognised that Western countries do not have an exclusive view of modernity; there is a “multiple modernity” – Russian, Chinese, Turkish, etc.<sup>8</sup>

We should not be afraid to put forward alternative social concepts, because competition is what drives science! If suddenly the “only correct concept” turns out to be wrong, there will be no alternative to it.<sup>9</sup> One should not be afraid to compete in the English-speaking environment dominating in today’s science. But for this purpose it is necessary to have its own elements of structural strength, namely, leading scientific journals published simultaneously in Russian, English, Chinese, languages of other BRICS countries, and most importantly – powerful publishing holdings, publications in which should become *sin qua non* for any serious scientific or educational programme. The bibliometric systems of the BRICS countries need to be interfaced. We have RINC, and there are attempts to create other systems. China has CNKI (China National Knowledge Infrastructure), and Arab countries have Al Manhal.

In fact, today there is already a “creeping” recognition of each other’s journals. For example, many Russian journals have started to be indexed in the CNKI, and, accordingly, many Chinese authors have become more interested in publishing in them, as this has started to count in their scientific performance indicators. For example, colleagues from South Africa and other African countries have approached us with similar proposals.

However, more systematic measures are needed here. There should not be pure symmetry, but in all the main elements of the Collective West structural force in the sphere of knowledge formation and dissemination, the corresponding serious non-Western instruments should appear, including on the basis of BRICS. And healthy competition may well develop between Western and non-Western publishing houses and journals. This will only move global academic science forward! The main thing is to overcome asymmetric interdependencies (according to R. Cochain and J. Nye<sup>10</sup>) – when we depend on publications in Western pub-

<sup>1</sup> Соколов М., Тумаев К. О.р. cit. С. 254.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. С. 257.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. С. 252.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. С. 259.

<sup>5</sup> См.: Clark R. Pool or Duel? Cooperation and Competition Among International Organizations // International Organization. 2021. № 75 (4). P. 1133–1153.

<sup>6</sup> Дегтерев Д. А. Ценностный суверенитет в эпоху глобальных конвергентных медиа // Вестн. Рос. ун-та дружбы народов. Сер. «Международные отношения». 2022. № 22 (2). С. 352–371.

<sup>7</sup> Научные журналы в условиях трансформации международных отношений: проблемы, вызовы и перспективы. Часть 2 / Р. Н. Лункин, Гу Хо Ом, Д. А. Дегтерев [и др.] // Вестн. С.-Петерб. ун-та. Сер. «Международные отношения». 2023. № 16 (4). С. 428–436.

<sup>8</sup> См.: Eisenstadt S. N. Multiple Modernities // Daedalus. 2000. № 129 (1). P. 1–29.

<sup>9</sup> Переслегин С. Б. Эффект «чужого поля»: российская наука в англосаксонском когнитивном пространстве // Экономические стратегии. 2017. № 8. С. 63–64.

<sup>10</sup> См.: Keohane R., Nye S. Power and Interdependence. N.Y. : Longman, 2012.

lishing houses, which have become quasi-global in nature, and they do not depend on our structural power in this area, which is still at the initial stage of formation.

The non-Western BRICS member countries can do a lot in the field of joint development of social science, and Rus-

sia as a “distinctive state-civilisation, a vast Eurasian and Euro-Pacific power” with unique opportunities for “cultural triangulation”,<sup>1</sup> i. e. generalisation of cultural knowledge, can play a key role. This is recognised by foreign experts as well.<sup>2</sup>

M.-R. Dehshiri<sup>3</sup>

## SYNERGY OF CULTURES IN THE CONTEXT OF BRICS

### Conceptual framework: conceptualizing synergy of cultures

Constructive interaction between cultures, especially since the beginning of the third millennium, has received serious attention in international community. Significant efforts have been made for promoting mutual understanding between cultures prior to our idea of “synergy of cultures”. The first attempt was the approval of the proposal of the then President of Islamic Republic of Iran Mr. Sayed Mohammad Khatami by the United Nations to name 2001 as the year of dialogue among civilizations. In the idea of dialogue among civilizations, the priority was given to facilitating the space of mutual understanding and openness among cultures. Although this idea led to mutual recognition between civilizations and cultures, it did not go beyond the limits of interaction and dialogue and did not propose an operational approach to bring views closer together. After that, in 2005, on the initiative of Spain and Turkey, the idea of “alliance of civilizations” have been raised for international action against extremism through the realization of international, intercultural and interreligious dialogue and cooperation. This initiative, instead of trying to harmonize views while accepting the diversity and plurality of cultures, actually was trying to promote the homogenization of cultures, which actually neglects today’s diverse world with many cultures and civilizations. Among the criticisms that have been made towards this concept, we can refer to the fact that the process of unification of some civilizations may have inclusive-exclusive approach. In other words, this concept may mistakenly evoke the union of some cultures against other cultures. The third idea was “the rapprochement of cultures”, which was proposed by UNESCO in 2010 to promote the recognition and mutual understanding of nations by identifying the diversity of the world’s cultures. This idea led to the approval of the proposal of the Republic of Kazakhstan for declaring the years from 2013 to 2022 as “Decade of rapprochement of Cultures”, proposal which was approved by General Conference of UNESCO. It was emphasizing on the cooperation of na-

tions to achieve sustainable peace, but it does not propose practical mechanisms for the rapprochement of cultures and the constructive participation of cultures for peaceful coexistence of the nations in the plural human world. In addition, the idea of the rapprochement of cultures had a retro-oriented and not a future-oriented approach for human society. The fact is that these different concepts tried to convey the mother concepts of “peaceful coexistence of cultures”, “mutual understanding of cultures”, “Complementary of cultures”, “openness of cultures” as well as “constructive and effective interaction among cultures”, based on mutual respect in the international cultural arena.

The idea of “synergy of cultures” has the relative advantages of similar concepts which can once again put culture as the basis of world politics and at the top of the priorities of the world society. It realizes a common understanding of universal ideas while accepting diversity of cultures and respecting specific cultural identities. Synergy of cultures means collaborative or hybrid action that can occur when different cultures with distinct perspectives work together for the realization of a macro-cultural approach, which is more important than its constituent parts so that all cultures take steps to improve the efficiency of synthesized global culture. It is in this situation that two plus two gives a result greater than four. The synergistic situation creates a kind of cooperative atmosphere that is not enough to share and exchange the advantages of cultures. In this conjuncture, this global culture would consider diverse innovative solutions to problems that have rarely been understood or accomplished by a specific culture.

The synergy of cultures means that the collaboration of different cultures can construct a new added value and reproduce a new cultural synthesis which is distinct from the constituent cultures. Taking benefit and advantage from other cultures’ experiences through cultural contact would pave the way for collective awareness and improve cultural potentiality and creativity of humanity. Not only does it include the relative advantage of interacting cultures, but it also creates new added value. This provides a strong factor for the establishment of sustainable peace in today’s world.

In an age where time and space are intertwined and the world is constantly changing, countries must be culturally aware and capable of intercultural communication because the ability of intercultural communication as one of the resources of soft power improves the efficiency of cultures and brings a new kind of energy to global culture. Today we live in a transitional international system, whose landscape is fluid. In this context, the idea of synergy of cultures by emphasizing on the aspects of similarity and paying attention to common cultural concerns while respecting

<sup>1</sup> Концепция внешней политики РФ. 31 марта 2023. URL: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/70811> (дата обращения: 21.02.2024).

<sup>2</sup> См.: Mine Y. The Global Demographic Change and Africa-Asia Relations: Beyond Big Power Summits // Africa and the Formation of the New System of International Relations. Vol. II. : Beyond Summit Diplomacy: Cooperation with Africa in the Post-pandemic World / eds A. M. Vasiliev, D. A. Degterev, T. M. Shaw. Palgrave Macmillan Cham, 2023. P. 48–49.

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cultural diversity, requires a comprehensive and win-win approach to the challenges and opportunities ahead in order to find creative solutions. In this context, cultures may have understood and learned how to take advantage of diversity, how to maximize their strengths, how to use positive and proactive communication skills, how to develop and enrich human activities and how to emphasize on cooperation to achieve common interests and benefits. Relying on common values and goals can help us find common solutions, so that through this intercultural approach, we can take an important step towards changing the existing situation by emphasizing on common elements of each other's cultures in the process of dialogue.

The synergy of cultures can be found in the middle of the spectrum, the two sides of which are centralization and decentralization of world culture. Centralization may lead to the imposition of homogenizing rules and procedures in the name of universality of global norms that challenge local cultures. Decentralization may lead to protectionism, cultural identification, as well as preservation of traditional cultural or specific identities. The independence of action at the local level and excessive reliance on traditional values and norms may lead to deterioration of universal human values. In this context, instead of relying on cultural differences, it is appropriate to rely on cultural diversity, in the sense that emphasis on differences leads to some kind of confusion, while emphasis on diversity creates an order based on the compatibility between commonalities and diversities in a coherent perspective. This approach requires the synergy and complementarity of diverse cultures despite maintaining the distinctions of cultures. In other words, the synergy of cultures in the current international system, can be positioned in the middle of two contradictory currents of cultural unilateralism and cultural pluralism. Cultural unilateralism is a kind of cultural homogenization with an emphasis on cultural assimilation in the name of emphasizing on universal commonalities and universal human values, emphasizing on the alignment of cultures based on universal criteria, avoiding attention to identity distinctions. On the other hand, cultural pluralism emphasizes on cultural tolerance, relativism and "multiculturalism" in general. In this way, the two mentioned approaches, one looks at culture as a factor of homogeneity and the other as a factor of differentiation. Therefore, the idea of synergy of cultures constitutes a moderate approach between the two extremes of homogenous approach of "cultural assimilation" and heterogeneous approach of "multiculturalism" in the international community.

The idea of "synergy of cultures" has the ability to present culture as the axis of sustainable development in such a way that culture is expressed through its various components, including tangible and intangible cultural heritage, creative industries, and various forms of cultural expression such as arts, literature, traditions and behaviors. This approach is important in the sense that it considers culture as "a collection of assets, values and cultural capitals" and honors diverse cultures based on mutual respect.

The idea of the synergy of cultures is considered to be a step toward progress and sustainable global development. In the current competitive world, the idea of synergy of cultures can, while promoting the positive and constructive competitiveness of cultures, encourage cooperation and interaction among them to create a new synthetic

culture and to respond to common human needs. Although different cultures have different cultural backgrounds, beliefs and lifestyles, they want to achieve a kind of compatibility, complementarity and cooperation within the pluralistic world, as an opportunity to synergize with each other for a prosperous future. In fact, every culture in the world has a special richness to actively contribute and participate in the process of additive interaction with other cultures in the realization of global synthetic culture.

### **BRICS and synergy of cultures**

The affinities and commonalities of BRICS member States in cultural values as well as in historical traditions such as improvement of family institution as well as the belief in religion and spirituality can serve as a basis for mutual understanding and as a platform for cultural interaction. Their opposition to the dominance of western counterculture and their attachment to the idea of "cultural independence" as well as their indigenous culture can lead to a strong cultural synergy among them.

As BRICS has brought together ancient civilizations, the dialogue among them would create a cooperative, inclusive and assertive world order. The two principles of respecting traditional values and cultural diversity have turned the BRICS organization into the most important platform for dialogue among civilizations and cultures. That can be done if they stick to the slogan of "cooperate, create and construct" and to the principle of "unity in diversity".

If BRICS member States respect their cultural diversity and consider it as the factor of strength of this organization, their efforts for promoting synergy of cultures, while respecting the difference of opinions, would make the dialogue meaningful and create a new space for a just and peaceful world order. BRICS represents a suitable platform for creating an alternative mechanism through strengthening people-to-people relations and expanding cultural cooperation, synergy and friendship of member countries against the culture of domination, unilateralism and homogenization.

In this conjuncture, the Islamic Republic of Iran that officially joined the BRICS organization on January 1, 2024, can promote the idea of cultural synergy through the promotion of favorable environment for enhancing cultural exchange programs, support for creative art industries, educational initiatives and youth participation of BRICS countries in the process of effective interaction of cultures. BRICS institutional capacities in the field of cultural and creative industries can strengthen innovative interactions of the member States.

In fact, insisting on positive and constructive role of culture in sustainable development of BRICS countries can create a new added value and lead to a comprehensive framework for mutual supportiveness as a suitable basis for synergy of cultures. It is in this context that cooperation between BRICS member states would lead to more achievements than the aggregate of their capabilities. BRICS can serve as a model of synergistic interaction of cultures to spread public awareness and to encourage sustainable development based on cultural diversity. While it provides the space to acknowledge and respect diversity and plurality of cultural norms of all member States, it also facilitates the cultural exchange among them to present a synthetic

identity of BRICS organization. That would encourage cultures to use creative methods to advance common goals while preserving their fundamental values and originalities.

Therefore, BRICS can crystallize the synergy of cultures based on institution-building spirit and appropriate mechanisms for multilateral cultural diplomacy. It can demonstrate the transition from the level of simple and linear interaction to the level of complex and synergistic interaction, as it considers cultural diversity to be a value added among member States. This approach suggests that cultural diversity would be neither ignored nor minimized, but rather viewed as a source in the development of interaction. That requires their competency in cross-cultural communication as well as their synthetic interaction through the pattern of commitment, engagement, adaptability, flexibility and empathy as well as the institutionalization of the culture of innovation and mutual trust. In fact, the result of synergy of cultures at the level of BRICS organization is wider than the set of cultures. If BRICS countries would like to realize the model of cultural synergy, they should try to synthesize tradition and modernity, insist on rationality and pragmatism, exchange intellectually in science, technology and arts and disseminate the culture of peace and moderation against violence and extremism.

We can refer to some principles of "synergy of cultures" among BRICS member States as follows:

1. The principle of institutionalization of collective cooperation: In the current interdependent world, diverse cultures should create a network of communication and interaction in such a way that each culture would take advantage of collective cooperation. In this perspective, BRICS Civil Forum which was established in 2015 with the aim of strengthening constructive dialogue among the institutions of civil society and academia in BRICS countries on a wide range of social issues can be considered as a platform for communication that can promote innovative capacities for the development of cultural interactions among member States.

2. The principle of mutual respect: the consistency and tolerance of cultures in the process of free flow of information and communication provides their behavioral flexibility, while preserving their cultural identity. In this case, mutual trust can be considered as a source that provides the free interaction of cultures to solve human problems. Mutual respect would be realized when they succeed to remove prejudices, selfishness, self-centeredness, suspicions and misunderstandings.

3. The principle of openness: the synergy of cultures depends on their ability to maintain openness in the process of cultural interaction in such a way that they can successfully adapt themselves to the environment of dialogue. The openness of cultures to each other provides the possibility of working in harmony with each other while maintaining their cultural diversity, and respecting the richness of other cultures in the changing international system.

4. The principle of effective participation in narrative-building: Cultural communication promotes participation of diverse cultures in the process of narrative-building and correcting their image with the aim of removing misunderstandings and taking advantage of the outcome of cultural interaction.

5. The principle of balance between continuity and change: The principle of balance requires continuity in

change. Continuity in the sense that different cultural systems tend to resist change and want to maintain their beliefs, values and norms. The more cultures rely on their past glory and proud background the more resistance they show to face changes. If they look at the future in the framework of synergy of cultures, this attitude would promote the flexibility and openness of cultures and increase their competitiveness.

6. Principle of adaptability: cultures should be able to increase their capacity of changeability in styles and methods while maintaining their originality and beliefs in order to improve their ability to cooperate actively and to adapt themselves to the surrounding environment. The principle of the adaptability of cultures requires that different cultures adapt themselves to the transitional and dynamic environment while preserving their native value systems.

7. The principle of interconnectedness: In order to increase their efficiency, cultures need to increase the connection and interaction with each other. The more connected the cultures are, the more information they will exchange with each other. In fact, the synergy of cultures requires the improvement of the ability of cultures to distribute information in the global community and their effectiveness in the virtual space in order to find effective solutions and initiatives for solving the problems of Global South and to transform ideals into common policies and programs.

Considering the above principles, the idea of synergy of cultures can be considered as a creative and leading idea for the multilateral cultural diplomacy of the BRICS countries, whose cultures have the vitality and effectiveness to interact positively and constructively with each other in the transitional world.

## Conclusion

Based on whatever expressed in this article, we believe that the idea of synergy of cultures can serve as a platform for promoting the dialogue among BRICS countries in order to realize a just world without western and American domination. That requires the acceptance cultural diversity as the principle of effective interaction. The model of synergy of cultures seeks to optimize the interaction between cultures while preserving cultural diversity and multiculturalism. This optimal space for constructive interaction among cultures would flourish more consistency in the components of sustainable peace while respecting cultural diversity. Based on the idea of "synergy of cultures", diverse cultures act like a puzzle, which at the same time complement the BRICS common culture and remain like a rainbow that contributes to the beauty of the horizon. and are considered as colorful flowers that add beauty and freshness to the flower garden of BRICS.

Synergy of cultures is considered as a vital approach for promoting the competitiveness of cultures and their satisfactory interaction and efforts to receive mutual resources and facilities for solving complex international problems. That requires that each culture would have the openness to take positive characteristics of other cultures while maintaining its own cultural authenticity as well as accepting equal opportunity of all cultures to enrich the BRICS common culture and to promote inter-regional interactions in such a way that all cultures would be treated equally without being divided into first and second degree cultures.

We can suggest the following mechanisms for enhancing cultural synergy among BRICS countries:

- Adoption of an active and innovative approach in cultural and public diplomacy for strengthening cultural interaction network among BRICS member States;
- Creating new institutions for the development of co-operation around cultural commonalities such cultural heritage of the member countries;
- Reinforcement of scientific and academic exchange as well as joint research projects for mutual understanding of each other's cultures and enhancing innovative cooperation and creative thinking;
- Expansion of cultural tourism and people to people contact for enhancing mutual understanding of BRICS countries;
- Utilizing translation of books as a means for cross-cultural interaction among BRICS member States in order

to flourish BRICS identity and disseminate the culture of peace;

- Encouraging collaboration and building relationships in the framework of track II diplomacy through the organization of joint sessions of discussion between professors, researchers, journalists and students, in order to explore the opportunities for the improvement of cultural and scientific relations;
- The organization of cultural festivals, cultural performances (theatre, music, etc.), exhibitions, workshops, discussion groups, and networking events as the suitable mechanisms for the development of cultural and academic interactions among BRICS member States;
- Bridge building measures through sharing experiences in a collaborative environment in order to stimulate communication and relationship among peoples of BRICS countries.

## B. Desgardins<sup>1</sup>

### THE BRICS: AMBITION AND LIMITS

We Europeans are the civilized ones, and for us the Chinese are the barbarians. This is what civilization has done to barbarism.

*Victor Hugo*

Victor Hugo's indignation at the burning of the Summer Palace by Lord Elgin, son of the one who removed the friezes from the Parthenon in Athens (!), was fully justified as it was a stupid humiliation inflicted on the Chinese and an error, too often reproduced by Europeans in their former colonies. It is still paid today with a resentment shared by Southern countries, and the meeting of the BRICS is one of the platforms for this expression and to nourish another dialogue of civilizations.

– Originally, in the early 2000s, BRIC was a simple acronym coined by a Goldman Sachs economist to distinguish four countries – Brazil, Russia, India, China – likely to show higher growth rates than Western countries. It was about identifying an investment theme.

– Then, an organization was born in 2003, a fifth country, South Africa, was admitted, and over the years, a rhetoric was developed to break free from the multilateral institutions established by the West in 1945, to seek an alternative to the dominance of the US dollars, to avoid borrowers having to submit to the IMF's liberal doctrine.

– Since 1 January 2024, the entire BRICS has welcomed five new members and represents 35% of the world's GDP and 42% of the world's population.

– How to understand this ensemble? It is a space for dialogue between civilizations, with Modi's India exalting Hinduism, Xi's China allowing a neo-Confucianism to develop under the control of the Communist Party, and Putin's Russia boasting the superiority of Russian civilization.

But one cannot stop at this juxtaposition of nationalisms because the only point of agreement is opposition to the liberal values of the West.

– Moreover, like the Silk Roads or the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the BRICS organization, as we will see below, primarily serves Chinese ambition and faces obvious limits in terms of trade, finance, monetary and political aspects.

#### Chinese ambition

Undoubtedly, dialogue within the BRICS is hindered by China's dominance, with a GDP five times higher than that of India and ten times higher than that of Russia. China represents 70% of the BRICS GDP, it is the main export market for around 40 countries, and intends to exert influence on them.

#### Chinese aspirations

China condemns the colonial remnants of Western powers but practices a not-so-different imperialism. The enlargement of the BRICS primarily serves Chinese interests: Egypt is the headquarters of the Arab League and the gateway to the Suez Canal, a key artery for Chinese trade to Europe; Ethiopia, with 120 million inhabitants, the second most populous country in Africa, is the headquarters of the African Union, a continent coveted by China for its wealth of raw materials; Saudi Arabia, Iran, and the UAE are significant suppliers of hydrocarbons to China.

Beyond the more or less shared desire to find an alternative to the Western model, many countries are wary of China and have understood that through enlargement, it seeks to find growth outlets, secure food and essential raw materials.

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### *Chinese selfishness*

China displays its desire to break Western dominance over the multilateral system but, for example, opposes granting its partners, India and Brazil, permanent membership status on the UN Security Council.

China intends to continue enlargement to rally states against the West, but other members, Brazil and India, are opposed and want to play the most advantageous card on each issue, economic, military... sometimes with the West, sometimes with Russia, sometimes with China.

China is dominant, but its structural growth is slowing, its ability to lend to other countries is undermined by the numerous setbacks of the Silk Roads, its international political image is tarnished by the ideological hardening observed in recent years, and India intends, more and more each day, to make its voice heard.

### **The commercial limitations of BRICS enlargement**

The expanded BRICS countries achieve \$6.2 trillion in exports, less than the G7 and its \$7 trillion in exports. But that's not the important part. While China is an important partner for each of the BRICS members, trade between the other countries is low and more significant with the West.

India, for example, exports only \$25 billion worth of goods to China and Russia combined, compared to around \$230 billion to OECD countries.

In recent years, there has been growth in trade between certain BRICS countries: for example, Brazil's exports to China and Russia have increased by nearly 50% to reach around \$120 billion, while exports to the United States are much more stable at around \$40 billion. At the same time, India has greatly increased its purchases of Russian oil to take advantage of discounted prices, but India, wary of China, is developing its exports more towards the United States.

Within the South, African imports from China and Russia have increased nearly fifteenfold since 2002, compared to less than fourfold from the United States. African exports to China and Russia have similarly increased significantly, while those to the United States remain fairly stable. However, this remains limited. African exports to the Sino-Russian duo amount to around \$60 billion, far from the approximately \$220 billion to OECD countries. Mexico doesn't even sell \$20 billion worth of goods to the combined China-Russia, compared to \$600 billion to OECD countries.

Amid increasing US protectionism, the ambition of BRICS members is to promote South-South trade, but trade between these countries is modest, and integration is limited.

Aiding in the food security of BRICS member countries is an ambition as the members only meet half of their needs. In the group, there are some major producers, Russia, Brazil, and, secondarily, South Africa, but in Egypt and Ethiopia, food security remains a distant goal; Saudi Arabia, a country with a high population growth rate, and Iran face water resource problems; India and China must import for their subsistence.

### **Financial limitations in offering an alternative to the IMF**

BRICS members want to dismantle the multilateral organizations created in the aftermath of the Second World

War under the auspices of the West, notably the IMF and the World Bank.

The NDB, New Development Bank, created in 2015 with a capital of \$50 billion and the only common institution of the BRICS, aims to offer an alternative to the IMF to facilitate development and avoid the conditionality of loans practiced by the IMF.

However, since its creation, the NDB has only made \$33 billion in loans, while the World Bank has lent \$78 billion, and only a fifth of the NDB's loans have been in local currencies, with nearly 70% of these loans made in US dollars.

In summary, the New Development Bank is a mediocre alternative to multilateral institutions.

Financially, the heterogeneity among BRICS members is striking. Ethiopia is in default, Egypt is on the brink of bankruptcy, Iran is very impoverished, while Saudi Arabia and the UAE are among the creditor countries and have by far the two highest GDPs per capita in the group.

### **Monetary limitations and the inability to offer an alternative to the \$:**

The exclusive dominance of the US dollars in the international monetary system dates back to 1945, to the Bretton Woods agreement.

In 1974, OPEC had wanted to break free from the US dollars and favour Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) for oil payments, but it failed.

Members of the BRICS, impressed by the US blocking half of Russia's foreign exchange reserves, amounting to \$350 billion, want to escape the extraterritoriality of US rules to sanction operations conducted in US dollars, but this may remain a mere statement.

To date, the currencies of the five BRICS countries finance no more than 5% of international trade, and none of these countries is capable of offering a financial market depth, liquidity, and stability comparable to that of the US dollars.

China settles more than 40% of its transactions in Yuan, but 60% of its overseas assets remain denominated in US dollars. Consequently, even if Saudis accept to be paid in Yuan for their oil, and Brazilians settle their imports from China in Yuan, none wants to keep reserves in Yuan. As long as the Yuan is not convertible, it will only represent 1 to 2% of international trade.

Meanwhile, although the United States represents less than 15% of international trade, the US dollars still accounts for 40% of debt issuance, 59% of commercial transactions, and nearly 90% of currency exchange worldwide.

The adoption of the Yuan as an international transaction currency seems a distant horizon, certainly not desired by India. Furthermore, the establishment of a common currency, an equivalent of the Euro by such different economies, does not seem credible.

Therefore, the monetary system will not evolve soon, and in the meantime, the United States will be able to continue financing its deficits with international savings.

### **Political Limits**

The whole is heterogeneous and the effective enlargement as of 1 January 2024 has exacerbated these oppositions.

At the recent BRICS summit, there were 77 invited countries, including around 20 candidate countries (Indonesia, Nigeria, Venezuela, etc.), but nothing concrete emerged.

What do the wealthy Saudi Arabia and impoverished Ethiopia have in common? Or the Chinese or Russian authoritarianism and Brazilian democracy? Or India and China, opposed in the heights of the Himalayas? Or Saudi Arabia and Iran? Or the vastness of Russia and the smallness of the Emirates?

Certainly, BRICS members have a principle of not interfering in internal affairs, especially regarding human rights, among others. They have not condemned the invasion of Ukraine nor voted for sanctions against Russia. But let's be realistic. If Europe, a union of culturally and economically close countries, struggles to forge consensus 67 years after its creation, what convergence of interests can be expected from such different countries as the BRICS members? What convergence of interests between India, close to the Western camp, and China, desiring to establish a new world order? What to think of an organization where one of the leading countries, India, sees China, who is another member, as the main threat?

### Conclusion

"The more they flatter you, the less you can trust them." This statement by Mao to Ho Chi Minh deserves to be reversed. If China flatters its BRICS partners and fuels their resentment against the West, it is to better establish its dominance over the group. In fact, at the end of this Letter, we can draw 5 conclusions:

- BRICS are not the dominant entity: expanded to include five new members, BRICS represent 35% of the world GDP, but the G7 remains predominant with 43%, or \$43 trillion.

Among BRICS, it is appropriate to mention fragmentation, to underline the opportunism of states, the now transactional approach. Modi is an example: one day he buys oil from Russia, the next he shows closeness to the United States or buys weapons from France.

Reforming global governance will take time, implementing an alternative to the US dollars will take even longer because these countries have a weak capacity to reach agreements.

- BRICS are unable to act because, in this heterogeneous group of 10 members, the rule of unanimity pre-

vails. Since the creation of BRICS, the only achievement of the group is the NDB, New Development Bank, and the amount of its loans is modest.

The G20, a mixed forum of developed and emerging countries representing 80% of the world GDP, remains better suited to addressing major international issues.

The West has nothing to fear from BRICS competition but must not ignore the message conveyed by the organization. Biden understood this well when he announced his intention to reform the IMF and the World Bank, two institutions dominated since their creation in 1945 by Western countries. Similarly, the Europe-Middle East-India corridor project presented at the G20 is a response to the Silk Roads. Also, the PGII, Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment, presented at the G7, has promised \$600 billion to finance infrastructure and offer emerging countries an alternative to the Silk Roads. Finally, the international system is evolving, as the African Union has become a member of the G20.

- BRICS are hardly a growth pole: since 2013, the average annual GDP growth has not exceeded 1% for 3 of its members, Russia, Brazil, and South Africa. Egypt and Ethiopia are not taking off; Iran is becoming impoverished; growth has slowed significantly in China in recent years. Therefore, only India, or even Saudi Arabia, remains as growth poles, and thus, the fragmentation has increased.

- BRICS are lagging behind in the energy transition: they are responsible for 22 billion tons of greenhouse gas emissions compared to 9 billion tons for the G7. At this level, the common concerns of the planet, such as climate change, should prevail over ideological quarrels.

- BRICS have very little influence on the international stock market: compared to the United States, which represents 60% of global market capitalization, they offer the best attractiveness for technological values seeking listing and the best liquidity for investments; none of the BRICS is likely to offer an alternative, at most diversification for investors. The listing of many Chinese companies in the United States, despite political tensions between the two countries, is a good indicator.

**S. Deshpande<sup>1</sup>**

## RUSSIA IN THE NEW MULTIPOLAR WORLD: AIMS AND POSSIBILITIES

Since the late 1990s, the concept of multipolarity has gained prominence around the globe. Russia and China, in particular, have repeatedly agreed on this ill-defined term and subsequently have included it or alluded to it in nearly all of their joint declarations, statements, and treaties dating from the mid-1990s to the present. At a time when American hegemony is declining and speculation abounds as to which among the world's burgeoning nations will rise to power, it is important to examine the renewed Sino-Russian rela-

tionship and one of its foundational pillars – the promotion of multipolarity.

The bipolar international system of 1945 was over after the disintegration of Soviet Union in 1991. The Soviet breakup appeared to be one of the constitutive factors for the emerging new world order. Whereas one of the two superpowers crumbled, the USA, endured and it took the preeminent position in the international system. The dissolution of the Soviet Union gave birth to new independent states with Russia amongst them. Many other actors ranging from the Central European countries to China and North Korea faced a problem of accommodating the new systemic realities and reconsidering their foreign policies. The system of various alliances between states and

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inter-governmental organizations was likewise deeply affected by the change of the international system in the aftermath of the end of the Cold War.

Not surprisingly, systemic shifts of early 1990s made it necessary for all international players to gain a position in the new international system that would signify their roles and ambitions in world politics for years to come.<sup>1</sup>

US has entered the new international system as an unchallenged leader and took the status of the pole state in a unipolar system. The predominant position of the US was not challenged within the first years after the end of the Cold War. Other major powers, such as Japan and the European Union, accepted the status quo and became subordinate within the US-centered unipolar system. China, another would-be great power showed no explicit revisionist intentions.<sup>2</sup>

As for the major intergovernmental organizations, the role of UN decreased and so did the value of UN membership. At the same time, the US-led NATO started expanding its power eastwards, which undoubtedly made the status of a NATO country appealing for the states seeking both security guarantees from the US and the role of a US ally. Likewise, other US-led or western-centered organizations and clubs, such as the IMF, GATT/WTO and G7 entered the unipolar world order as international institutions in the new international setting. Eventually, in Europe the changes of 1989–1991 signified a widening gap between those states that openly decided to join the western institutions of EU and NATO and those that remained outside e. g. Russia and Belarus.

The brief summary provided above describes the structural factors behind Russian foreign policy in the early 1990s. Like all international actors, Russia faced a challenge of solving the structural dilemma of how to deal with the new world order. The general trend for Russia was that its political leadership defined a country's status in the world as that of a great power, despite this being inconsistent with the structural settings of the unipolar system. Since 1993 Russia has been claiming this status which it believes fits its geographical vastness, strategic interests and nuclear capabilities.<sup>3</sup> However, the aspirations for great power status were nothing but an ambitious blueprint, as they represented an enormous misperception of what status could be attainable in the new post-cold war international order. The inconsistency became visible at three levels: the global, the regional and the institutional.

At the global level, Russia didn't recognize the unipolarity as the organizing principle of the new world order. Instead, the vision of multipolar world became prevalent in the Russian diplomatic parlance, especially after Yevgeni Primakov took the helm of Russia's foreign policy in 1996. According to the Primakov doctrine, the end of the Cold War was the exit to multipolarity with both US and Soviet (Russian) power diminishing and giving way to many other powerful actors like China or united Germany.

In the multipolar world Russia is seen as, first and foremost, one of the "poles" with a status equal to the US,

EU, China and Japan. Although neither in fact nor in theory could Russia put itself on a par with these actors due to its economic decline, in the multipolar world Russia's great power status was taken as a given due to its permanent seat in the UN Security Council and vast nuclear capabilities. In the bipolar world these two elements used to be a crucial part of the deterrence model in which the US and the Soviet Union were the two superpowers. References to the country's seat in the UNSC and its nuclear capabilities would become a permanent feature of Russia's foreign policy practice.<sup>4</sup>

Although the posture of multipolarity presumed the absence of any dividing lines or the spheres-of-interest logic, Russia claimed to be a regional hegemonic power. This doctrine would justify a certain zone of influence and responsibility beyond Russia's borders. This zone named "The Near Abroad" mainly covered the former Soviet Republics; however, the case of NATO enlargement showed that Russia was extremely sensitive over the idea of Central European countries as well as the Baltic States joining NATO for the first ten years after the Cold War. The main challenge for Russia's status as a pole in the multipolar world was that the international system of 1990s was more prone to be unipolar than multipolar.<sup>5</sup> Russia therefore, in order to get recognition of its great power status, would have to remake the international structure. To do this Russian diplomacy was assigned a double task: 1) to pursue the country's foreign policy interests, to establish crucially important cooperation, and ensure rapprochement with the major Western actors; and 2) to try to regain the great power status by transforming the system to the doctrinal pattern of multipolarity.

Multipolarity emerged as a solution to Russia's structural problem of positioning itself in the world. It relied on capabilities that Russia inherited from the USSR, e. g. the permanent seat in the UNSC, membership of the OSCE, and not least, the country's own nuclear capabilities, however the doctrine failed to provide for Russia's genuine integration into the new international system, because it implied balancing the growing power of the new global actors, e. g. the US, NATO and the EU. This approach negatively affected the coherence of Russia's foreign policy, as reacquisition of great power status as an ultimate goal inevitably raised tension and suspicions in the West.<sup>6</sup> Russia's political, economic, and diplomatic transformations began in late 1991 with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the independence of Russia and other constituent republics. Over the past 30 years, Russia's foreign policy has been occasionally adjusted in response to changes in domestic and international situations and has gradually established its own characteristics: independence, all-sidedness, and the image of a great power. Russia's foreign policy, while safeguarding its own national interests, has had a significant impact on both global politics and regional situations. On the 30th anniversary of the collapse of the Soviet Union, it is of great academic value and practical significance to explore in depth the evolution of Russian foreign policy during the 30 years and its internal and external motivations, probe into its continuity, and analyze its impact on the international landscape.

<sup>1</sup> From Yugoslavia to Iraq: Russia's Foreign Policy and the Effects of Multipolarity // Ulkopoliittinen instituutti (UPI) – The Finnish Institute of International Affairs (FIIA). 2023. Working Papers 42. URL: <https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/14440/WP42.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> From Yugoslavia to Iraq...

<sup>4</sup> From Yugoslavia to Iraq...

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.



### **Eurasia in the Multipolar World Order**

In this Multipolar World Order, the West and East will contend across the supercontinent, primarily in the Indo-Pacific (South and East Asia), Central Asia, South Caucasus, Central and Eastern Europe, and even the Middle East. This struggle will be manifested in hot wars or proxy wars in fragile regions. Ukraine and Syria are already arenas of conflict. International norms and laws are being interpreted in different ways. To justify their actions in different parts of Eurasia, the great powers will appeal to principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and self-determination. But the rules and legalities will play a secondary role, with economic, political and military capabilities of states playing the decisive role. This tough competition between the rival great powers asserting their spheres of influence will entail weaponized sanctions to secure technologies and exclude the opponent from access to markets, controls over vaccine distribution, restrictions on financial activities, and battles for influence in international organizations. This will only mean continued instability across the continent – a “new Cold War”, as some have called it.

Market access for companies of different states will be limited depending on the spheres of influence of the poles. Cyberspace will be another battlefield where great and middle powers will compete. Small and middle states may have little or no room to choose or maneuver. They will have to or be forced to choose one of the poles or centers, given their practical economic and/or security needs. Their independence will be diminished. In the Multipolar World Order 2.0, the centers will limit or even cut their economic links with rivals or perceived adversaries over geopolitical or even ideological differences, as has already happened between the West and Russia. The continuation of these trends will only lead to new conflicts.

The war in Ukraine, which started on February 24, 2022, has become the top security concern of the Eurasian continent. The post-Cold War unipolar moment is long over. To be sure, Biden has tried – with some success – to use the conflict to rally Western allies and other partners around the world to apply sanctions on Russia (in addition to those that were already in place in response to Moscow’s annexation of Crimea in 2014). After the invasion of Ukraine, 141 members of the United Nations voted for a measure demanding that Russia withdraw unconditionally. Only four countries – Belarus, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK), Eritrea and Syria – supported Moscow and rejected the resolution, with 47 abstaining or missing the vote.

### **Multipolarity in Foreign Policy under Putin**

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, influenced by a series of factors, including dramatic changes in the international landscape after the Cold War, the volatility of the international situation, changes in domestic political and economic development, and the diplomatic philosophy of Russian leaders, Russia’s foreign policy has undergone a process of evolution from exploration to establishment. From 1991 to 1995, Russia has been committed to a Pro-Western Diplomacy. The halt of the Cold War put an end to the military, political, and ideological confrontation between Russia and the West, and Moscow not only inherited Gorbachev’s Pro-Western Diplomacy, but also strove

to develop closer relationship with the West. From 1996 to 2000, Russia has been committed to the Multipolar Diplomacy, the main goal of which was to restore Russia’s status as a great power and promote a multipolar world. Opposing NATO’s eastward expansion and seeking to minimize its adverse effects. Promoting the establishment of the CIS Free Trade Area, building a regional collective security system and leading the establishment of a customs union (later reorganized as the Eurasian Economic Community) and the Russia-Belarus Community (later upgraded to the Russia-Belarus Union State). Establishing a strategic partnership with China in 1996 and with India in 2000 to counterbalance the U. S.

The main reasons for implementing the Multipolar Diplomacy include: NATO’s eastward expansion posed a direct threat to Russia’s security; the U. S. attempted to create a unipolar world of hegemony and forced Russia to accept this international system, the West was wary of Russia for its – imperial ambitions; the rise of Russian nationalist sentiment, etc. The Multipolar Diplomacy, to a certain extent, demonstrated Russia’s status as a great power and made Russian diplomacy more comprehensive. From 2001 to 2004, Russia was committed to the foreign policy of Great Power Pragmatism, the core of which was to create a favorable external environment for its economic and social development and to restore its great power status. The 9/11 attacks provided an opportunity for the Putin government to end the cold relations with the West since the Kosovo War and to pursue the foreign policy of Great Power Pragmatism. From 2005 to 2008, Russia was committed to the foreign policy of Neo-Slavism. Responding to U. S. and European interference in Russia’s internal affairs as well as – color revolutions in the CIS region, President Putin embarked on a democratic path suited to Russian conditions domestically and diplomatically pursued a policy of cooperating with the U. S. but firmly countering it in areas of core interests to Russia.

From 2009 to 2013, Russia was committed to the Stability and Cooperation Diplomacy, the main goals of which include: maintaining Russia’s great power status and Russian-American strategic stability; keeping stable relations with the West; safeguarding stability in the CIS region and domestic socio-political stability; advancing the foreign policy of cooperation and avoiding conflicts with other countries.

Since 2014, Russia has been committed to a Great Power Diplomacy, which was prompted by the Ukraine Crisis in February 2014 and the consequent confrontation between Moscow and the West. The main reasons for the Putin administration to implement the Great Power Diplomacy include: the West’s attempts to pull Ukraine into its geostrategic orbit, which crossed Moscow’s red line; the intensification of geopolitical and military competition between Russia and the West; the deep-rooted Russian great power mentality. As a result of this foreign policy, Russia had to strengthened its relations with Asia-Pacific countries, but the Russia-Ukraine conflict has slowed down its modernization.

Over the past three decades since the collapse of the Soviet Union, influenced by domestic and international situations and other factors, Russia’s foreign policy has gone through the stages of Pro-Western Diplomacy, Multipolar Diplomacy, Great Power Pragmatism, Neo-Slavism, Stability and Cooperation Diplomacy, and Great Power Diplo-

macy. Russia's foreign policy has changed in response to the situation, but continuity is seen in those changes and is manifested in its pursuit of great power status, the priority given to national security, the chase for international power, the utilization of international mechanisms, and the focus on economic diplomacy. Russia has already developed an independent foreign policy based on national interests, which has played an important role in maintaining national sovereignty and security and promoting economic and social development, and has had a significant impact on the international situation as well. Now Russia has rebuilt its relations with the outside world, but such relations are not yet mature or even stable, which is prominently reflected in Russia's relations with the West, with the CIS and other regions or countries.

Russia's policy, therefore, is to remain tactically flexible, prepared for every eventuality, but also to be more strategic than ever in building a world order that is stable, peaceful, and comfortable for Russia.<sup>1</sup> As the US and Europe are not ready to engage in order-building with Russia and other major non-Western actors, instead adopting an oppositional posture, and – primarily due to internal political reasons – because they are highly unlikely to so engage in the next decade, a new international order's emergence is more likely to occur in the 2030s or 2040s than in the 2020s, after the inevitable rotation of elites in the US and the EU.

### **Ukraine war: Is a new multipolar world emerging?**

Russia-Ukraine conflict is undoubtedly one of the biggest geopolitical conflicts of the 21st century. What would be a regional issue in our analysis, turned into a global event with economic and geopolitical impacts that will last for decades to come. The uncritical analysis of the subject is the main obstacle to a real geopolitical comprehension of the ongoing process. Our goal is to make some considerations to fill these gaps.

Russian demands about its geopolitical security have continuously been disregarded by either Washington or Brussels over the past three decades. Europeans and North Americans did their best to expand the European Union and NATO to Eastern Europe despite Moscow consistently expressing its dissatisfaction with such an advance.

In fact, Russia has always represented a "geopolitical concern" to Washington due to its military and technological capacity inherited from the USSR. The ideal Russia for the West only occurred under the leadership of Boris Yeltsin (1991–1999) when the country made the transition to capitalism in a sudden and dramatic process, going through one of its most severe economic and social crises.

Western perspective has a divergent viewpoint. Maintaining NATO created in the Cold War scenario makes no sense. However, it makes sense when we think of the billions of dollars in sale of war material produced largely by the US to its European partners and the multi-million commissions involved. It is to keep Europe under Washington's political and military domain. On the economic side, the expansion of the European Union over Eastern Europe followed the same logic. By increasing the number of member states, the aim is to address the challenges faced by an economic union under problems.

US had the perception that it could take advantage of the Russia-Ukraine conflict to weaken Vladimir Putin's leadership, promote an upgrade in the criticized existence of NATO and facilitate a possible regime change through economic strangulation. They underestimated the neutral stance of China, India, Brazil and several countries on the African continent. It also provided the ground for the de-dollarization of the world economy due to the economic sanctions against the Russia, uniting the objectives of several countries that already questioned the supremacy of the dollar as the dominant commercial transaction currency. The sanctions on Russia have directly impacted Europe, while the US benefitted economically and Europeans suffer as much as Moscow from their effects.

### **Russia and Multilateral Organizations**

Moscow believes the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), and to a lesser extent the BRICS group (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) afford it opportunities to shore up its clout amid shifting global power dynamics, push back against Western influence in Eurasia, manage relations in a more competitive landscape, highlight the importance of the United Nations as the legitimate arbiter of international laws and norms and counter what it perceives as repeated Western efforts to skirt those norms, thwart Western efforts to isolate Russia diplomatically and through sanctions, project Russian power and influence, and bolster its international standing.

The influence of these institutions, however, should not be overstated. For Russia, their importance is more symbolic than substantive. With China's increasing economic and political power in global affairs, they also allow Russia to manage its relationship with a rising China, particularly in Russia's own backyard.

For Russia, the importance of these organizations is more symbolic than substantive. They help the Kremlin to highlight, both at home and abroad, that Moscow retains international standing, that it has the diplomatic means to counter the expansion of Western influence around its periphery and U. S. and European efforts to isolate Russia, and that Russia is a global, not just a Eurasian or regional, power. Engaging in these international organizations and groups also helps Moscow push back at Western efforts to isolate Russia diplomatically following a long series of transgressions. Russia may be isolated from the Euro-Atlantic community, but these organizations help show that Moscow is not isolated from the rest of the world.

In the face of China's growing prominence in economic and political terms, there are few indications that these organizations are helping Russia manage its relationship with a rising China. That is particularly the case in Russia's own backyard, where the disparity between the two countries' economic influence is increasingly evident. While Russia has long held grand hopes of advancing its larger security and geopolitical agenda through international organizations,<sup>2</sup> these efforts have been stymied by the objections and conflicting interests of the member

<sup>1</sup> Послание Президента РФ Федеральному собранию 20 февраля 2019 года // КонсультантПлюс : [сайт]. URL: [http://www.consultant.ru/document/cons\\_doc\\_LAW\\_318543](http://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_318543).

<sup>2</sup> Stronski P., Sokolsky R. Multipolarity in Practice: Understanding Russia's Engagement with Regional Institutions // Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. 2020. 8 Jan. URL: <https://carnegieendowment.org/2020/01/08/multipolarity-in-practice-understanding-russia-s-engagement-with-regional-institutions-pub-80717>.

states – some of whom do not share Moscow's agenda of transforming the EAEU, SCO, or BRICS into an anti-Western club. This includes China, India, and many countries of Central Asia.

But these successes come at a price. These organizations were created to advance cooperation among their members in dealing with regional problems and challenges that are also of concern to Moscow. Russia's behavior toward multilateral institutions is driven primarily by how they advance Russian national interests rather than broader organizational purposes and priorities. This attitude has been one important factor that has undermined the capacity of these groups to achieve their objectives. As a result, regional problems are festering, and Russia is neither serving its own interests nor those of its neighbors or other member states.

### Conclusion

The establishment of a new world order will take time, and in the meantime serious conflicts and crises could occur. The current state of US-Russia relations is just a beginning in this regard. In the medium term, the priority for major powers is to prevent a new large-scale war, which is becoming highly likely. In this regard, Russia, again, intends to act as a key security provider through its foreign and defence policies. Russia's pivot to Asia will continue and the Greater Eurasia comprehensive partnership concept will gradually be substantiated and thus will become a zone of stability and a powerful unit within the global order.

Russia will continue to deepen partnerships with China and India and to enhance cooperative relations with US allies and partners like Japan, South Korea, and, when possible, Western European countries. Neither major European allies nor Asian allies of the US support further escalation of the Russia-West and US-Russia confrontation. Maintaining these relationships seems the best way to forward the confrontation's conclusion on terms compatible with the current state of the world.

It's expected that this clash between NATO and Russia will bring about a permanent reordering in the power dynamics of geopolitical forces in the 21st century. The so-called American Century is being finalized by the rise of new and future powers such as China, whose global role is gaining strength. Beijing's performance in the Russian-Ukrainian conflict demonstrates that its action is guided by long-term projects: collaboration in the weakening of the North American power to determine the punishment of its enemies through economic means, consolidating BRICS as a global influencer, the decrease of the dollar as an international currency and the support for a multipolar spectrum as the basis of the international system in the current century.

The world is witnessing the steady rise of a new multipolar world order and most countries are ready to assert their sovereignty and defend their national interests, traditions, culture. A multipolar world order will ultimately contribute to "steady and sustainable global development", and help solve pressing social, economic, technological and environmental challenges.

**Ye. G. Drapeko<sup>1</sup>,  
A. A. Kovalyov<sup>2</sup>**

### HUMANITARIAN COOPERATION WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF BRICS

In general, humanitarian cooperation within the BRICS framework is an important tool for addressing global humanitarian challenges and creating sustainable development

in the region and beyond. Within the framework of humanitarian co-operation in the field of education and science, BRICS is establishing exchanges of students, teachers and researchers. Projects in this area include initiatives such as the establishment of joint research centres, joint scientific conferences and publications. We should also mention the formation of permanent institutions for the preservation of historical heritage, the work of museums and libraries, and youth cultural co-operation. There are such platforms for cultural exchange as the Alliance of Museums, the Alliance of Art Museums and Galleries, the Alliance of Library Cooperation and the Association of Children's and Youth Theatres.<sup>3</sup>

In May 2022, the Ministers of Culture of the five countries signed an action plan for the implementation of the Cultural Partnership Agreement for 2022–2026 aimed at deepening cooperation in preserving and promoting the cultural heritage of the BRICS countries, developing cooperation in the digital space and creative industries.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> First Deputy Chairman of the Committee on Culture of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, Deputy to the State Duma of the Russian Federation, Ph. D. in Sociology. Author of a number of scientific publications, including: "Economics and Management in a Tourism Entity" (co-authored), "Constitutional Rights and Freedoms of Citizens in the Mechanism of Cultural and Legal Relations" (co-authored), "Artistic Education in Modern Society", and others. Member of the Permanent Committee of the Interparliamentary Assembly of the CIS Member States on Culture, Information, Tourism and Sports. Honored Artist of the RSFSR. Recipient of the Lenin Komsomol Prize. Awarded the Orders of Honor, Friendship, Medals "In Commemoration of the 850th Anniversary of Moscow", "In Commemoration of the 300th Anniversary of St. Petersburg", "On the Occasion of the 100th Anniversary of Sholokhov", Certificate of Honor of the State Duma of the Russian Federation. Professor of the SPbUHSS (1994–1999).

<sup>2</sup> Deputy of the Legislative Assembly of St. Petersburg of the I–VI convocations (1994–2021), Researcher at the Institute of Archaeology of the RAS. Expert of the State Duma Committee on Culture, specializing in legal regulation of the cultural heritage protection. Author of over 100 publications on archaeology of the Eurasian steppes of the Bronze and Early Iron Ages, ancient history and archaeology of China and Mongolia, etc. Awarded the badge of Russia's Ministry of Culture "For Achievements in Culture", the gratitude of the Chairman of the Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, the Certificate of Honor of the Governor of St. Petersburg, the medal "In memory of the 300th anniversary of St. Petersburg", etc.

<sup>3</sup> Наумов А. О., Наумова А. Ю., Белоусова М. В. Культурная дипломатия группы БРИКС // Государственное управление : электронный вестник. 2023. № 100. С. 7–18 ; Богатырева О. Н., Ковба Д. М., Табаринцева-Романова К. М. Межцивилизационный диалог как инструмент гуманитарной дипломатии стран БРИКС // Дискурс-Пи. 2022. Т. 19, № 3. С. 101–121.

<sup>4</sup> Наумов А. О., Наумова А. Ю., Белоусова М. В. *Op. cit.* С. 14.



Cultural co-operation within the BRICS framework also provides an opportunity for exchange of experience and knowledge transfer between the member countries. It allows each country to learn from the experience of others and use it for its own development.<sup>1</sup>

The deepening of Russia's partnership with other states in a multipolar world urgently requires the creation of a system of regional and universal international treaties in the humanitarian sphere, reflecting the specifics of integration processes and promoting the social and cultural development of partner states.

The Russian Federation is a party to several conventions under which it has assumed obligations in the field of cultural heritage protection. These conventions are part of the UNESCO and Council of Europe systems of international legal instruments.

The Council of Europe conventions ratified by the Russian Federation (the Convention on the Architectural Heritage of Europe and the European Convention on the Protection of Archaeological Heritage) are more specific and contribute to the introduction at the national level of generally accepted international standards of attitude to cultural heritage. Unfortunately, such detailed documents have been adopted by UNESCO only in the form of recommendations.

At present, the Russian Federation and its strategic partners participate in a number of UN conventions and its bodies, but the provisions of these treaties need to be specified in order to ensure the best conditions for cooperation.

One example is the "UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property", under which Member States undertake, *inter alia*, to control archaeological excavations, to ensure the preservation "in situ" of certain cultural property, to promote the development or establishment of scientific and technical institutions (museums, libraries, archives, laboratories, workshops, etc.) necessary for the preservation and promotion of cultural property, and to ensure the preservation of the cultural heritage. These provisions of the Convention have been concretised by UNESCO in a series of recommendations that have formed the basis of more extensive international treaties for the protection of archaeological heritage of a regional character. More recently, the UNESCO-UNIDROIT Legal Committee adopted a recommendation to enshrine in national legislation a provision on State ownership of archaeological monuments and all archaeological finds, regardless of their location.

The Russian Federation, relying on the norms of ratified international legal acts, as well as taking into account the recommendations of UNESCO, has created an advanced regulatory framework in the field of cultural heritage and, first and foremost, the protection of archaeological monuments. Provisions on the preventive protection of archaeological heritage, including archaeological prospecting on developed land plots, on state ownership of archaeological monuments and finds, on the strict regulation of archaeological research, on the criminalisation of the instrumental search for antiquities, and on the classification of all archaeological finds as part of the state museum fund are included in the federal law (73-FZ). For the first time in the world,

a norm on state guarantees to citizens to ensure the preservation of heritage in the interests of present and future generations appeared in national legislation.

At the same time, the states of the "global south" are still not covered by an international treaty aimed at introducing generally accepted international standards for the treatment of archaeological heritage. Unfortunately, not all BRICS countries, with the exception of the Russian Federation, Egypt, the UAE and China (where, however, normative regulation has been replaced by active administration), have sufficiently developed legislation in this area. Poverty of the population, insufficient funding for scientific work and lack of personnel to protect archaeological and cultural sites allow, in particular, uncontrolled plundering of archaeological monuments for the purpose of illegal export, mainly to Western countries. Sometimes international groups of plunderers, taking advantage of gaps in legislation, after illegally exporting cultural property, for example, from Russia, India or China, legalise it on the territory of third countries of the Eurasian continent and then openly sell it on Internet auctions. At the same time, within the framework of, for example, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, regular but inconclusive ministerial meetings are held on the problem of illegal trafficking of antiquities.

Based on the experience of the Russian Federation and neighbouring countries, Russian specialists have prepared theses for a draft international treaty aimed at ensuring the preservation of archaeological heritage and preventing its illicit trafficking. First of all, such a document is relevant for the Eurasian cultural space: the remote transmission of cultural and technological innovations, religions, migration of ancient and medieval peoples across the continent has created a unique picture of cultural diversity and unity. All states of the continent should be interested in establishing strict and reasonable national rules regarding antiquities, which is the key to curbing illegal international trafficking of these objects.

The Russian Federation's launching of such an initiative should help to strengthen the authority of our country in the international arena and initiate the creation of a system of Eurasian regional conventions in the field of humanitarian law.

### Main messages for the draft international treaty

Based on the need to prevent illegal excavations and spontaneous destruction of archaeological sites, to suppress illegal international trafficking of antiquities, taking into account the obligations undertaken by the States Parties to the UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, the proposed draft international treaty for the protection of archaeological heritage should include the following provisions:

- definition of the concept of archaeological heritage as well as its movable part, whether or not associated with certain immovable archaeological monuments;
- enshrining the guarantees of States Parties to ensure the preservation of archaeological heritage in the interests of present and future generations of its citizens;
- enshrining the principle of preventive legal protection of movable and immovable parts of archaeological heritage;

<sup>1</sup> Гуманитарное сотрудничество в рамках БРИКС: ключевые аспекты и перспективы. URL: <https://nauchniestati.ru/spravka/gumanitarnoe-sotrudnichestvo-v-ramkah-briks/>.

- consolidation of the priority of the right of state ownership of movable and immovable archaeological objects buried in the ground, on the ground and under water, irrespective of the ownership rights to the relevant land (water) plots;
- norms on ensuring preliminary archaeological survey of territories subject to economic development (archaeological reconnaissance) in order to identify previously unknown archaeological heritage sites and to prepare a set of measures for the preservation or full scientific research of archaeological monuments;
- norms on ensuring rescue archaeological research in case it is impossible to ensure the preservation of an archaeological site during construction, excavation or other works;
- norms on limitation or complete prohibition of civil turnover of the movable part of the archaeological heritage;

- norms on the regulation of archaeological research, including the issuance of permission by the competent authority to investigate a certain monument (territory) within a reasonable period of time, the obligation to submit to the competent authority a full scientific report on the conducted research and transfer the finds for state storage, and the conduct of scientific expertise of the submitted reports;
- a norm on ensuring effective measures against illegal excavations, arbitrary use of metal detectors and other technical means to search for archaeological objects;
- establishing guarantees for States parties to ensure proper storage of archaeological finds from archaeological excavations, as well as those seized by the State from illicit trafficking.

**N. El-Sheikh<sup>1</sup>**

## **BRICS: THE DRIVING FORCE FOR THE NEW WORLD ECONOMIC ORDER**

During the structural global transformations, the strategic developments are usually accompanied by economic ones that support them and reflect their depth at the same time. The end of World War II with the American nuclear bombing to Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6 and 9, 1945, was preceded by an economic nuclear bomb that destroyed the world economic order based at that time on pluralism. Washington has launched Bretton Woods's system in 1944, with its triple foundations. It took the advantage of the European economies and governments' collapse on the backdrop of the war, to dominate the world economy. Although Moscow participated in the discussions of Bretton Woods' conference, it did not join the agreement, considering it a clear American hegemony over the proposed economic system. Actually, Washington dominated the conference work, through adopting the American "White Plan", which reflects the United States point of view and interest only, and ignored the "Keynes Project", which represented the British ones.

After six decades of total American economic hegemony, the world order has witnessed fundamental changes at the strategic and economic levels. Since the economic crisis of 2008, developments are accelerating and the challenge to the United States unipolarity is rising both politically and economically. Those who are complaining and refusing the unipolar system with all its dimensions, including economic ones, are growing. Demands are rising for a pluralistic global system that is more just, more stable, and more responsive to the interests of all countries.

The inauguration of BRICS was the beginning of such transformation and the leading force for it. BRICS works for economic multilateralism by moving along three main pillars that together represent a triangle of solid base for the new world economic order.

### **De-dollarization**

BRICS is working on a complete abandonment of dollar in trade and commercial transactions through a steady shift towards the use of local currencies. The dominance of a single currency over trade is an unprecedented exception in history. The rise of the United States at the beginning of the twentieth century was linked to the rapid growth of the American economy, its endeavor to translate its huge economic power into global political and strategic influence, and the sharp decline of competing European economies in the wake of the devastation that befell Europe during World War II. That enabled Washington to extend its control over the global economy through a set of mechanisms. The most important and influential of which is the adoption of the dollar in all financial and commercial transactions globally. For more than seven decades, the dollar has dominated the trade as all commodities have been priced in dollars, most notably oil, stocks and financial reserves all over the world. The destination of money around the world has been linked to the value of the dollar and the interest rate determined by the US Federal Reserve, which was obvious when the latter began rising the interest rate 11 times in a row since February 2022.

During the last two years, BRICS' countries have taken important steps towards ending the dollar's global dominance. Including increasing transactions between them in the local currencies. The world seems ready to build on such seismic trends and further accelerate the process of de-dollarization as US policymakers continue to weaponize the dollar. The developments accompanying the Ukraine crisis gave strong impetus to such trend, which might have taken decades longer. Russia is working seriously to completely abandon the dollar in trade, as well as in paying for Russian energy and arms as well. The share of local currencies has increased to represent 65% of Russia's total trade with foreign countries and 70% with main trade partners by the end of 2023.<sup>2</sup> The European companies are paying for Russian gas in rubles for the first time. In January 2023, the Russian Central Bank added 9 currencies to the list of

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<sup>2</sup> Доля нацвалют во внешней торговле РФ по итогам 2023 года вырастет до 65 % // Интерфакс : [website]. 2023. 12 дек. URL: <https://www.interfax.ru/russia/935855>.

currencies for which it sets an official exchange rate with ruble, bringing the number to 43 currencies.<sup>1</sup> The expansion using local currencies with Russia's trading partners, accelerated the pace of de-dollarization, and placed the ruble in an unprecedented economic position as an international trading and evaluation currency.

China and India are following the same path. The proportion of mutual dealing in yuan and ruble reached 95% of the total trade between Russia and China in November 2023.<sup>2</sup> India began settling accounts with Russia in rupee in December 2022. Tehran and Moscow began dealing in ruble and riyal as well since July 2022. Same with Turkey, where Turkish exports to Russia in lira increased by approximately 400%. The Turkish imports from Russia in lira increased by approximately 150%, and in rubles by 260% in November 2023.<sup>3</sup> India has also signed an agreement with the UAE allowing it to settle commercial transactions in rupees instead of dollars in July 2023. The volume of bilateral trade between India and the UAE reached \$84.5 billion in 2022/2023. India is the third largest importer and consumer of oil in the world. The Indian Central Bank announced in 2022 a framework for settling global trade in rupees.<sup>4</sup> That reflects a worldwide trend that goes beyond the BRICS group. It is a growing trend as many countries lost confidence in dollar, which Washington is printing large quantities of without a gold backing.

During the BRICS summit on June 22, 2022, it was agreed to create an international reserve currency based on the BRICS basket of currencies. The new currency will be backed by gold to support its value and its ability to compete with the dollar in international trade. BRICS countries are increasing their gold reserves in preparation for the creation of that common currency. The BRICS Bank is also working to develop a unified digital currency for the group's countries. According to the head of the monetary policy department at BRICS Bank, Ivando Cassino, the issuance of the digital currency will take place through stages, within 5–10 years. It may be used initially as an investment instrument, and later in business dealings.

In this context, the share of dollar reserves held by central banks globally declined to 59%, the lowest level in 25 years, during the fourth quarter of 2020, according to a survey conducted by the International Monetary Fund on the official foreign currency reserves. In 2016, the IMF included the Chinese yuan as a reserve currency in the basket of currencies that make up the Special Drawing Rights, along with the US dollar, euro, pound sterling, and yen. Central banks in the world are moving to use the Chinese yuan as part of their efforts to diversify their foreign currency reserves. In a sign indicating the gradual decline of the dollar's dominance, in light of the tensions ravaging the global political arena. The percentage of reserve managers in central banks who invest or have a desire to invest

in yuan has increased to about 85% during 2022, according to a survey was conducted by the UBS investment firm on 30 major central banks in the period between April and June 2022. The increasing desire for the Chinese currency came after Western countries froze about \$300 billion of Moscow's hard currency reserves, as part of the sanctions they impose on Russia. Concerns related to American inflation, and the efforts made by the Federal Reserve to combat it, also affected confidence in the dollar.

The dissolution of dollar's status as a dominant global currency will inevitably affect the American economy. Washington would also lose an important tool for international influence, which is a strong indicator of the shift towards a new multipolar economic order.

### Alternative payment and financial transactions systems

The second pillar is to create banking and payment systems independent from "SWIFT", which is dominated by the United States. BRICS countries are working to integrate their national payment and financial transactions systems. That includes the Russian SPFS, the Chinese CIPS, the Indian SFMS, and the Brazilian Pix. More than 159 foreign institutions from 20 countries have been linked to the Russian SPFS.<sup>5</sup> The Chinese CIPS has a huge infrastructure, spanning six continents and 47 countries around the world. It is limited to yuan only. In May 2023, 30 Russian banks were linked to the Chinese payment system CIPS, among dozens of Russian banks that submitted applications to join it.<sup>6</sup> The connection of Russian banks to the Chinese banking system helps them make payments directly without the need for money transfers to pass through Western banks. That would facilitate the trade between Russia and China. The logistics (shipping period) will become more predictable, not only for large companies but also for small and medium-sized business in Russia. Smooth payments are a necessity as faltering payments affect the shipping period and logistics services. Based on this, alternative payment systems are crucial to enhance cooperation, especially with the exit of Russia, Iran, and a number of other countries from SWIFT. However, there are regulatory and technical difficulties facing Russian banks when they join the Chinese system. Each bank needs to individually agree with the Chinese side and adapt to CIPS requirements. Technically, it requires installing software and training staff to implement the exchanges.

On April 18, 2023, an agreement was signed according to which India has adopted the Russian financial messaging system SPFS for bank payments to Russia. In recent years, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has been proactively trying to internationalize the rupee and its payment systems. First steps are being taken. One of the two significant memorandums of understanding signed mid-July, between the RBI and the Central Bank of the UAE related to the interlinking of respective payment systems, to promote the use of rupee and UAE dirham bilaterally and cost-effective fast cross-

<sup>1</sup> Банк России начинает устанавливать официальные курсы рубля еще к 9 иностранным валютам // Банк России : [website]. 2023. 18 янв. URL: <https://cbr.ru/press/pr/?file=638096472718284108DATABASES.htm>.

<sup>2</sup> 95% торговых операций между Россией и Китаем прошли в рублях и юанях // РБК : [website]. 2023. 20 нояб. URL: <https://www.rbc.ru/rbcfree/news/655b40d69a7947e7013c1967>.

<sup>3</sup> Россия и Турция увеличили использование нацвалют в двусторонней торговле // РБК : [website]. 2023. 25 нояб. URL: <https://www.rbc.ru/rbcfree/news/656241a89a794716ef14560e>.

<sup>4</sup> Chaturvedi A. India ties up with UAE to settle trade in rupees // Reuters : [website]. 2023. 15 июля. URL: <https://www.reuters.com/world/india-ties-up-with-uae-settle-trade-rupees-2023-07-15>.

<sup>5</sup> В ЦБ заявили, что к российскому аналогу SWIFT присоединились 557 участников // ТАСС : [website]. 2024. 16 янв. URL: <https://tass.ru/ekonomika/19740461>.

<sup>6</sup> Заруцкая Н. Косвенными участниками китайской системы CIPS стали 30 российских банков // Ведомости : [website]. 2023. 26 мая. URL: <https://www.vedomosti.ru/finance/articles/2023/05/26/976987-kosvennimi-uchastnikami-kitaiskoi-sistemi-cips-stali-30-rossiiskih-bankov>.



border fund transfers. They have also included exploring the linking of payments messaging systems.

Alternative payment and financial transactions systems have proven to be an effective and secure way. The continued increase in the number of participants confirms their efficiency. The widening scope of reliance on it represents a qualitative shift in countries' exit from the financial systems related to the United States (Swift) and their freedom from the pressures and sanctions associated with it.

### Alternative monetary institutions

The third pillar is establishing alternative financial institutions to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB), which are dominated by the United States and a corner stone to "Bretton Woods".

In 2015, the New Development Bank (NDB) and BRICS Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA) were established on the basis of partnership, not hegemony. The initial subscribed capital of the NDB was \$50 billion and the initial authorized capital was \$100 billion. Contributions were distributed equally among the founders of the NDB, with Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa having equal shares. The founding bylaws of the NDB stipulate that no shareholder shall have the right to veto, and that the BRICS members shall assume its presidency in rotation. No founder is allowed to increase its share of the capital, and thus its voting share, without the approval of the other founders. The capital of the founding members collectively, when expanding the bank to include other countries, should not be less than 55% of the total capital. As for the CRA, its founding capital reached \$100 billion. China provided \$41 billion of it, Brazil, Russia, and India each provided \$18 billion, and South Africa \$5 billion. Therefore, China's voting share in it is the largest, meaning that it is actually led by China.

The NDB approach, goals and policy are completely different from those of Western monetary institutions. The IMF and WB follow a policy of political and economic conditionality with the aim of dominating countries and interfering in their internal affairs in a way that serves American interests. They link their loans to the conditions of structural adjustment, liberalizing prices, local currency exchange rate as well, privatizing the public sector, reducing government spending, and increasing taxes in general while reducing them on large companies, especially foreign ones. Unlike Western institutions, both the NDB and CRA aim to support development, especially infrastructure, and build broad international and regional development partnerships. The goal of Western institutions is to impose their political and economic model on other countries. The first loan provided by the World Bank to France after its founding amounted to \$250 million, which was conditional on the removal of communist ministers from the government. The WB did not approve the loan until France complied with that condition. While the NDB provides loans and guarantees for development projects, and is a partner in their establishment. Concerning the CRA, it is supposed to provide short-term loans to help countries overcome imbalance of payments and liquidity pressures, especially those resulting from the deterioration of the exchange rate of their currencies as a result of fluctuating international financial conditions.

Up to the end of 2022, the New Development Bank provided \$32.8 billion loans to 96 development projects in member countries. The loans went to the sectors of transportation, water, sanitation to clean energy and both digital and social infrastructure. Among them is lending \$6 billion to the emergency assistance program for member states to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, and two loans of \$1 billion each to support economic recovery in India and Brazil.<sup>1</sup>

That encourages many countries to join the NDB. The first wave of membership expansion has been in 2021 with Bangladesh, the United Arab Emirates and Uruguay joining in September, then Egypt in December. The contributions of the new members amounted to less than \$1 billion for Bangladesh, about \$1.2 billion for Egypt, and \$556 million for the UAE. Such contributions would strengthen the bank's capital. The NDB is currently about half of the World Bank in terms of the assets it can lend. The CRA is about one-tenth of the IMF, which has a lending capacity of about one trillion dollars, according to its website. More than 15 countries are reportedly seeking to join the New Development Bank. The NDB president, Dilma Rousseff, noted that the bank is currently considering the applications and is likely to approve the admission of only four or five states.

In parallel with the NDB and CRA, China has established the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) in 2015. A total of 92 countries contribute to the bank's capital of more than \$97 billion. China owns about 30% of its shares, India 8.4% and Russia 6.5%. What is striking about this bank is the extensive participation of Western and Western-allied countries in it, such as Canada, Western Europe, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand and others. Very notable exceptions that remained outside it, such as the United States and Japan. The bank is considered an alternative to the Asian Development Bank, which was founded in 1966 and is controlled by the Washington and Tokyo, which are the two largest shareholders with 68 countries participate in it.

A fourth pillar can be added to the previous three main ones. It is the alternative networks and frameworks for partnership and cooperation based on "win-win" principle. The most prominent of which is the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU), led by Russia, and is considered one of the important and promising economic blocs in the Eurasia region. It includes the Customs Union, the Common Economic Space and free trade zone among its five member states, Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Armenia, and Kyrgyzstan. Its total area is 20.2 million km<sup>2</sup>, which is a large market with a population of about 183 million people. It aims to deepen the integration process among its member states, including the formation of common markets for gas, oil and their derivatives. Despite the recent era of the EEU, as it began its work in 2015, it has received the attention of many countries. About 50 countries have expressed the desire to build partnership and free trade zone with it, most notably Egypt.<sup>2</sup>

Several fruitful rounds of negotiations were held regarding the conclusion of a free trade agreement be-

<sup>1</sup> Building a Leading Development Bank for Emerging Economies : Annual Report 2022 // New Development Bank : [website]. URL: [https://www.ndb.int/annual-report-2022/pdf/NDB\\_AR\\_2022\\_complete.pdf](https://www.ndb.int/annual-report-2022/pdf/NDB_AR_2022_complete.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Порядка 50 стран выразили желание сотрудничать с ЕвразЭС // РИА Новости : [website]. 2017. 25 янв. URL: <https://ria.ru/20170125/1486437550.html>.

tween Egypt and the EEU. There are several elements that support launching the partnership between them. The most important of which is the solid base of mutual interests. Egypt represents a large market for the EEU member states, and a hub for their exports to African and Arab markets. It provides an advantage for the products of EEU, the most important of which are wheat, metals, chemical industries, plastic products, cars, and tractors. On the other hand, the EEU represents a distinguished gate for Egyptian exports in the Eurasia and Central Asia region, most notably agricultural commodities, and pharmaceutical products. Promising economic areas in which a mutually beneficial partnership could be reached have been identified, including agriculture, pharmaceutical industries, tourism, infrastructure, textile, and furniture and building materials industry. The partnership agreement will also contribute to develop joint investments in light of the technical support that the EEU can provide Egypt in vital areas. The Russian Industrial Zone in Egypt, which is the first in the Middle East and African, will be a fulcrum in this regard.

Likewise, the Belt and Road project led by China. The belt includes the group of land routes linking China to Europe through Central Asia, South Asia, as well as Southeast Asia. While the road includes a maritime network linking China with major ports across Asia, the Indian Ocean, the Middle East, North Africa, and Europe. This initiative is China's grand plan to expand economic cooperation and infrastructure across continents through strategic land and sea routes. It has indeed succeeded in becoming a global project bringing China closer to the world through investments and infrastructure projects in more than 150 countries. Total investments under the initiative exceeded \$1 trillion in July 2023 with broad development opportunities for many countries.

Economic structural changes have always been the backbone for long-term strategic ones. The world is witnessing critical economic transformations that have a profound impact on the structure of the international system. Despite the American resistance, supported by Europe, the train of change has already moved under the driving force of BRICS and it will inevitably reach its final destination, where a more just and equitable pluralistic world order.

N. K. Garbovsky<sup>1</sup>

## THE BRICS EDUCATIONAL SPACE: VALUE REFERENCE POINTS AND UNIVERSITY RANKINGS

The new international reality, which began to take shape at the end of the last millennium and has been gaining quite distinct outlines in recent years, suggests new challenges to the forms, tendency, and choice of participants in the dialogue of cultures and civilizations. Today, the world economy, trade, finance, and technology markets rapidly transform, and many stereotypes of international relations and intercultural interaction collapse. According to A. S. Zapevsky's fair remark, "Under these conditions, Russia has to simultaneously solve a number of tasks. On the one hand, this is overcoming the crisis of cultural and civilizational identity, formation of its modern national idea, on the other hand, searching for its place in the new globalizing world. The acute issues arise: who should be integrated economically, culturally, and politically with and how to optimally define and realize its national interests?"<sup>2</sup> These issues can-

not but affect the field of education. Herewith, forming new educational space – the educational space of the BRICS countries with that membership, which it has been developing in the last period and with the prospect of its expansion with new members in the coming years – is possible.

The first steps towards formation of common educational space of the BRICS countries were taken over 10 years ago. In November 2013, at the meeting of the BRICS Ministers of Education in Paris, the idea of expediency of establishing BRICS Network University was first articulated, and two years later, in November 2015, the Ministers of Education and Science of the BRICS countries signed the Moscow Declaration on Collaboration, and the Memorandum of Understanding, which was key founding document of BRICS Network University (NuBRICS). In 2016, the founding conference of Network University was held at Ural Federal University, during which the general principles of forming and functioning this international educational institution were discussed, main areas and programs of student training were outlined, and proposals for development prospects were put forward. Network University has united more than 50 universities of the participating countries. Six main areas of scientific research and training were identified: water resources and pollution neutralization; informatics and information security; the BRICS country-studies; ecology and climate change; economics; energy.<sup>3</sup>

Scientific and educational activities within BRICS Network University are coordinated by international thematic groups. Their task is determining the content of educational programs, coordinating procedures for recognizing outcomes of learning by participants of BRICS Network University, resolving issues of academic exchange, mobility, etc.

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<sup>2</sup> *Заневоцкий А. С. Становление глобальной культуры и конфликты цивилизаций (По материалам Международных Лихачевских научных чтений)*. СПб.: СПбГУП, 2018. С. 7.

<sup>3</sup> BRICS Network University : [website]. URL: <http://nu-brics.ru>.

In accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding on establishment of BRICS Network University, main projects are joint educational programs at the master's and postgraduate levels, as well as short-term educational projects of various kinds, in particular, summer and winter schools, courses involving guest professors from partner universities, etc.<sup>1</sup>

Over the past ten years, the geopolitical situation in the world has changed significantly. Today, the BRICS, with its new members, claims not only the status of a financial and economic conglomerate, but also the status of a certain cultural and educational association, within which joint research and educational programs should be implemented, aimed not only at developing scientific knowledge in various fields, but also at training personnel of new generation capable of effective collaboration in various areas of the economic community.

Solution of this ambitious task is impossible without a detailed analysis of the scientific and educational potential of each of the participants in this collaboration, as well as intrinsic factors that can create insurmountable obstacles to international collaboration among the BRICS member states.

For understanding how to move forward and what obstacles may be encountered on the way of educational integration of the BRICS countries, it is expedient to refer to the experience of previous years and analyze some statistical data on joint research and educational activities of the universities from the BRICS member states. So, in the report to the BRICS Global University Summit, the number of scientific articles in SCOPUS published by researchers representing the BRICS countries in collaboration with each other for the period of 2012–2014 is given. The analysis of these data shows a very modest level of joint publication activity by researchers from BRICS universities. The share of articles published by Russian scientists together with researchers from the BRICS countries to the total number of Russian researchers' articles in the SCOPUS database slightly exceeds 1% with Brazil, 1% with India, 2.2% with China and 0.54% with South Africa.<sup>2</sup> It can be assumed that after 2022 these figures will be even lower for the reason that in recent years the number of articles by Russian scientists in journals indexed in the SCOPUS database has significantly decreased. Here-with, as the author of the analytical article "BRICS Network University and its role in building new architecture of multilateral cooperation in the field of education and science" O. A. Alekseenko notes, "the share of joint publications of researchers from the BRICS countries with representatives of the United States and the European Union significantly exceeds similar indicators."<sup>3</sup>

It is impossible not to agree with the author of this article that the main reasons constraining scientific and educational cooperation between the BRICS countries are linguistic and cultural factors: "1. The BRICS states belong to different civilizational areas, use different languages, which often are the main ones in the academic environment, scientific research and publications... 2. The BRICS coun-

tries have their own academic traditions that differ from each other, and mobility of students, undergraduates, post-graduates and scientists is difficult due to geographical factors."<sup>4</sup>

In other words, the eternal and natural barriers to international collaboration – the language barrier and traditions that form cultural identity – can still slow down implementation of the most ambitious international projects.

The author of the above analytical article noted that in international databases, joint scientific publications of the BRICS scientists with authors from the Western world are significantly more frequent. One of the reasons for this publication asymmetry is the requirement to publish scientific articles almost exclusively in English. Apparently, it is no coincidence that even within the BRICS, South Africa has the largest share of joint publications to the total number of publications indexed in the SCOPUS database, with India (3%), where, as in South Africa, English is the language of education and science.

When building projects in the BRICS international educational space, one should not forget that the language of training is one of the most important values of the education system. The question inevitably arises: what language should scientific and educational interaction be carried out within the BRICS – according to the usual model, i. e. in English, a non-native language for both teachers and trainees, or according to some other linguistic model? Should we continue travelling the path of least resistance in the new international educational space, organizing the BRICS education and scientific communication in English? Externally, the societies are ready for this decision: for a long time, at the secondary school level, the widespread study of English has become almost mandatory both in Russia and in other BRICS countries. In higher education, lecturing in English is also quite common practice in many non-English-speaking countries.

Such an apparently easiest linguistic solution to the problem of educational and scientific communication in the architecture of the BRICS educational space to be built today is unlikely to be consistent in both political and cognitive terms.

Wouldn't it be a mistake to turn a blind eye to the fact that the English language naturally supports the expansion of Western Anglo-Saxon culture, many values of which turn out to be unacceptable to the BRICS countries' cultures? Is the example of Iran, a new member of the BRICS, illustrative, which has banned teaching English in primary schools and gradually switches to multilingualism in teaching foreign languages in secondary schools, having realized that studying only English is nothing more than adjustment of the population to the different cultural code of the strange world striving to continue its dominance?

Is it worth neglecting the cognitive experience of the past years, which has proved that it is the native language that is the value allowing the deepest immersion in the object of cognition?

The history of education in our country shows that the forced focus on learning in a non-native language is inevitably replaced by education in the native language. In the middle of the 18th century, Russia integrated into the European educational space. When in Russia, the first Moscow Imperial University was founded, the German pro-

<sup>1</sup> Ongoing ITD projects // BRICS Network University : [website]. URL: <http://nu-brics.ru/pages/projects>.

<sup>2</sup> Алексеев О. А. Сетевой университет БРИКС и его роль в выстраивании новой архитектуры многостороннего взаимодействия в области образования и науки // Вестник высшей школы. 2017. № 9. С. 39.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Алексеев О. А. Op. cit.



fessors brought from Europe to Moscow the mandatory requirement for reading lectures in Latin, the European language of science, as “the foundation of all sciences”. But already in the early years of the university, efficiency of lecturing in Latin was questioned. Lomonosov’s follower, Nikolay Nikitich Popovsky, Professor at Moscow University and translator, stated in his introductory speech to his course of lectures, that when teaching philosophy, Latin is worthless to be used, because “there is no such thought that it would be impossible to be explained in Russian.” It is important to note that it was said about philosophy as the basis of humanitarian knowledge. He also spoke about this at the meeting of the University Conference in 1758, where he did not receive the support of the professors.<sup>1</sup> But in 10 years, the issue of the education language was unequivocally resolved in favor of students’ native language, and at the insistence of the curator of Moscow University M. M. Kheraskov and by decree of the Empress, Russian professors began to lecture *in the language native for them and for students*, about which a note in the *Moskovskiy Vedomosti* newspaper has been preserved: “Since 1768, at Imperial Moscow University, for better dissemination of sciences in Russia, lectures given by natural Russians in the Russian language, at all three faculties, have begun...”

A century and a half later, in the Russian Biographical Dictionary, A. A. Polovtsov, Chairman of the Russian Historical Society, the author of the article dedicated to Popovsky, noted that the speech of Popovsky “is still not uninteresting because of its reasonable criticism of educational importance of so-called classical languages.”<sup>2</sup>

It is also interesting today, for comprehending advantages and disadvantages of using in international education English as the modern language of science and education.

Neglecting linguistic factors in education is extremely dangerous and irresponsible. For the purpose of achieving efficient university interaction within the emerging BRICS educational community, discussing the theme of linguistic coordination of educational and joint research processes seems extremely relevant.

Anglicization of educational and research communication within the BRICS can be countered by a different approach to become possible due to modern information and communication technologies.

This approach supposes students to learn educational and scientific information in their native language. Here-with, university teachers will also use their native language to convey information to the students. The core of this communicative model is translation. In this case, both student education and research activities can be carried out in the language of the country, in which the student or researcher is located.

This approach is not new at all: it was widely used in the Soviet Union for teaching foreign students. However, its efficiency was not great due to the shortage of qualified translators and high cost of using equipment to provide simultaneous translation, and consecutive translation was rather time-consuming.

Today, the very practice of teaching foreign students, who do not speak Russian well enough, clearly shows

a possible way: students widely use electronic translation tools in the classroom, which makes it possible for them to obtain the necessary information in their native language. Further development of information technologies in the field of translation and speech recognition makes this way quite acceptable.

However, for achieving real efficiency, joint international and interlanguage “linguistic refinement” of educational materials by the BRICS countries’ educational community, linguists and specialists in other fields of science is required, with artificial intelligence capacity to be used, in order to minimize distortion and omission of information by automatic translation programs.

This approach would allow foreign students to receive more complete scientific information, compared to what they can get either through a foreign language, which is non-native for them and for an English teacher, or through insufficiently mastering the language of the host university. The translational learning model may increase attractiveness of the universities for international students within the BRICS common educational space, facilitate mobility of students and researchers, and create more comfortable linguistic conditions for absorbing scientific and educational information. All these will contribute to improving the BRICS universities’ status in international rankings, and may also form important criteria for developing new ranking methodologies, in particular, the planned BRICS Universities Ranking.

The initiative on creating the BRICS Universities Ranking, designed to increase recognition of the BRICS member states’ universities in the global educational community, was expressed in July 2023 by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of Russia at the meeting of the BRICS Ministers of Education in South Africa. This initiative was enshrined in the Declaration adopted on the results of the meeting, and further discussed and supported by the expert community during public discussion on the theme “Promotion of the Russian higher education system in the international space” in the Public Chamber, which gathered working groups of the Russian Union of Rectors, the Academy of Sciences, the Academy of Education, as well as public councils under relevant authorities and commissions of the Public Chamber. The BRICS University Ranking could become an alternative to existing international rankings and an important tool for positioning and promoting Russian education and science in the international arena. The idea of ranking universities in the BRICS countries has its objective reasons. Even before 2022, based on the analysis of global rankings, it was revealed that each of them has its own “priorities”: some countries are better positioned, while others are almost invisible. Until 2012–2014, international rankings did not even notice activities of “Phystech” (Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology), the leading Russian university for training specialists in the field of theoretical, experimental and applied physics, mathematics, informatics, chemistry, biology and other exact sciences.

Currently, the situation has worsened: Russia is “poorly visible” in all rankings, in spite of fairly good indicators. Most international rankings openly discriminate against Russian universities. There have been problems with counting Russian authors’ citations by scientometric systems. In

<sup>1</sup> Поповский Николай Никитич // Половцов А. А. Русский биографический словарь. Т. 14. URL: <https://azbyka.ru/otechnik/Spravochniki/russkij-biograficheskij-slovar-tom-14/478> (accessed: 18.04.2024).

<sup>2</sup> Поповский Николай Никитич.

2022, the international organization IREG Observatory engaged in formation of international ranking rules, suspended the membership of Russian universities. Today, our country is in dire need of a national instrument for the global positioning of universities.

In February 2024, at the meeting of the Council for Science and Education with participation of the President of Russia, Academician Sadovnichy, Rector of Lomonosov Moscow State University, announced a new idea – to create a ranking for the BRICS countries. He proposed to develop the methodology for assessing universities, consider it at the Council of the Union of Rectors and present it in October 2024 at the BRICS Summit.<sup>1</sup> The initiative was approved by the head of the Russian state, who said at the meeting of the Presidential Council for Science and Education: “As for the BRICS ranking, this is a very good proposal, we [Russia] chair the organization this year, discussing issues of our collaboration with colleagues. Really good idea. It needs to be developed at the working level.”<sup>2</sup>

It is proposed to base the methodology of the new international university ranking on the criteria of the Three University Missions Ranking, which, along with education and science – values traditional for international rankings, for the first time includes a new criterion – interaction with society, thus evaluating all three key university’s missions.<sup>3</sup> “One of our proposals,” stated V. A. Sadovnichy, Rector of Lomonosov Moscow State University, at the meeting of the Council of the Russian Union of Rectors, “is creating the ranking of universities in the BRICS countries, based on the project ‘Three University Missions’.”<sup>4</sup> According to Sadovnichy, “since 2020, the Three University Missions Moscow International University Ranking has been the most representative in the world: 2,000 universities from 112 countries participate in it; it is based on objective indicators, and considers the particularity of Russia.”<sup>5</sup> The Three University Missions Moscow International University Ranking turned out to be the only tool that makes it possible to assess the international competitive positions of all Russian universities, regardless of the political situation. There are 154 Russian universities represented in it. In total, the Three University Missions ranking fami-

ly assesses 459 universities from 82 regions, i. e. virtually all current universities in Russia. The closest competitor – the British THE – ranks only 76 Russian universities and widely uses subjective survey estimates. The Shanghai Rating (ARWU), based on objective indicators, assesses only 9 Russian universities. The Three University Missions Ranking is the most objective one, assuming maximum of participants and minimum of subjectivity. The weight of subjective (expert) assessments is 0% (compare: THE – 33%, QS – 50%) and the weight of bibliometric indicators is 17% (compare: THE – 30%, QS – 20%, ARWU – 67%). The Three University Missions Ranking displays the country’s real needs, and there has been no alternative to this ranking yet. Following the results of 2023, three Russian participants entered the top 100 of the global ranking: Lomonosov Moscow State University (17th place), St. Petersburg State University (39th place), and MIPT (43rd place).

A new criterion is proposed to assess the BRICS university scientists’ publication activity, as well. Relevance of scientific papers should also be assessed given national needs of the countries participating in the ranking. As one of the sources for this assessment, the so-called “White List” – the list of the most authoritative scientific journals, which includes about 30 thousand Russian and international editions, used to assess Russian scientists’ publication activity, – can be proposed.

Within the BRICS, Lomonosov Moscow State University suggests starting several pilot ranking projects. As one of these pilot projects, it is proposed to consider the Russian “BRICS University Ranking of the Three University Missions family”. The University considers it advisable to recommend to the authorities, universities and non-governmental organizations of the BRICS member states to focus on the global university rankings supported by the BRICS, and proposes to create within the BRICS a public advisory body (council) on academic leadership. The Council will be purposed at consolidating efforts on improving competitiveness (academic leadership) of universities and scientific organizations, and forming competition rules in the new international educational space of the BRICS countries.

<sup>1</sup> Путин поддержал идею создать рейтинг университетов стран БРИКС // Интерфакс : [website]. 2024. 8 февр. URL: <https://www.interfax.ru/russia/945220> (accessed: 18.04.2024).

<sup>2</sup> Владимир Путин поддержал идею создать рейтинг вузов стран БРИКС // Rating Review : [website]. 2024. 8 февр. URL: [https://raex-rr.com/news/press-reliz/rating\\_brics\\_approve/?ysclid=ltk04ueplo484151369](https://raex-rr.com/news/press-reliz/rating_brics_approve/?ysclid=ltk04ueplo484151369) (accessed: 18.04.2024).

<sup>3</sup> Три миссии университета // Mosiur. The Three University Missions : [website]. URL: <https://mosiur.org> (accessed: 18.04.2024).

<sup>4</sup> На заседании Совета Российского союза ректоров поддержали инициативу президента РСР создать рейтинг вузов стран БРИКС // ВКонтакте : [website]. 2024. 20 февр. URL: [https://vk.com/wall-78019879\\_42567?ysclid=ltjysou731286337423](https://vk.com/wall-78019879_42567?ysclid=ltjysou731286337423) (accessed: 18.04.2024).

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

Ch. Goddard<sup>1</sup>

## RUSSIA IN THE NEW MULTIPOLAR WORLD: NEW AIMS AND NEW POSSIBILITIES

## Introduction

Multipolarity in the field of international relations occurs when there are three or more centres of power, each with power to a comparable degree. Numerous scholars, notably J. David Singer and John F. Copper argue that it is the most stable power structure.<sup>2</sup> The world is emerging into a new and exciting phase of multipolar development, not least thanks to the emergence and consolidation of BRICS.<sup>3</sup> There are many positive and some negative sides to this though – and we are fortunate in Russia to be able to take advantage of the former, and protect ourselves robustly against the latter. Fortune “favours the bold”<sup>4</sup> – and we have no better example of how boldly we position ourselves on the international stage than the Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation 2023,<sup>5</sup> (FPC 2023) signed into authority by the President on March 31st 2023. This short paper explores something of these positives and negatives.

## Multipolarity

Multipolarity has an increased number of independent actors. If we define stability as the probability that the international system retains all of its essential characteristics such

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<sup>2</sup> That is compared to unipolarity and bipolarity – see: *Deutsch K. W., Singer J. D. Multipolar Power Systems and International Stability // World Politics. 1964. Vol. 16 (3). P. 390–406. See also: Copper J. F. The Advantages of a Multipolar International System: An analysis of Theory and Practice // International Studies. 1975. Vol. 14 (3). P. 397–415.*

<sup>3</sup> The original BRICS intergovernmental organisation of Brazil, Russia, India, China – later joined by South Africa – saw additional members acceding in January 2024 namely Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran and the United Arab Emirates. Argentina, which was due to join at this time, withdrew following the November 2023 presidential election which returned a candidate opposed to BRICS. Another 14 countries have applied for membership, and may for all practical purposes be considered to be aligned, if not actually Candidate Members. These are Algeria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Bolivia, Cuba, Honduras, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Palestine, Senegal, Thailand, Venezuela and Vietnam. BRICS currently represents more than 45% of the world’s population, and accounts for over 35% of the world’s GDP (as opposed to the G7 nations account for only 30%). Bilateral agreements between members exist with fundamental principles of non-interference, equality and mutual benefit.

<sup>4</sup> First coined by Turnus in Virgil’s Aeneid (ref. book 10 line 284), “Audentis Fortuna iuvat”.

<sup>5</sup> Signed into authority by the President on March 31st 2023, available at [https://mid.ru/en/foreign\\_policy/fundamental\\_documents/1860586/](https://mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/fundamental_documents/1860586/) (accessed: 07.02.2024). This document marks a significant move away from previous doctrines both in format and content.

that no single nation (specifically its system of imposing its culture, beliefs, politics and economic pressures) becomes dominant, then most of the members of the international system continue to survive and thrive, and large-scale war does not occur. Plenty to unpack in there, beyond the scope of the limitations of length of the papers to this Reading, but delegates here will be able to grasp the boundaries and topics within this wide-ranging statement.<sup>6</sup>

For a while, post 1945, we saw a largely bipolar world order, with America facing off against the Soviet Union predominantly in the European theatre half a world away from itself. Yet the American capitalist and colonial influences, like a virus, could not be contained, leading to flashpoints and confrontations (both ideological and physical) in other places as well. The demise of the Soviet Union led to a temporary power vacuum, one occupied with indecent haste and joy by America, which was not shy in coming forward to expand its values globally. This joy was largely the result of arms sales and other capitalist ventures that improved the profit margins of American companies at the expense of the host nations, not all of which were glad of the American interventions. The emergence – and resurgence – of the Russian Federation began the process of putting an end to this – linked with partners from the CIS. Our Constitution – that we are a multi-national people – embraces our attitude to the world generally, in that we are a rich mixture from which strength can be drawn with tolerance, bound as we are to our common destiny. Americans will stand behind the motto “e pluribus unum” – “out of many one”. By contrast we could offer an alternative – “e pluribus viribus” – out of many, strength. Humankind in its wider context is similarly bound to a common destiny – we sink or swim together, especially in rising climate change waters brought upon us in large part by American and other allied fossil fuel carelessness.

## BRICS as innovation in the World Order

The vision of BRICS<sup>7</sup> is surely the definitive primary step forward for those of us with a multipolar vision. The original partners have very different cultures and languages, and many other differences too. Yet commonality was found, and significant bilateral treaties were created between partners. The expansion in January 2024 continued this, and other candidates stand ready to join. To me, this is exciting beyond belief – friendship and support, shared values and work to further the prosperity of the BRICS citizens are I think some of the foundations upon which BRICS flourishes. And how it flourishes! Already matching the GDP of the G7, but with a much broader political, doctrinal, and cultural base, BRICS is the world’s template for a multipolar world. In my small corner of Russia, I have students

<sup>6</sup> These papers will allow the interested reader to unpack this statement, especially in the context of arms control and power balance.

<sup>7</sup> No publicly available detailed information seems to exist on the seeds that gave birth to the vision, who said what to whom and when. The original architects of BRICS have surely contributed to world stability and peace in a way that fully deserves the Nobel Peace Prize. With the accession of Sweden to NATO, perhaps the time is now ripe for the creation of a parallel suite of international prizes – open to any nationality – under the auspices of a comparable academical type body formed from the BRICS partners.

from all the original BRICS countries, and some from the newer ones too. The atmosphere of collegiate and fraternal bonding therein bodes well for the future as these students will be the influencers and decision makers of the next generation.

### Positive aspects of multipolarity and BRICS

Our FPC 2023 is a document that delegates will be familiar with. It establishes – by reference to statements on today's world, its major trends and prospects for development, and the national interests of the Russian Federation. It then establishes our foreign policy priorities, notably (and for the first time) against regional tracks of Russian foreign policy. In seventy-six detailed articles, our view of the world, our place in it, and how we seek to positively influence it is laid out. If a single adjective had to be thought of to describe it, I would choose “collaborative”.

There is a wealth of material in the FPC 2023 to choose from, but for this paper I choose two. The first is the establishment of an equitable and sustainable world order (articles 18 and 19) and the second is the requirement for the Rule of Law in international relations (articles 20 to 23).

As to the first, the text is so powerful that it cannot be paraphrased but must be reproduced:

*18. Russia is striving towards a system of international relations that would guarantee reliable security, preservation of its cultural and civilisational identity, and equal opportunities for the development for all states, regardless of their geographical location, size of territory, demographic, resource and military capacity, or political, economic and social structure. In order to meet these criteria, the system of international relations should be multipolar and based on the following principles:*

*1) sovereign equality of states, respect for their right to choose models of development, and social, political and economic order;*

*2) rejection of hegemony in international affairs;*

*3) cooperation based on a balance of interests and mutual benefit;*

*4) non-interference in internal affairs;*

*5) rule of international law in regulating international relations, with all states abandoning the policy of double standards;*

*6) indivisibility of security in global and regional aspects;*

*7) diversity of cultures, civilizations and models of social organization, non-imposition on other countries by all states of their models of development, ideology and values, and reliance on a spiritual and moral guideline that is common for all world traditional religions and secular ethical systems;*

*8) responsible leadership on the part of leading nations aimed at ensuring stable and favourable conditions of development, both for themselves and for all other countries and peoples;*

*9) the primary role of sovereign states in decision-making regarding the maintenance of international peace and security.*

What wonderful opportunities open up in our BRICS community with the rejection of hegemony, recognitions of sovereign equality, cooperation founded on a balance of mutual interests and benefits, and recognition of diversity of cultures, civilisations and models of social organisa-

tion! One example – a recent lunch with Iranian colleagues at a MGIMO conference uncovered many personal similarities between us as well as a delightful exploration of Persian poetry – in some cases as old as 1000 years. I am told that most non-Iranians do not know this, yet it forms a hugely significant part of Iranian everyday culture – even to the point of classical poetry being read to small children at bedtime and taxi drivers quoting it in traffic jams. Knowledge of even one or two snippets of such poetry would lubricate cross cultural discussions on other topics. Inquisitiveness, and a passion for learning about others are I think significant factors in successful international relations.

The second topic I choose is the Rule of Law in the international legal order. We broadly understand this at a visceral level – knowing what a society might look like where the Rule of Law is absent. But to define what the Rule of Law actually is, is much harder. To do this, I give my students Lord Bingham's excellent and highly readable book “*The Rule of Law*”<sup>1</sup> in which he espouses eight guiding Principles. In particular, I encourage them to regard these Principles as lenses through which we should examine and assess any given legal situation, regulation, treaty, convention, or set of circumstances with a legal dimension.

One example: I would like to draw attention to the following extract from article 23 of the FPC 2023:

*23. In the interests of increasing sustainability of the international legal system, preventing its fragmentation or decay, and avoiding indiscriminate use of generally recognized norms of international law, the Russian Federation intends to make it a priority to:*

*1) counter the attempts to replace, revise or interpret in an arbitrary way the principles of international law enshrined in the UN Charter and Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, as of 24 October 1970;*

*2) progressively develop, including given the realities of a multipolar world, and codify international law, primarily within the efforts taken under the aegis of the United Nations, as well as ensure participation of the maximum possible number of states in the UN international treaties, and universal interpretation and application thereof;*

*3) consolidate the efforts taken by states that advocate restoration of universal respect for international law and enhancement of its role as the basis of international relations;*

*4) exclude from international relations the practice of taking illegal unilateral coercive measures in violation of the UN Charter.*

Taken against Bingham's eight principles, (a whole lecture course in itself, and well beyond this short paper), the overriding message that I take from this is the complete rejection of American capricious self-serving foreign interventions (often without legality) with complete disregard and desecration of different cultures and peoples. I find the position of the Russian Federation to be completely the opposite – where notwithstanding our robust defence of our values and interests – our Foreign Minister and UN Ambassador show the world our compassion, resilience, and adherence to the Rule of Law. We call out those who

<sup>1</sup> Bingham T. H. *The Rule of Law*. London : Penguin Books, 2011. Refer to Chapter 10 for Bingham's exposition on this topic in the context of international treaties and relations.



fall short of this, and do so with an authoritative voice. Our BRICS partners are broadly aligned with us, the emphasis on “broadly” being a symbol of our strength together as equals with whom there can be differences. That is we have partners with whom we have some differences but there is constructive dialogue – not subservient states joined to us by a doctrinal dog leash with no spine of their own.

### Negative aspects of multipolarity and BRICS

No review – however brief – could be complete without considering the other side of the coin. We are fortunate in having a President who is so erudite in historical matters, and quite rightly loses no opportunity to remind our so called Western “partners” of the need to recall history to understand the current situation. He does so with great depth and breadth.<sup>1</sup> He also mentions plain truths that over-adventurous western leaders should recall before embarking on deploying troops where they would be a threat to the security of the Russian Federation.<sup>2</sup> So, taking a leaf from the President’s book, let us look into history.

In 431 BCE, the Peloponnesian War broke out between Athens and Sparta. The Athenian general, Thucydides in his account “The History of the Peloponnesian War” gives much food for thought. Despite being Athenian and a combatant, historians generally regard his account as being unbiased and historically accurate. The History explains that the primary cause of the Peloponnesian War was the “growth in power of Athens, and the alarm which this inspired in Sparta.”<sup>3</sup> The term “The Thucydides Trap”<sup>4</sup> describes the theory that when a great power’s position as hegemon is threatened by an emerging power, there is a significant likelihood of war between the two powers.

“Thucydides’s Trap refers to the natural, inevitable discombobulation that occurs when a rising power threatens to displace a ruling power... [and] when a rising power threatens to displace a ruling power, the resulting structural stress makes a violent clash the rule, not the exception.”<sup>5</sup>

It is not difficult to see the parallels to the modern day. We have in the BRICS community a powerful entity coming into mature existence. This threatens the status quo of the American centric view of the world that its allies have accreted themselves around much like chewing gum stuck on a lamppost. Our community’s rise is a gentle, mutually cooperative and respectful one. Yes, there are differences,

but they are dealt with as they should be between broadly equal partners who have the same multipolar goals in mind. Not as subservient satellites to a hegemon.

This then is the possible negative that BRICS might bring – war. Not just any war, but as the President drew attention to, there is a risk of nuclear war if cool heads do not prevail. And therein lies the strength of BRICS – our strength out of many world class statesmen, working together. Diplomacy and skilful international relations being the tools with which we can robustly protect ourselves.

In this context, mention should be made of Maria Vladimirovna Zakharova, the official spokesperson of our Foreign Ministry.<sup>6</sup> Her weekly press briefings, usually delivered without notes, and often lasting three hours or more, are clear articulations of the very best of the reality of our FPC and BRICS. I always commend her to my students to be studied as the best example of our foreign policy outreach – supremely articulate, occasionally objectionable, but always authoritative. Exactly how it should be, and the wider world should listen to her messages from our Foreign Ministry and take heed of the strength of our passionately held views that are often in stark contrast to the Anglo-Saxon western capitalist viewpoints.

The diversity of our BRICS union, the multi nationality and multi ethnicity of its leadership, the size of the population it represents and its GDP (which is increasing in economies that are not as debt burdened as that of America) – are all factors that will bring coolness to rising tensions in discussions with the American hegemon.

However, the hegemon’s unpredictability when threatened – and their capabilities – need to be able to be robustly contained – and it would not surprise me to learn that our leaders are already well advanced in arrangements to create a Pact of mutual support and defence – one based on shared values not least of which is the wish for multipolarity and the strength – in all its forms – of one through many.

### Conclusion

Our FPC and our BRICS brotherhood are principles, and a reality, that we can (and should) all get behind with enthusiasm and vigour – as we move to our next phase of the world order. They represent the best of, and the future of humanity.

<sup>1</sup> See for example, the interview to Fox News Tucker Carlson, 9 February 2024 – see transcript: <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/73411>.

<sup>2</sup> See the Address to the Federal Assembly, 29 February 2024 – see transcript: <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/73585>.

<sup>3</sup> Thucydides 5th century BC – The History of the Peloponnesian War – see (1.23.6). Book 1 traces the growth of the Athenian Empire (1.89–118). Athenians defend their empire on the basis it was given to them, not taken by force (see for example the speech at 1.73–79, where amongst other ideas they opine that they did nothing contrary to human nature in accepting it, nor in refusing to give it up. See: <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/7142/7142-h/7142-h.htm#link2HCH0001>. Thucydides may meet via his plaster cast bust in the Pushkin Museum in Moscow, made from a Roman copy (located at Holkham Hall) itself taken from an early fourth-century BC Greek original.

<sup>4</sup> The term was first coined by Professor Graham Allison in a 2012 article in the Financial Times.

<sup>5</sup> Allison G. *Destined for War: Can America and China Escape Thucydides’s Trap?* N. Y. : Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017. URL: <https://www.livelib.ru/book/342047/readpart-obrecheny-voevat-greham-allison/~4?ysclid=lv0qy4fn57876475854> (accessed: 15.04.2024).

<sup>6</sup> Ms. Zakharova is an Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation. The dictionary defines a Plenipotentiary is a person, especially a diplomat, usually invested with the full power of independent action on behalf of their government, often in a foreign country. Foreigners should bear this in mind when listening to her briefings, for they are not (as many seem to think) equivalent to the press secretarial briefings given for example by the US Administration.

**Al. A. Gromyko<sup>1</sup>**

## BRICS+ – COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES AND DEVELOPMENT RISKS

BRICS (from 2024 – BRICS+) entered the third decade of the 21st century as an important constant of international relations and the system of global governance. There are 18 years of development behind us, as a result of which the membership of this prestigious club has grown from four to ten. Among the new participants there is Saudi Arabia, which authorities, having made a decision in principle to join, prefer the option of gradual involvement of the kingdom in the activities of various BRICS+ structures. A few dozen more states are seeking to become either full members (including Algeria, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Venezuela) or to gain an observer status.

For Russia, the successes of BRICS+ are particularly important, as our country was at the origin of its creation and in many ways was its main creator. Conceptually, the roots of the association go back to the second half of the 1990s, when Moscow promoted the idea of the Russia-India-China (RIC) strategic triangle. In retrospect, it can be argued that the RIC subsequently grew into BRICS+, just as it can be argued that the association created in 2006 absorbed the RIC. A false start in its expansion occurred only once, when in December 2023, J. Milei, Argentina's new president, withdrew his country's application to join.

BRICS+ has a pronounced inter-civilizational dimension, and the latter in turn is an inherent characteristic of a polycentric world. The geographical diversity also draws attention, which emphasizes that in today's world the distance separating partners and like-minded people is not as fundamental as it has been throughout most of human history. The civilizational characteristic is closely related to the category of sovereignty, which largely determines the worldview of the states that created BRICS and joined it later.

In a sense, BRICS+ is a super-integration association, but not an extra-integration one. It is not a classic interstate or international organization, especially an integration union. It includes countries that participate in various structures that do not necessarily overlap with each other (EAEU, SCO, Gulf Cooperation Council, African Union, Mercosur, etc.). At the same time, of course, BRICS+ has obvious integration elements stemming from the very motivation to participate in it – to coordinate and harmonize

their actions in bilateral and multilateral formats. As the association develops, its club character begins to combine with the creation of structures that have institutional features, such as summits, various permanent forums, or are full-fledged international organizations, such as the New Development Bank.

The association grows not only in numbers, but over time begins to fulfill functions that were not previously associated with it. Especially after its latest expansion, BRICS+ is, first, beginning to resemble an informal mouthpiece of the global South, and second, to play the role of an effective link between Russia and the non-Western world. The inclusive nature of this international club is striking, which stems from the fact that members of the association may include states with a complicated history of relations, such as China and India. Only the countries of the collective West do not fit into the idea of this inclusiveness, but not because of the nature of BRICS+, but because of their own stance towards it. Undoubtedly, from a geopolitical point of view, the West treats BRICS+ as a competitor, and jealously follows the development of the one it perceives as an alternative model of international cooperation. At the same time, the association itself cannot be called anti-Western, given the close economic and political interaction of most of its members with Western countries and organizations.

It is fair to say that the development of BRICS+ is a reflection of the shift of the center of gravity of the world economy to Eurasia. But it seems that to reduce everything to this factor would be wrong and would diminish the role of the association in world politics. It is broader than reflecting new routes for economic and financial flows. No less important is the significance of BRICS+ as a kind of research laboratory for improving or even restructuring effective mechanisms of global governance and regulation. In this sense, it is reasonable to speak about the aspiration of the association to the future, while many actions of the collective West are perceived in the world as a desire to cling on to the past.

The club, informal character is also characteristic of a number of Western structures, primarily the G7. However, it represents what so sharply distinguishes it from BRICS+ – opposition to others, consolidation on the basis of exclusivity and an Anglo-Saxon core, willingness to impose or coordinate sanctions regimes against those the West identifies as adversaries and competitors, rejection of the notion of the world as a diversity of cultures and civilizations in favor of a primitive approach of “friend-or-foe” and “democracies versus autocracies”. Of course, the G7 also has its own “outreach” format – inviting representatives of non-Western states to meetings. But, in fact, it is a function of the same basic attitudes of the collective West to protect the “rule-based world” convenient for it in the first place and resembles a tug-of-war to reduce the number of those who are friends with the “wrong” states.

The notion of humanistic values, including certain moral and ethical principles originating in Christianity, was an outgrowth of European civilization. However, history has so ordered that many of those values and worldview ap-

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proaches have come to be perceived in the European West as “traditional” values with connotations of being retrograde, not modern, not progressive. In today’s world, in many respects, a situation is emerging where, to a greater extent, the BRICS+ and other most prosperous countries of the global South are taking up the defense of humanistic values, while the collective West is promoting radical and pseudo-liberal attitudes, and not only social, but also socio-economic ones.

The latter stems from the European West’s enthusiasm, which has grown into an obsession, for green technology and an unquestioning belief in the infallibility of the anthropogenic version of climate change. It would seem that energy transition and the “green course” is a progressive thing. But the flip side of this obsession is an obsession with technology. Only if earlier the improvement of life meant the use of technology for the sake of creating a society of consumption and abundance, now other, even more sophisticated and expensive technologies are aimed at actually depriving people of their former prosperity and comfort, both in the industrial and post-industrial sense.

In terms of foreign policy approaches, when comparing the collective West and BRICS+, they seem to switch places, if we think in terms of traditions and innovations. It is obvious that it is the collective West’s foreign policy that is retrograde, conformist, when the stake is placed on coercion, force (whether through “soft power” or hard power), sanctions regimes, megaphone diplomacy, information confrontation, and preserving a status quo. This contrasts with what BRICS+ and many other states of the global South are promoting: real multilateralism, sovereign equality, consideration of each other’s interests, moving away from bloc mentality, rejection of the philosophy of westernization pretending to be modernization demanded by all, etc.

Advantages and disadvantages are characteristic of both classical international organizations with international legal personality, such as the UN, the African Union, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, etc., and club formats (BRICS+, G7, G20, N5, etc.). The former have their own charters, extensive governing bodies, legally prescribed rights and obligations, and, in fact, they are pyramidal structures. The latter have greater flexibility, the possibility of a situational combination of bilateral and multilateral tracks, the consensual nature of decisions, the primacy of voluntariness and trust. There are also many organizations of an intermediate nature, such as the OSCE, which has not yet acquired its own charter.

First, regional integration associations, which are formed around common free trade zones, customs unions and common markets, stand apart. Of these, the most clearly organized is the European Union, which, until the Lisbon Treaty came into force in 2009, did not even have a procedure for a member country to withdraw from it. Second, military-political blocs with their natural formalized governance structures, discipline and legally enshrined rights and obligations.

The United Nations has unique features and characteristics as a unique universal and generally recognized interstate (intergovernmental) international organization. There are some entities of a continental scale, such as the African Union, the Community of American States, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, and others. Most interstate associations and integration projects are region-

al in nature. BRICS+ certainly stands out against this background, as it includes representatives of several continents in the Eastern and Western hemispheres of the Earth.

Centrifugal and centripetal processes exist in the organizations of all listed categories, and the problem of integrity and consolidation of this or that structure is solved in each of them differently. For the European Union, Brexit – Britain’s withdrawal from the regional integration union – was an extremely painful process. For BRICS+, Argentina’s withdrawal of its application to join was not a notable problem. Of course, internal structuring is important for club formats as well. No matter how many countries join BRICS+ in the future, in addition to the participating “ten”, the participation of Russia, India and China will always be systemically important for BRICS+. The withdrawal of any of them from the association would be its version of Brexit. There are no countries or their domestic groupings in BRICS+ that view the other part of the participants as systemic adversaries and targets for restriction and against whom they are willing to wage proxy wars in regional armed conflicts. In the other club format, the G20, the situation is different, as the G7 countries that make up the G20 adhere to bloc discipline and engage in open sabotage of the activities of some member countries.

BRICS+ is not a harmonious entirety, has its own internal lines of tension, but offers such impressive consolidating incentives that contradictions recede into the background. At the same time, the association faces significant challenges, especially in the early years after the massive expansion that has taken place. Given the fact that the number of countries knocking on the door of BRICS+ is much higher than the current number of its members, it is important to maintain the stability of the “club” and its ability to act effectively within the framework of the decisions taken. At the same time, it is important to find formats for engaging a wide range of international actors in BRICS+ activities that suit everyone. In light of this, the observer state status will remain highly sought after, as possibly the associate membership status will.

The association will certainly be characterized by the methods of “multi-speed movement” and “variable geometry”, with the help of which interested states can more quickly implement certain projects without the need to obtain their support from all participants of the “club”. These methods are well-tested, including in the history of the EU, so that they can be applied to BRICS+ well-calibrated, taking into account the lessons learned from other structures. When an international organization lives with a voluntary strait jacket of rigid membership requirements and developed supranational bodies, as in the EU, “multi-speed movement” is fraught with internal stratification, creation of competing groupings, emergence of center and periphery, first and second class states. Such risks are not seen in BRICS+ at this stage of development.

Of course, an increase in the size of any interstate association cannot but bring certain procedural and substantive difficulties. But it seems that in the case of BRICS+, the enlargement process entails many more positive points, including more stable internal balances to compensate for the asymmetric weight of Russia, India and China in the association. Behind the quantitative expansion of BRICS+ there are clearly qualitative parameters. Each of the participating countries contributes its added value to the “club”.

For example, Beijing offers the Belt and Road strategy; New Delhi offers the India-Middle East-Europe and North-South corridors; Moscow offers raw materials, cooperation with the Eurasian Economic Union, continental transportation corridors, its competencies in peaceful nuclear power and energy, and, in the future, the Northern Sea Route transportation artery; Brazil offers its leading position in Latin America; Iran, UAE and Saudi Arabia offer their leading positions in the world hydrocarbon markets, and the last two countries also offer their large-scale investment opportunities.

It will be important for BRICS+ to continue to position itself as an association that does not seek confrontation with others and does not see itself as an alternative mechanism

for global governance and regulation. BRICS+ already includes many countries from Eurasia and other continents that do not seek to oppose the collective West and break relations with it. They still do not regard economic and financial interaction with it as dependency. Many of them are indeed interested, for example, in diversifying foreign exchange reserves, but are not aimed at de-dollarisation of the world trade. On the contrary, basing BRICS+ not on the “zero-sum game” philosophy, but on providing member states and potential members of the “club” with additional competitive advantages in trade and cooperation with any external players of their choice, is an important trump card in preserving the attractiveness of the association for many years to come.

**A. A. Guseinov<sup>1</sup>**

## IDEOLOGY: THE POINT OF VIEW OF ALEKSANDER ZINOVIEV

Two issues were and remain the main ones for the Likhachovsky Conference, and they are the ideological focus of our international humanitarian forum: a) what is the modern world in terms of cultural development; b) how does the world-creating role of culture itself change? Answers to them that we have come to today, in my opinion, boil down to the following theses: the world has become multipolar; the dialogue of cultures has been supplemented by their conflict. Civilizational and cultural diversity of the contemporary world, which has already transformed from scientific works into real politics and has become the primary social motive for people's activities, has again actualized the role of ideology as a socially significant factor.

It is not by chance that in Russia, which found itself in the ground zero of the new configuration of world events, issues of ideology came almost to the top of the national topical public agenda. This is evidenced, in particular, by growing demands for abolition of the constitutional ban (Article 13 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation) on creation of the state ideology as one of conditions for the patriotic consolidation of Russian society. The proposed report examines topical problems of ideology on the example of how they were developed by the outstanding thinker Aleksander Aleksandrovich Zinoviev, who created the detailed doctrine of ideology, organically integrated into his sociology.

### **I. Ideology as a component of the social organization of society.**

According to Zinoviev, it is included in the mental aspect of social life, which organizes consciousness of mem-

bers of the society and, along with two other (business and communal) aspects of it, is one of the three fundamental factors, on which the social organization of society rests.<sup>2</sup> Zinoviev draws subtle distinctions and distinguishes the mental aspect of social life from the mental sphere. It is necessary to distinguish the very evidence, according to which the person's social life activity always is of the conscious nature, is characterized by subjective accompaniment and what is its role as a factor organizing their life together in a ‘cheloveinik’ (in society). This was an important step on his way to scientific sociology: by the mental sphere, he understands a special permanent component of a social organization, which is supported by particular people to be specifically engaged in the mental state of society and living off this activity.<sup>3</sup> It coincides with ideology (ideosphere) at the stage of society.

According to Zinoviev, the social organization of people goes through three stages: pre-society, society, and super-society. Ideology goes through the same stages. However, at the stage of pre-ideology, it has not yet gained independence as an object. In the framework of the society itself, it becomes one of the objects of spiritual life, along with many others (morality, religion, literature, etc.). With the society's transition to the stage of super-society, it rises to the central object level that unites and internally organizes the entire mental (spiritual) aspect in the diversity of its various objects. Super-society, according to Zinoviev, is the stage of social organization of society that was achieved and embodied in the Soviet experience of real communism and in the Westernist experience of Westernized globalism that emerged as the alternative of the communism during the Cold War. The qualitative increase in the role of ideology, its transformation from an ordinary object of the mental (spiritual) aspect into the key, decisive object is one of the signs of a super-society. And only when viewed from the height of this most developed stage, one can understand the real and paramount importance of ideology for social organization.

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<sup>2</sup> Зинovieв А. А. Логическая социология. Ч. 4: Западнистское общество // Гуманитарный портал. URL: <https://gtmarket.ru/library/basis/5669/5673> (accessed: 07.05.2024).

<sup>3</sup> Зинovieв А. А. На пути к сверхобществу. М.: Центрполиграф, 2000. URL: <http://lib.web-malina.com/getbook.php?bid=2071> (accessed: 07.05.2024).



## II. The subject of ideology

In terms of content, ideology is a set of concepts and judgments that cover the entire (although each time with varying extent of completeness) set of phenomena that people have to live and encounter with, as well as reflect on in everyday life. They concern the person, his/her consciousness, attitude to nature and mystic forces, relations between people, wealth and poverty, past and future, domination and subordination, etc. Ideology does not have its own narrow subject of consideration, all the facts of human life, from the smallest and most intimate to the largest, concerning the state, humanity, and the outer space, can become the content of ideological statements. Being diverse in its content, it can also be embodied in a wide variety of forms – in treatises, artistic and visual works, parables, jokes, aphorisms, epigrams, etc. The ideological worldview can form a kind of field, a kind of atmospheric background that does not prevent people from living their ordinary lives, just as, for example, they habitually and imperceptibly live in the field of physical gravity. But nevertheless, it exists and can unexpectedly “reveal itself in just one word and in one phrase... How many people were killed, burned and imprisoned for such words!”<sup>1</sup> Today, when ideology can suddenly reveal itself in one letter, one sign, it is clear how right Zinoviev was.

## III. The function of ideology

Ideology isn't knowledge. The scientific criterion of truth is not applicable to it in principle. Of course, it can use (rely on, hide behind, speculate, etc.) scientific data, even pretend to be scientific, but nevertheless has a completely different nature and purpose. Correlation of ideology with science is comparable to its correlation with religion. It can mimic science, act as scientific one, and willingly does so in the Modern Times, when science has become dominant in the public consciousness, just as in the previous worldview era it mimicked religion and acted as religious. Science and religion are the most frequently used elements of the mentality aspect of society in ideology. The attitude of ideology to its other elements – morality, education, art, literature, etc. – is the same.

“But the specific social role (function) of ideology is not cognition of reality, not education, not entertainment, not informativeness about events, etc. (although all these are not excluded, but assumed), but the formation of people's certain understanding of the phenomena of their environment and life in this environment. Moreover, such an understanding that significantly affects their behavior.”<sup>2</sup> More specifically, its task is standardizing people's consciousness, developing an identical way for them to understand the phenomena of their surrounding life. Ideology in the system of social organization of society is responsible for which way, in which direction people's brains are turned in this society. “Ideology does not just form and organize people's consciousness, it creates and imposes certain stereotypes (algorithms) of consciousness on people, which appear in stereotypes of behavior.”<sup>3</sup> It affects individuals' minds not at all for appealing to their independent thinking, but for turning their thinking (their brains) in the right (standard, ideologically set) direction, so that they could

perceive predetermined and ideological “truths” hanging in the air as their own. Ideological statements are not correlated with reality by themselves, their goodness (efficiency) is revealed only indirectly, through their impact on human behavior. Only in this case they become a real, sociologically significant force.

## IV. Ideology and ideologists

Ideology does not arise spontaneously, it is artificially created and invented. It does not exist without ideologists. “Ideologists invent certain kinds of intellectual (linguistic) schemes, stamps, clichés, labels, tags, images, generalizing examples and samples, parables, catch phrases, slogans, etc., and not as auxiliary means on the way to cognition of being as it is, but as the final and highest result of cognition. They themselves claim to be the ultimate truth. People should assimilate these products of ideologists and look at the phenomena of being only through them.”<sup>4</sup> Ideology is a pure product of thought, it is not determined by any other reality besides thinking itself.<sup>5</sup>

It is interesting to note that the multi-volume work “Elements of Ideology” by Destutt de Tracy, a French nobleman who first coined the very concept of ideology in its modern meaning, opens with the question “What does it mean to think?” His doctrine of ideology, which he also called universal grammar and logic, and which he considered as rational organization of the entire intellectual space, was intended to answer this question. F. Engels also wrote about ideology as the result of the inability of thinking to go beyond its own limits, “Ideology is a process to be performed by a so-called thinker, although with consciousness, but with false consciousness. The true driving forces that motivate him to act remain unknown to him, otherwise it would not be an ideological process.”<sup>6</sup>

Ideology is created by ideologists. For this reason alone, not to mention others, it cannot emerge spontaneously, naturally arise in many people's minds.

## V. Particular ideologies and the ideosphere

Society can be characterized (described) as an objective, lawfully ordered reality that generates and simultaneously unites into something whole and integral the existence of a large number of heterogeneous people with their group and private interests.<sup>7</sup> Ideology (ideosphere), along with the economy and the state, is one of the three basic (fundamental) factors to ensure its integrity as a historical subject. It sets as a mental standard a certain life guideline to be the same for the whole society, guiding conscious actions of individuals and groups of people in a single direction. In this sense ideology can be called the society's self-consciousness developed by its individual outstanding representatives and presented to all its members as their common destiny in the form of the system of unconditional values.

However, society is a complex organism consisting of separate (special, private in relation to society as a whole) groups of people (classes, ethnicities, confessions, profes-

<sup>1</sup> Зиновьев А. А. Фактор понимания. М.: Алгоритм, 2006. С. 316.

<sup>2</sup> Зиновьев А. А. Идеология партии будущего. М.: Алгоритм, 2003. С. 22.

<sup>3</sup> Зиновьев А. А. Идеология партии будущего. С. 31.

<sup>4</sup> Зиновьев А. А. Фактор понимания. С. 313.

<sup>5</sup> Дестюд де Траси А. Основы идеологии. Идеология в собственном смысле слова / пер. с фр. Д. А. Ланина. М.: Академ. проект: Альма Матер, 2013.

<sup>6</sup> Маркс К., Энгельс Ф. Сочинения. 2-е изд. Т. 39. С. 84.

<sup>7</sup> Зиновьев А. А. Логическая социология. Ч. 4: Западнистское общество.

sions, amateur associations, etc.),<sup>1</sup> who also have their own group interests and standards of behavior. They form their own goals and behavioral schematics that allow them to assert themselves in society, acting together and ideologically cohesive. Typical forms of such special ideologies are class, environmental, feminist, etc., ones. Zinoviev calls them particular ideologies: they are ideologies, because they contain all the signs of ideology, except for the one, by virtue of which they are called particular, namely: they do not cover the whole society. Particular ideologies are included in public consciousness (the mental aspect) of a social organization, without inclusion in its ideosphere.<sup>2</sup>

Ideology as an artificial invention is always an author's work, it bears not only traces of its creators' biography, but also the influence of its social environment, political and human passions, has its own intellectual history, in short, considered from the point of view of its content, as a certain set of judgments, it is always specific, vulnerable, can be challenged. But for corresponding to its functional role as a basic factor, it must be recognized as universal and generally binding by the whole society. It must be embedded in the entire society's consciousness and gain material strength as its universal conviction. To do this, it must be supplemented as a second mandatory element, with an appropriate real, very specific controlled mechanism, subject to strict management laws. "The second element of the ideological sphere forms a set of people, organizations, institutions, enterprises and the means they use, one way or another related to the ideology development (in other words, production of ideological goods and services), with its dissemination and bringing it to the consumer, i. e. to individual members of society and their associations. I call it the ideological mechanism."<sup>3</sup>

The real sociological problem lies in the following: how to carry out such brain reversal so that all the individuals in a given society thought the same. This miraculous transformation of the particular into the universal, which constitutes the true alchemy of ideology, carried out by it with the help of then ideological mechanism, is the work of the ideosphere. The unity of ideology and ideological mechanism forms the ideosphere, which in contemporary societies is a huge independent industry, covering, as Zinoviev believed, about 20% of able-bodied population. The connection of private interest with the universal, which is crucially important for ideology, is carried out in two ways: in one case, it is absolutization of a certain particular ideology by raising it into a universal one, in the second case, it is relativization of a universal ideology by reducing it to the multitude of particular ones. The classic cases of these versions are the Soviet and Westernist ideospheres that developed during the Cold War in the second half of the 20th century.

## VI. The Soviet type of ideology

Widespread in Russian literature, and even more instinctively rooted in our public consciousness and everyday speech, is the idea that ideology is a more or less integral, systematized doctrine, the classic example of which was the Marxist-Leninist communist theory, elevated to the rank of the Soviet ideology. Marxism, which, however, is characteristic of all complete philosophical systems, was con-

scious of itself and openly proclaimed as the only correct doctrine related to man and society, towering above all previous immature and all other modern false doctrines of this kind. In this capacity, it was elevated to the rank of the cementing spiritual foundation of society and consolidated as a state ideology, mandatory for all Soviet citizens. Soviet ideology existed precisely as a certain doctrine intended for a certain society, set forth in certain philosophical and political texts, work with which (their understanding, propaganda, commenting, clarification) was carried out at the state-controlled level and in the generally binding directive form.

Identification of ideology with its specific form in the USSR, namely, with the Soviet ideology, led to the fact that rejection of the latter was perceived in the country as de-ideologization. Hence all the passions of the last years of Perestroika around abolition of the sixth article of the Brezhnev Constitution on the CPSU's leadership, rejection of the monopoly of Marxism-Leninism. Hence Article 13 (considered almost diabolical by certain circles) of the 1993 Constitution of the Russian Federation, which prohibits state ideology, causing many misunderstandings today. Transition from real communism of the Soviet period to post-Soviet capitalism was perceived by Russian society as rejection of state ideology in favor of the de-ideologization regime. It is precisely in this way – de-ideologized – that the social life of Western democracies was thought of and is partly thought of to this day.

## VII. What is the de-ideologization of society and how possible is it?

This question is especially important and relevant in the light of the current domestic discussions about ideology and the battles for it, since they are aimed against ideological carelessness of the previous (new pre-war?) the period of the modern (already post-Soviet) history of Russia. Zinoviev's answer to it, expressed close to the text,<sup>4</sup> can be summarized in the following nine items.

1) De-ideologization is self-consciousness of the modern super-society ("Westernism" in Zinoviev's terminology, or the "collective West", as it is increasingly called today by domestic journalism), which has developed in the democratic countries of the United States and Western Europe during and in the process of transferring the confrontation with Soviet communism to the Cold War regime. It means that "ideologies... have lost their meaning. Science takes their place... It is believed that the era of ideologies has passed at all." De-ideologization is considered by its apologists as designation and a real sign of a qualitatively new level in development (progress) of man and society.

2) "Ideologies are associated with social conflicts. These conflicts are considered to be disappearing... Particular ideologies are identified with ideology in general." It is about the belief that ideology, as false consciousness that expresses and stimulates workers' class struggle for social ideals, has discredited itself. It is being replaced by positive knowledge and the consumer society. De-ideologization it-

<sup>4</sup> All the quotations given below, without indicating the pages, are borrowed from the chapter "The Ideosphere of Westernism" of the third part (The Twentieth Century) of the book: *Зиновьев А. А. Фактор понимания*. С. 373–381. Zinoviev, faithful in this case to his scientific and literary style, does not consider the origin of the very concept of de-ideologization in the middle of the 20th century, its history, authors, texts. He is interested only in its sociological essence, which in turn can be revealed only within the framework of his own worldview.

<sup>1</sup> Зиновьев А. А. Логическая социология. Ч. 4 : Западнистское общество.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Зиновьев А. А. На пути к сверхобществу.

self has become a form of the West's ideological struggle not only against Marxism, but above all against real communism as an ideologically organized society. "The West has struck at the fundamental principles of ideology about advantages of the Soviet system and way of life over the Western one. The West has contributed to shifting people's interests towards purely material needs and temptations. The West has greatly contributed to flourishing corruption in the ruling strata of society, up to the top ones."<sup>1</sup>

3) The statement about disappearance or even insignificance of social conflicts does not correspond to reality. Particular ideologies (ideologies of certain social groups, classes) have not gone away. "New ones appear in place of some. Nazi, Fascist and Marxist ideologies have failed. But new ones have appeared, for example, pacifist, feminist, homosexual and others. And the old ones haven't been completely finished off yet." Particular ideologies or ideologies in the traditional sense of the word persist not only in the actual meaning, but they cannot disappear by definition either. Social organization cannot exist without a hierarchical structure and the social struggle for dominance that inevitably follows from it and supports it, which is why ideology, in fact, cannot be evaluated in terms of truth and falsity. However, even public thought itself could not remain at the level of the concept of de-ideologization in understanding ideology.

4) Particular ideologies should be distinguished from the ideology of society in general or its ideosphere. "The latter is a component of social organization of society, along with the state and the economy. No society can exist without an ideosphere." It (at least partly) can be referred to such common (extra-group, supra-class) elements as language, knowledge, legal and other comprehensive institutions that make up the supporting structure of social organization.

5) "The ideology of Westernism is pluralistic in the sense that it consists of many different ideas, doctrines, concepts, and lines of thought. Its parts cannot be mechanically combined into a single logical whole. These parts often contradict each other and are at enmity with each other. Nevertheless, this pluralism can be considered as division of labour within some unity and as expression of individual differences of the authors of the texts. In any case, we mean the Western economy as something unified, although we are well aware of the fierce struggle between its parts. As for the political system of Western countries, we also know about the struggle of parties and fractions within the parties. So, why can't we talk about the Western ideology in the same sense, even if it is teeming with internal hostility?"

Zinoviev's sociology is original and unique not only in its content, but also in its origin: it was created outside traditions and schools, although, of course, taking into account and knowing all significant names and achievements of European philosophy and science. In particular, it can be found similarities with Hobbes' idea of the state as a force restraining the natural state of the struggle of all against all. The ideosphere, as one of these means, not only presupposes internal hostility in the field of ideology, but it itself is one of ways to support it in a controlled manner. The terrible religious, ethnic, and political orgies known from history can be considered as absolutisations, extreme cases of

relevant ideologies, but in no way as distortion of their essence.

6) Pluralism of particular ideologies (ideologies as expressions of interests of the population's various groups in society) is a way of their inclusion in the ideology of Westernism, a kind of marker of their belonging to the latter and awareness of its paramount value.<sup>2</sup> It is a specific ideological mechanism of the Western ideology, most often referred to as liberalism. It can be considered such an expression and the result of a long centuries-long development of the spiritual and cultural development of the peoples of the West, which, as they say, entered into their flesh and blood (or, in fashionable language, constitutes their "cultural code"). In this case the trick of the sociological mind is that the very denial of state ideology becomes a positive ideological factor. The illusion of equality in the struggle for ideological dominance is created and at the same time complete freedom, which extends from the opportunity for "proudly" and "respectably" ignoring the ideological games themselves to legislative guarantees of self-preservation for their participants, since none of them can win.

7) "Ideological pluralism corresponds to democratic society. Here, it is an element of civic democracy. Undemocratic society is characterized by ideological monism and ideological intolerance."<sup>3</sup> Under modern conditions this difference in ideological regimes has become not so much a consequence as a cause and is considered as one of decisive criteria for distinguishing democratic and undemocratic social structures.

8) The pluralistic regime of the ideosphere makes it possible to hide particular ideologies in those specific historical contexts and forms (different author's versions, events, traditions, philosophical, aesthetic and other ideological forms, bright personalities, etc.), in which they exist, thereby creating in society the appearance of an atmosphere of de-ideologized thinking. "The pills of ideology are not so nice in themselves for people to swallow them voluntarily and with pleasure. They are sweetened with more pleasant 'substances' and dissolved in them so that people could swallow them without even noticing this. Indoctrinating the population of Western countries is generally built not as a compulsory duty and a compulsory burden, but as an entertainment and an activity useful for consumers of the ideology." Precisely because ideology is always contextual, invisibly present in all forms of intellectual and humanitarian activity, it does not act as a particular ideology of some class, stratum, party, etc., but as an "universal" cause, the cause of the entire society. This does not mean that it is actually such, "it means that no stratum, no class, no party and no social group declares it as their ideology. It arises, persists and spreads as a special and independent element of the social structure. In this respect, its position is similar to that of the state."

9) "The ideology of Westernism is the same for everyone. If it could be extracted from its connection with other phenomena in which it is immersed, it would be found that it is intellectually primitive at any level." And thereby its strength is ensured. As Zinoviev repeatedly emphasized, too high humanistic pathos and intellectual level of Marxism's ideology was one of the reasons that it lost in the fight against the Western ideology.

<sup>1</sup> Зинovieв А. А. Идеология партии будущего. С. 81.

<sup>2</sup> Зинovieв А. А. Логическая социология. Ч. 4: Западнистское общество.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

“Functions of ideologists in Western countries are performed by philosophers, sociologists, psychologists, historians, political scientists, journalists, writers, politicians, advisers in government institutions and in parties, employees of secret services and propaganda agencies. There are special research institutions, agencies and centres to deal with the problems of ideology in one way or another.” “These people give unity to ideological pluralism, form the coherent ideological environment.” “It is

only important not to allow others to introduce any explicit and organized ideology into the ideological chaos – to de-ideologize people in this sense. But at the same time, they tirelessly bring their commonplace ideas into this ideological chaos, which meets the needs of ‘de-ideologized’ fellow citizens. In conditions of the Western ideological field, ideological freedom is a much more powerful method of fooling the masses than ideological compulsion.”

**M. S. Gusman<sup>1</sup>**

## CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS OF FORMING NEW INFORMATION COLLABORATION

With development of information technology and the Internet advent, the media space has been rapidly transforming. At the end of the 20th century, the concept of “New Media” appeared, which at that time marked the beginning of integrating printed publications into the web space. However, in recent years, during continuous digitalization and informatization of society, which was clearly manifested during the coronavirus pandemic, consumption of information in digital format has come to the fore, leaving traditional media in a vulnerable position before the power of digital progress.

According to the Global Digital 2024 Report, at the beginning of 2024, there are 5.35 billion Internet users in the world (~66% of the global population), 5.61 billion people use mobile phones, which is almost 70% of the total world population, and 52% of Internet users (~2.7 billion people) use it daily, for keeping up to date with news and current events.<sup>2</sup>

At present, the term “New Media” means not only “re-location” of traditional media to the digital space by creating their own electronic versions (websites, mobile applications, platforms for Internet radio and TV broadcasting), but also development of the latest digital formats for collecting and transmitting information (social networks and messengers, Telegram channels, blogs, podcasts, etc.), which implies users’ active participation in creating and distributing the content.

Emergence of new actors in the information field triggered growth in the flow of filterless data oversaturated it and caused increasing consumption of short, understandable content, which is clear and succinct explanation of the topic of interest.

Concurrently, increasing the number of actors in the media space, each of whom is an informational influencer, often spreading unverified information to the multi-million audience, contributes to aggravation of the problem of fakes, stove-piping and disinformation. Users of social networks post unverified messages in messengers, bloggers broadcast their subjective viewpoint, ignoring the fact that they start the chain of spreading false information and lead to loss of trust in the media as a whole, extinction of their influence all over the world.

Herewith, cybercrime remains the most serious problem for stable operation of the media. Global and domestic media suffer annually hundreds of thousands of DDoS attacks. According to available data, in 2023, the number of DDoS attacks on Russian publications increased by 69 times, compared to 2021 (46,130 versus 670 incidents, respectively). Alongside this, cyberattack methods are being improved, and their new mechanisms are being developed. If earlier they attacked without web-security analysis, now attackers check availability of protection and its stability, which greatly increases chances of disabling the website.

Media-targeted attacks in cyberspace are particularly sensitive in terms of possible data leakage and disclosure of confidential information. This not only directly affects credibility of news sources, but also creates preconditions for potential conflicts. Breach of confidentiality in the information space can have irreversible consequences, up to an international conflict to undermine global stability. Thus, data security in the media sector is not only a strategic issue of ensure operational sustainability, but also represents an important aspect of global safety.

Countering these challenges to threaten global credibility of the media requires common efforts and solidarity from global media community. Unfortunately, among global media, there is currently the destructive trend of disunity and politicization, which facilitates rapid worsening of the crisis in the global media space.

Today, there are more than a hundred news agencies operating in the world. Definitely, the processes taking place at the forefront of the international arena cannot but affect the work of those who report on them.

The crisis of the international relations system has recently become the obvious phenomenon in global politics. The rise of international structures advocating formation of a new, more just and equitable architecture of international relations has currently become a natural phenomenon.

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<sup>2</sup> Статистика Интернета и соцсетей на 2024 год – цифры и тренды в мире и в России // WebCanape : [сайт]. URL: <https://www.web-canape.ru/business/statistika-interneta-i-socsetej-na-2024-v-mire-i-v-rossii/#7> (accessed: 02/16/2024).



Throughout its history, the Russian News Agency TASS has never stopped its work, honorably fulfilling its mission to bring to large audience official assessments, positions and views of Russia and its leaders on topical issues on the international agenda.

Since 2022, repeated attempts have been made to shake the international position of TASS as a full participant and one of the leaders of the global information community, advocating its exclusion from one of the top international media organizations – the European Alliance of News Agencies. Nevertheless, TASS managed to defend its membership in the structure.

TASS continues to work as an active full member in all global and top regional media alliances. Moreover, our agency has been able to strengthen its position in the Organization of Asia-Pacific News Agencies (OANA), members of which provides two thirds of the total global information flow. At the 18th General Assembly of OANA, held in October 2022 in Tehran, TASS was re-elected Vice-President of OANA. Moreover, by majority of votes, we were given the opportunity to hold the 19th OANA General Assembly in 2025 in Russia. Such a decision certainly indicates the great trust in our agency and the high authority of TASS among the member agencies.

To date, TASS continues participating in world summits, forums, congresses, international and regional conferences, exhibitions, competitions, seminars, and developing strategically important ties with our traditional partners, primarily with the media of China, Vietnam, Mongolia, North Korea, Turkey, Iran, the United Arab Emirates and other leading global media.

At present, TASS has successfully operated news feeds in all official languages of the United Nations. 57 representative offices in 52 countries allow quickly receiving and disseminating unbiased information about events in Russia and the world to the largest possible audience.

In 2024, Russia's foreign policy is focused on its presidency in the BRICS, the interstate association to be considered as a platform capable of turning into a centre for consolidating new forces. Currently, over 40 countries have expressed their desire to join the BRICS association, and 23 of these countries have already officially submitted their applications.<sup>1</sup>

The 15th BRICS summit, held in August 2023 in Johannesburg, the capital of South Africa, was dubbed "historic" by the media, as it marked a qualitatively new stage in the group development. According to its results, from January 1, 2024, Egypt, Iran, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Ethiopia joined the association, thereby the recognizable "five" turned into a full-fledged "ten", expanding its geography to the Middle East and North Africa.

The BRICS countries' goal is what Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov called "the new polycentric system of international relations", which is the fair consensus of original countries-civilizations that have an equally important voice in global development issues.<sup>2</sup> Recognition of the primacy of international law and the coordinating role of the United Nations, rejection of interfering independent

states' internal affairs, as well as willingness to uncompromisingly defend their interests and understand decisions of other countries are the cornerstones, on which it is based.

The task of TASS as the leading information partner of the state, strictly following its fundamental professional principles, is impartially and holistically outlining the country's position on key international issues, maintaining contacts with more than 200 world media at the highest possible professional level, for the purpose of continuing to contribute to formation of the positive, balanced and unifying international agenda.

News agencies' role in shaping the news worldview is extremely important. By promptly generating information and providing it, the media are one of the key links in efficient operation of the global community. If the media listen to different positions, comprehending them, they can play a significant and often decisive role in eliminating misunderstandings and settling conflicts.

TASS values its reputation and professional honour. There is a specific person behind each of our news (correspondent, journalist, source of the information). Reliability and accuracy are the most important priorities for TASS. Each employee of TASS can be said to give a kind of "Hippocratic Oath". Like doctors, we refrain from causing any harm and injustice, so TASS has always expressed its willingness to share its own experience in using tools for verifying and fact-checking information, and has repeatedly initiated creation of charters of global media, for combating disinformation and fake news.

Even in the period of disunity, the world media community should not forget about its professional duty and global creative mission to contribute to the deepening and development of the cultural and inter-civilizational dialogue of all countries on the equal and fair basis, strengthen mutual understanding between peoples all over the world, and peaceful and stable development of the planet. And completing this mission requires media cooperation in full.

In this regard, TASS continues open, active and honest interaction with all colleagues, who are interested in this. In 2024, the agency will make efforts on promoting principles of objective journalism and the original, honest partnership of sovereign participants in the TASS information process in framework of international professional alliances and its own events, the key of which will be the BRICS Media Summit. It will be attended by over 100 heads of the BRICS countries' leading media and their like-minded people. I am confident that, following principles of cooperation based on mutual respect, equality and common advantage, the media will be able to bring information interaction to a fundamentally new level in qualitative and quantitative terms.

So, in addition to solving the already traditional problems of countering the spread of fakes and disinformation, combating cybercrime, developing digital progress opens up for the media new areas for collaboration, such as virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR), the use of artificial intelligence (AI), development of audio and podcast projects, introduction of blockchain technologies to ensure transparency and reliability of information, as well as creation of new content monetization models, such as micropayments or subscriptions. I would like to believe that the ICT use by modern media for the benefit of society will contribute to improving the quality of their work and further development of digital progress.

<sup>1</sup> Шерпа ЮАР заявил, что страны Глобального Севера «стучат в двери» БРИКС // Новости в России и мире – ТАСС : [сайт]. URL: <https://tass.ru/mezhdunarodnaya-panorama/19851915> (accessed: 17.04.2024).

<sup>2</sup> Лавров С. В. Подлинная многосторонность и дипломатия против «порядка, основанного на правилах» // Россия в глобальной политике. 2023. Т. 21, № 4. С. 72–81.

In view of rapid transformation of the world and emergence of new challenges that professional media have to face today, their impartiality, constructiveness and solidarity will not only contribute to increasing public confidence in news and its official sources, but also

serve as a basis for strengthening stability in the information space, will demonstrate to the entire world society a positive example of new collaboration. Whether we will be able to achieve the stated goals depends on ourselves.

**A. K. Isaev<sup>1</sup>**

## RUSSIA'S FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC POLICY IN MODERN CONDITIONS

The propaganda of unfriendly countries often tries to present Russia's foreign policy as a struggle against Western democracy. Probably, one could agree with this, but with one correction: Western democracy by its genesis and nature is a slave-holding democracy. Back in Ancient Greece, democracy was exclusively for its own, for citizens, and slaves were considered to be talking tools, practically animals, to which no humane and civilised principles applied.

The founding fathers of the American state, who wrote such a humane Constitution, were also slave owners. This Constitution, of course, did not apply to slaves.

With the development of Western society, the number of those admitted to the "democratic table" gradually expanded. In the 20th century, virtually all citizens living in Western countries, including women, were given the right to vote. Nevertheless, there has always been, and still is today, the belief that humanistic principles can be left out of the rest of the world. We remember the brutal execution of muzzle-bound Sipayans in India at a time when the Liberal Party was in power in Britain and the newspapers were full of stories about the importance of humanist values.<sup>2</sup>

In 2023, at the Russia-Africa Forum in St Petersburg, Vladimir Putin named Patrice Lumumba the first among the leaders of the black continent's national liberation movement. Lumumba was a democratically elected head of government who was brutally tortured and murdered under the watch of Belgian officers. This was after the Declaration of Human Rights had been adopted and the Congo had gained formal independence. At the same time, the West was being told of the sacred mission of the US and its allies to bring humanism and freedom to all countries.

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<sup>2</sup> *Исаев А. К. Россия – лидер антиколониальной революции // Единая Россия* : [website]. URL: <https://er.ru/activity/news/rossiya-lider-antikolonialnoj-revoljucii-statya-andreya-isaeva> (accessed: 07.05.2024).

In the 20th century, the colonial system that had existed for several centuries, which allowed to rob, enslave and physically destroy the population of colonies, was replaced by the system of neo-colonialism, when formally a state remains independent, but is under the strict financial and political control of Western countries.

The struggle against neo-colonialism was actually led by the Soviet Union. One can have a different attitude to the personality of Nikita Khrushchev, but his famous speech on 12 October 1960 at the UN General Assembly served as a real manifesto of the anti-colonial struggle.

It seemed that after the collapse of the USSR, neo-colonialism should experience a revival. The US established itself as the world's sole hegemon and openly began to proclaim its leadership as an official ideology.

But here's the problem: Russia began to leave this system, firmly adopting a course of national sovereign policy and support for allied countries, regardless of the will of the West. Therefore, a military clash with Ukraine was imposed on us, with all Western countries on the side of the Banderite regime.<sup>3</sup>

However, the system of colonialism is hopelessly outdated. If in the past centuries its existence could be explained by the colossal gap in cultural and technological development between the metropolis and the colonies, whose population often did not even know that there was any other way of life than their own, then now in the information society, when any person, located anywhere in the world, can work in any company and get information about everything that is happening on our planet, the system of colonialism is becoming a brake on the development of mankind. At the same time, the West cannot abandon it. Like the Roman Empire, it has grown a colossal layer of "Roman poor" – tens of millions of people who do not produce any real product, but live much better than labourers in the "third world". This layer plays a significant role in the political system of the West, it is the electorate and does not intend to change its habits. The U. S. and its allies are waging a war, trying to preserve this layer and this neo-colonial system as a whole. And our country, as the Russia-Africa forum in July and recent events abroad have shown, is becoming the leader of a powerful anti-colonial revolution.<sup>4</sup>

In fact, humanity is facing the choice of one of two ways of further development.

The first way is neo-colonialism promoted by the G7. I would like to point out that the G7 does not include countries representing the so-called Third World, which is es-

<sup>3</sup> *Исаев А. К. Оп. cit.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

essentially a council of masters, headed by the supreme master – the United States of America, and together they seek to establish dictatorship over the entire planet. The model of the world order proposed by them boils down to the fact that there is only one correct socio-political order – the one that exists in the USA and Western Europe, and this order can be forcibly imposed on any country with this or that degree of rigidity, if the West deems it necessary.

Another way is to create a multipolar world, a world where all countries are equal and treat each other with respect, seek consensus in solving various problems, and do not dictate to anyone how to live. This is precisely the path offered by BRICS, which is an equal union of countries with different political systems, cultures, religions, ideologies and traditions. In this union, no one imposes anything on anyone: China does not demand that South Africa build Chinese-style socialism, Brazil does not oppose China's party system, and so on.

Let me remind you that BRICS was founded in 2006. Initially it included Brazil, Russia, India and China, and then South Africa joined. And since then, BRICS has evolved from a purely economic consultative association into one of the major international political organisations, comparable in influence to the G7.

It is obvious that the pandemic, the confrontation between Russia and the West, and the new round of globalisation have changed the world, and it will never return to the state it was in before 2020. But what the new world order will be is not yet clear.

The war that is going on now in the world economy, in the sphere of ideology and on the battlefields in different parts of the world, primarily in Ukraine, is directly related to the choice of a new world order.

The victory of our opponents will mean that humanity will remain in neo-colonial chains for a long time, and most states will be delayed in their development for decades or even centuries, suffering and death will increase in the countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America, while their resources will be exploited more and more by the growing economies of the Seven.

If we win, the world will be organised according to the model on which BRICS is working today. We see that there are more and more supporters of this model. It is planned that in 2024 the organisation will unite 46% of the world's population, and the combined GDP of the BRICS countries will reach 37% of the global GDP. Moreover, this is only the first stage. The expansion of the organisation will definitely continue.

The BRICS heads of state also advocated the use of national currencies in international trade and financial transactions between the BRICS countries. In fact, they are storming the main bastion of the G7 – the US dollar. The less the dollar is in international trade and in the gold and foreign exchange reserves of various countries, the fewer opportunities the G7 will have to exercise its economic power over the world and solve its internal socio-economic problems at the expense of other countries.

The discussion within the BRICS about whether to introduce a single currency for the organisation or to focus for the time being on the creation of a single payment system within which countries will trade in their own currencies is not a discussion about de-dollarisation as such, but only about its pace. Obviously, both involve de-dollarisa-

tion, but the introduction of a new monetary unit will of course bring down the dollar faster, as some 60 countries that are now BRICS-oriented will also start to switch to the new currency, which is extremely stable and reliable. However, there is one important circumstance that cannot be ignored: today, some BRICS countries keep a significant part of their foreign exchange reserves in dollars and are holders of U. S. debt obligations, so they do not want the dollar to fall quickly. Nevertheless, they are also interested in its gradual displacement, i. e. dedollarisation is an inviolable goal for them, as it is for us.

I am confident that sooner or later we will win the current war together on all fronts: military, economic and ideological, and humanity will follow the path proposed by the BRICS countries.

Speaking about domestic policy, of course, the President's Addresses to the Federal Assembly are of paramount importance.

In 2023, priority attention was given to the tasks related to the Strategic Defence Forces, but the country's development goals formulated in peacetime have not changed. Moreover, Vladimir Putin has set a number of new social tasks.

Firstly, it is the creation of a state fund to help veterans of the SVO and families of fallen fighters. We see that many people returning from the front or having lost a breadwinner there need psychological support, medical care, assistance in solving everyday problems. For each of these issues, they appealed to different authorities. The Fund allowed citizens to receive assistance in a "one-stop-shop" mode. And while now it is working for the participants of the armed forces and families of the deceased, in the future, according to the President, its activities may be extended to other veterans of combat operations.

Secondly, an important task is to raise the minimum wage at a rate that outpaces inflation. Often we see the public focus on increasing benefits and pensions, but both are directly dependent on wages. It should also be remembered that the higher the wages of employees, the more opportunities the budget has to eliminate social problems, because income tax is the main source of financing the budgetary sphere. Thus, the fulfilment of the task set by the President on the minimum wage will not only increase wages, but also solve a whole range of other social issues.

Thirdly, Vladimir Putin said that in recent years we have adopted many measures aimed at supporting families with children. But we realise that, apart from the universal maternity capital, these measures were mainly aimed at supporting low-income citizens. In his Address, the head of state proposed a mechanism for expanding tax deductions. This is a direct material support for families, regardless of their income level.<sup>1</sup>

The President dwelt separately on social assistance to people working in the defence industry. We are used to the fact that the defence industry complex acts as an economic engine for many industries: through defence orders various civilian enterprises are loaded, the latest developments in the "defence industry" are picked up by other industries. Vladimir Putin actually proposed to make the defence industry a driving force for the creation of new social

<sup>1</sup> *Исаев А. К. Социальный аспект Послания Президента 2023 года // без формата : [website]. URL: <https://groznyi.bezformata.com/listnews/sotcial-niy-aspekt-poslaniya-prezidenta/114804620/> (accessed: 07.05.2024).*

technologies. We are talking about the creation of special social packages for workers in the industry and the construction of rental housing for them at the expense of state subsidies. I would like to note that the lack of social support for people going to work in another region and their lack of rental housing in the new place have always been serious deterrents to internal labour migration. The construction of rental housing and the introduction of social packages, first in the defence industry and then in other sectors, will help solve the problems of qualified specialists moving from one region to another.

Finally, in his Address, the President essentially presented the concept of a new industrial policy, which involves not only economic measures, such as industrial mortgages, but also social changes, including a restructuring of the education system, including a phased abandonment of the Bologna system and the restoration of the best elements of Soviet higher education, taking into account the experience of recent decades.<sup>1</sup>

The 2024 Address also focused on social policy, including poverty reduction, support for fertility and families with children, education and healthcare.

First of all, the President announced the launch of a new national project “Family” aimed at supporting motherhood and childhood. By the end of 2030, it is planned to allocate 75 billion rubles to help the subjects of the Federation, where the birth rate is below the national average. Also, the family mortgage programme and the maternity capital programme will be extended until at least 2030, and tax deductions for the second, third and subsequent children will be increased. All the legislative decisions necessary for this will be adopted by us as a matter of priority. In addition, United Russia will monitor measures to support families with children in the regions.<sup>2</sup>

As a result, by 2030, the poverty rate among large families should more than halve and the overall poverty rate should fall below seven per cent, including by expanding the availability of the social contract system, which allows people to start a business or learn a new profession: 100 billion rubles will be allocated for it.

In addition, the President proposed to launch a new comprehensive programme to protect maternal health and the health of children and adolescents, including reproductive health. This programme involves expanding the network of women’s clinics, modernising perinatal centres, children’s polyclinics and hospitals. We will provide full funding for this programme. In total, more than one trillion rubles will be allocated for the construction, repair and provision of healthcare facilities with medical equipment by 2030.

On the initiative of the President, a programme of major repairs of kindergartens will start next year. Many of them were built back in Soviet times and are in need of serious modernisation. Also, about 18.5 thousand school buildings are to be overhauled by 2030. Overall, more than 400 billion rubles will be allocated for the renovation of kindergartens and schools. In addition, we will set aside the necessary funds in the federal budget to build at least 150 new

schools and more than 100 kindergartens in those cities where the problem of overcrowding of educational institutions is particularly acute. Here, too, we will need to exercise parliamentary control over the quality of work and the efficiency with which budget money is spent.<sup>3</sup>

I would like to add that from 1 September a federal additional payment of 5,000 rubles a month will be introduced for educational advisers to principals at schools and colleges, and from 1 March the federal additional payment for classroom management and group supervision will be doubled: it will reach 10,000 rubles a month. And by 2026, a new model of wages for public sector employees should be prepared, aimed at eliminating the unfair disparity in salaries from region to region.

In his Address, the President instructed the government to work with the regions to implement a programme to repair and equip secondary vocational education institutions, including the dormitories of technical schools and colleges, which have long been in need of renovation. For our part, we will allocate 120 billion rubles from the federal budget over six years for this purpose. We will also allocate an additional 126 billion rubles by 2030 to overhaul 800 hostels of higher education institutions and universities. Moreover, 400 billion rubles will be allocated to expand the programme for the construction of university campuses and campuses: as a result, not 25 campuses will be built by 2030, as previously planned, but at least 40. The programme for the creation of engineering schools on the basis of universities will also be expanded: 30 such schools are already functioning, 20 will be launched this year, and the President proposes to open another 50 by 2030. These centres will not only train high-class specialists, but also offer original technical solutions in industry, agriculture, construction, transport, and social sphere. We will also allocate over 9 billion rubles to upgrade the infrastructure of pedagogical universities.

All these measures will contribute to ensuring the educational, scientific and technological sovereignty of our country.<sup>4</sup>

The President has also set the task of ensuring sustainable growth of wages and social benefits. One of the main tools to achieve this goal is to increase the minimum wage. Let me remind you that from 2018 to the present, the minimum wage has almost doubled to 19242 rubles. By 2030, we will have to almost double it again – to 35,000 rubles.

Another important topic that the President touched on in his Address to the Federal Assembly is long-term care for the disabled and elderly. At first, the system of long-term care was launched in 34 pilot regions, by the end of last year it had begun to work in all constituent entities of the Federation, and now the President has set the task of increasing its financing and accessibility so that by 2030 100 percent of citizens in need of such care will be provided with it.<sup>5</sup>

The President drew particular attention to the problem of a severe shortage of specialists in a number of industries. We have been tackling this problem for over a year now as part of the party project “My Career with United Russia”.

<sup>1</sup> Исаев А. К. Социальный аспект Послания Президента 2023 года.

<sup>2</sup> Исаев А. К. К 2030 году уровень бедности среди многодетных семей должен снизиться более чем в два раза // Фракция «Единая Россия» в Государственной Думе : [website]. URL: <https://er-gosduma.ru/news/andrey-isaev-k-2030-godu-uroven-bednosti-sredi-mnogodetnykh-semey-dolzhen-snizitsya-bolee-chem-v-dva/> (accessed: 07.05.2024).

<sup>3</sup> Исаев А. К. К 2030 году уровень бедности среди многодетных семей должен снизиться более чем в два раза.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.



The project was launched on 1 September 2022. Until 2023, it was implemented in pilot mode in five regions – Lipetsk, Ryazan, Kaluga Regions, Kamchatka Territory and the Republic of Udmurtia.

As part of this project, special career centres were set up on the basis of the party's regional executive committees, where people who had undergone preliminary training helped visitors to register on the Jobs of Russia portal and gain access to the services of employment centres.<sup>1</sup>

The project also included mass events in various formats: for example, job fairs where employers could talk to potential job seekers.

As for high school students and graduates, within the framework of the project they could visit enterprises in their regions, get acquainted with labour conditions and learn about in-demand professions.

A separate area is the employment of socially vulnerable categories of citizens. We selected employers who are ready to create the necessary conditions for employees with special needs.

Since the beginning of 2023, on the initiative of Dmitry Medvedev, the party project "My Career with United Russia" has become a nationwide project.

Last year, more than 6,000 events were organised within the framework of the project on the party's platforms, and about 1.5 million people took part in them. Approximately 100,000 people received help in finding a job. More than half of the regions showed results that exceeded expectations. The project has become the most effective among all federal party projects.

I would like to point out that we have a sub-project aimed at helping women find jobs. At the same time, we are actively co-operating with the United Russia Young Guard on vocational guidance and job placement for young people.

It is necessary to emphasise the employment activities for participants of the SMO and their family members. Here we are actively co-operating with the Defenders of the Fatherland Foundation.

Assistance to heroes returning from the front who are defending our country and to relatives of those who are currently in the combat zone is one of our top priorities.

For example, we help the wives of businessmen who have gone to the front to acquire the necessary knowledge to continue their husbands' business. Or we help those women housewives who lost their breadwinners during the special operation and are now in dire need of an income to find a job.

In 2024, we plan to separately address the issue of assistance to those defenders who were seriously injured at the front and have limited employment opportunities.

The format of "Mentoring" has also been introduced.

Mentoring involves assigning people who want to find a job or build a career to party leaders of any level, who become their career mentors. The role of a mentor is to help in shaping the trajectory of career development, drawing up an individual training plan, providing recommendations for employment.

The specifics of the mentor's functions depend on the sphere of activity of the citizen who applied. For ex-

ample, if a citizen works in the field of sports, a mentor can assist in organising training, competitions and opening sections. For recipients of social support measures, assistance is provided and control over the fulfilment of the terms of a social contract, grant agreement, etc. is ensured.

In 2023, as part of the My Career with United Russia project, we launched Mentoring in several regions at once, and this format has shown excellent results. For example, in the Astrakhan region, with the support of United Russia party deputies, the employment service authorities implemented the Business Mum and Daddy Entrepreneur projects. Based on the results of competitions within the framework of these projects, members of the expert jury (supporters and members of the United Russia party) became mentors for the participants. They provide them with comprehensive assistance aimed at establishing and developing their businesses, obtaining support measures, applying for favourable loans, etc.

This area will be actively developed within the framework of the project in 2024.

At present, there is a particular need for qualified personnel at defence industry enterprises, given their increased workload in the context of the special military operation and external sanctions pressure.

As part of the My Career with United Russia project, it is planned to conclude agreements with representatives of industry unions to improve the quality of technical education and the number of graduates from specialised educational institutions.

Finally, as part of our project, a pilot "Return to Profession" programme will be developed in cooperation with industry unions. The programme will be aimed at returning to enterprises citizens whose education and work experience meet the criteria stated by employers, but whose qualifications have been lost as a result of a long break in seniority.

We have very ambitious plans. We expect that in 2024 our project will cover at least 700 thousand people.

We are also implementing the Professionalism project, which has made it possible to update educational programmes for a whole range of industries.

In addition, Vladimir Putin announced the launch of a new national project "Personnel", which should strengthen the link between all levels of education from school to university, and called on heads of enterprises to invite schoolchildren more actively to get acquainted with the production process.

I should add that in the autumn session of 2023, we adopted a new law on employment. According to this document, employment services should provide services not only to citizens registered as unemployed, but also to those who are in search of a more suitable job. Special support is envisaged for people at risk of dismissal, pre-retirees, veterans of the SVO and their families, disabled people, and young people. Also, since 1 February, the unemployment benefit has been indexed annually. Previously, it was increased irregularly, as opportunity and need arose.

In the spring session of 2024, United Russia began considering companion laws to the employment law. They should bring the Labour Code, the Tax Code and other legislative acts in line with the new norms. In addition, work continues on a draft law on the specifics of regulating platform employment.

<sup>1</sup> Ситуация в мире и актуальные задачи социального партнерства в России // ФНИП : [website]. URL: [https://fnpr.ru/upload/iblock/757/0bmqcnj3chz66t7xuc39wz35sw1luo6t/Isaev\\_AK\\_Situatsiya\\_v\\_mire\\_i\\_aktualnie\\_zadachi\\_1605.pdf](https://fnpr.ru/upload/iblock/757/0bmqcnj3chz66t7xuc39wz35sw1luo6t/Isaev_AK_Situatsiya_v_mire_i_aktualnie_zadachi_1605.pdf) (accessed: 07.05.2024).

I would also like to remind you that we have adopted a law which, from 1 July 2024, will abolish commission fees when paying for housing and communal services through banks. The law had a difficult fate. We introduced it back in the VII convocation, for almost four years there were difficult consultations with representatives of the banking community, and finally, thanks to the support of the President, the law was adopted. In the course of consultations with banks, we agreed that the final list of categories of citizens from whom banks will not charge commission for payment of housing and utility bills will be established by the government. But it is already known for sure that all Russian pensioners will be exempt from the fee.

We have also introduced an amendment to the legislation that gives medical organisations the right to use the balance of compulsory health insurance funds received

for medical care to purchase equipment, carry out current repairs, and rent accommodation for specialists. The heads of many medical institutions have been waiting for this decision.

The priority for us remained support for the participants of the SMO, their relatives and friends.

We provided for priority enrolment of special operation participants and their children in colleges and technical schools. We also passed a law on the termination of obligations under surety contracts for participants in special operations who died in a combat zone, died from a wound or became group I disabled. Finally, guarantees were provided for family members of former law enforcement officers to receive housing payments in the event of their death during a special military operation.<sup>1</sup>

And we will certainly continue our work to support the participants in the SMO.

**S. V. Kabyshev<sup>2</sup>**

## MULTIPOLAR WORLD: THE PATH TO DIALOGUE OF CULTURES AND CIVILIZATIONS

The modern world is undergoing a global geopolitical transformation, irreversibly changing the axiological-normative landscape of humanity. The world order that emerged after the end of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, based on the dominance of Western civilization, which claims to finally determine the fate and rules of life for states and peoples in exchange for a share in the economic welfare, which is also concentrated in the West, has proved incapable of maintaining peace and security, fair and equal conditions of dignified life and free development for all.

The idea of globalization, which appeared attractive for a single interconnected world built on the basis of universal human values, has turned into claims for alienation of sovereignty and exclusivity of the legal standards developed in the Euro-Atlantic context. Moreover, in their interpretation by the so-called progressive-minded elites. The practice of supranational institutions, including the relevant jurisdictional bodies, has been dominated by the demand for unconditional tolerance of any form of progressive expression, even if it comes into radical conflict with national-cultural tradition, ethical and religious foundations of society, is shocking and offensive.

At present, the systematic purposeful actions of unfriendly foreign states and organizations convincingly demonstrate that the countries of the collective West claiming

global ideological and worldview leadership have not simply retreated from the so-called eternal fundamental values, including the rule of law, equality, justice, and inviolability of property, which have been gained by Western civilization itself, but have essentially embarked on a path leading to legal nihilism. The open imposition of the world order concept based on the rules adopted in the countries of the so-called liberal democracy and opposed to the axiological-normative systems of, in particular, Russia and China characterizes the extent of crisis of the international law as a form of expression of the consolidated will of the world community.

In these conditions of a turning point in history, Russian jurisprudence, as well as domestic social science in general, faces fundamental challenges related to deep re-thinking of the national state-legal system in the context of transition to a multipolar world and justification of the very attractive, promising, vital philosophic-legal and at the same time utilitarian concept of multipolarity. It is not about bringing some new system-forming ideal into the ideological and semantic space of Russian jurisprudence, but about the consistent up-to-date deployment of historically formed traditional cultural and value foundations and aspirations of the Russian statehood on the scale of national political and legal life and the international legal order. In this regard, it is important to keep in mind that the ideological and normative foundations of Russia's legal positioning in the multipolar world and the formation of a legal image of multipolarity as such were formally and legally consolidated and justified in a constituent (constitutional) capacity during the amendment of the Russian Constitution in 2020, in particular, in the system of principles of constitutional continuity and national spiritual and cultural identity (Article 67.1), Russia's responsibility for maintaining and strengthening of international peace and security, ensuring of peaceful co-existence of states and peoples, preventing of interference in the internal affairs of the state (Article 79.1).

It is necessary to overcome the illusion of an exclusive Western-centric interpretation of legal humanism, to get rid

<sup>1</sup> Турчак А. «Единая Россия» в осеннюю сессию приняла ключевые законодательные решения // Без формата : [website]. URL: <https://moskva.bezformata.com/listnews/turchak-edinaya-rossiya-v-osennyuyu/125414888/> (accessed: 07.05.2024).

<sup>2</sup> Chairman of the Committee on Science and Higher Education of the State Duma of the Russian Federation, Professor at the Department of Constitutional and Municipal Law of the Kutafin Moscow State Law University (MSAL), Honored Lawyer of the Russian Federation. Author of a number of publications on legal issues, including monographs and textbooks: "The Constitution of Russia: Progress Traditions", "Constitutional Law" (co-authored), "Federalism in Russia and Canada", "Municipal Law-Making", and others. State Counselor of the Russian Federation, II class, Member of the Council under the President of the Russian Federation for Science and Education. Awarded the Order of Friendship, the Medal of the Order "For Merit to the Fatherland" I class, and the Medal "For Impeccable Service" III class. Recipient of the Higher Legal Prize "Themis" in the category "Science and Education".

of the complex of peripheral and catching-up legal development, of depreciation of our own unique civilizational experience of the arrangement of state and legal life. To persistently and consistently reveal the sociocultural conditionality of law, which must ensure natural civilizational diversity and universal dialogue and only in this way can serve the common destiny of humankind. The words of academician D. S. Likhachov, describing the civilizational significance of Russia, need not only substantive reflection, but also 'revival' and wide disclosure in state and international practice: "Russia's mission," stressed D. S. Likhachov, – "is determined by the fact that it has united up to three hundred peoples – large, great and small, all requiring protection. The Russian culture has developed in the conditions of this multinationality. Russia served as a huge bridge between nations. First of all, as a cultural bridge."<sup>1</sup>

I should note that the multipolar world idea itself as an alternative to the models of hegemony or bipolarity cannot be perceived as a panacea and does not remove the accumulated fundamental problems, but rather indicates a general methodological direction for their solution, which needs scientific reflection and thorough verified concretization. The multipolar world is undoubtedly a qualitatively more complex ontological construction, the viability, sustainability, and effectiveness of which are determined by the real provision of multi-level dialogue, mutual recognition, and consideration of existential state interests that define the historically formed space, in which the objective diversity of modern cultures and civilizations manifests itself. The international dialogue characterizing the multipolarity should serve as a natural expression and continuation of the national constitutional dialogue, which can be presented as a system of forms, methods, means of governmental and civil (non-governmental) nature, demanded in the state-organized society for the purposes of its self-organization by defining – on the basis of fair and equal participation, correlation of traditional spiritual and moral ideals, and actual vision of strategic perspectives – value and content meanings regarding the grounds, properties, interconnections, limits and prospects of formation, implementation, and development of constitutional norms and institutions.

Obviously, the real, practical development of multipolarity is naturally associated with the expansion of space and growth of struggle of ideas related to both international interaction and organization of national constitutional life.

The most important thought-starters and basic principles of building a multipolar system of international relations are defined in the Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, approved by Presidential Decree No. 229 of March 31, 2023. These are: sovereign equality of states, respect for their right to choose models of development and arrangement; non-acceptance of hegemony in international affairs; cooperation on the basis of a balance of interests and mutual benefit; non-interference in internal affairs; supremacy of international law in regulating international relations; indivisibility of security; diversity of cultures, civilizations, and models of social organization; responsible leadership of leading states; the predominant role of sovereign states in decision-making in the sphere of maintaining international peace and security.

It should be highlighted that this understanding of multipolarity, considered as the basis of the new international order, reflects Russia's principled vision of the trajectories of development of the international system, which has been developing gradually. In particular, it should not go without mention the Russian-Chinese Joint Declaration on a Multipolar World and the Establishment of a New International Order (Moscow, April 23, 1997) and the Joint Declaration of the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China (Beijing, December 2, 2002). These documents reflect the notion that, as the main trends of the multipolar world formation intensify, effective measures are needed to ensure mutual respect, equality and mutual benefit rather than hegemonism, and power politics, dialogue and cooperation rather than confrontation and conflicts.

Relying on these fundamental attitudes, Russian jurisprudence should offer its own well-founded vision of the holistic concept of multipolarity, which would not only serve as an ideological and doctrinal basis for clear, precise geostrategic positions of Russia and implementation of the national development course, but would also be competitive and really demanded in the world community, ensuring trust, good-neighborly relations, and partnership in the interests of the commonwealth. At the same time, understanding of the value and normative side of multipolarity should be complemented by an adequate concept of the composition, structural organization, and details of the institutions that will serve as tangible embodiment and guides of this concept.

In this regard, I would like to draw attention to the fact that serious substantive work remains to be done to substantiate, in particular, the legal nature and prospects for the BRICS development, as well as in relation to and in interaction with other forms of cooperation, including the CSTO (the Collective Security Treaty Organization) and the SCO (the Shanghai Cooperation Organization), since these issues are still pushed to the side.

In general, with regard to the justification of the multipolarity concept, it is not a question of revising the foundations of international law and universally recognized categories that define modern statehood, but of forming a model for the implementation of international law that is adequate to the conditions of a changing world, which would reflect and ensure the coordinated fair implementation of the true diversity of sovereign interests of all members of the world community.

In this regard, I would like to dwell a little more on some issues that require special attention in the formation of the scientific concept of a multipolar world.

First, the very terminological construction of multipolarity, stemming from the natural-scientific notion of poles, polarity, should not mislead as to its focus on the relations of attraction and repulsion. What matters is not the diversity of power centres, but the nature of ties, correlation, and interaction among the members of the world community. In this case, the understanding of international law as a system of addition, not subtraction, of sovereignties, which are not limited, but mutually supported and mutually reinforced through the international legal order, correctly noted by the Chairman of the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation V. D. Zorkin, is of crucial significance.

Second, multipolarity implies recognition of and respect for the natural interests of states beyond their bor-

<sup>1</sup> Лихачев Д. С. Избранные труды по русской и мировой культуре / сост. и науч. ред. А. С. Запесоцкий. 2-е изд., перераб. и доп. СПб.: СПбГУП, 2015. С. 57.

ders, which are based on the historical, cultural, religious, linguistic, and human community of the peoples living in the territories concerned. Without questioning the fundamental principle of sovereign equality, international legal mechanisms must be ensured to take into account the interests of compatriots and the position of the state of their cultural and historical affiliation.

Third, the concept of human rights needs a serious rethinking, which should be removed from the artificially limited liberal-Western value-philosophical context, freed from the political burden of geostrategic expansion, and linked to the idea of national-state identity based on traditional spiritual and moral values.

Thus, the specifics of the Russian paradigm of human rights can be characterized primarily (but not only) in terms

of the dominant value of the Motherland as a political and civilizational unity, the well-being of which is the basis and condition for the realization of the potential of each citizen. Equally important here is the aspect of the moral conditionality of freedom, the meaning of which is not liberation, but being a worthy member of society.

The situation of global socio-economic inequalities provoked by the centuries-long colonialism requires special attention in the light of the concept of human rights. In the logic of consistent recognition and guarantee of the right of peoples to development and pursuit of happiness, it is necessary to ensure more equitable mechanisms of global economic interaction based on the special responsibility of leading countries for the well-being of other peoples.

**R. U. Khabriev<sup>1</sup>**

### **POSSIBLE WAYS FOR BRICS COUNTRIES TO COOPERATE IN THE FIELD OF HEALTH CARE: PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS**

The need for BRICS countries to work together to achieve universal health coverage is emphasized in almost every declaration of the annual BRICS summits. Thus, 10 years ago, it was noted that “most BRICS countries face a number of similar health challenges, including those related to universal access to health services, technologies and medicines.”<sup>2</sup> In 2022, the Beijing Declaration of the XIV BRICS Summit reaffirmed that “BRICS countries will strengthen multilateral technical cooperation aimed at enhancing capacity for... universal health coverage, vaccine research and development, preventive and therapeutic health systems and digital medicine.”<sup>3</sup>

Goal 3 of the Agenda for Sustainable Development for the period until 2030,<sup>4</sup> “Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages” states the following target 3.8: “Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health care services, and access to safe, effective, quality, and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all.”

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<sup>2</sup> Пункт 42 IV BRICS Summit – Delhi Declaration (Делийская декларация, принята по итогам IV саммита БРИКС). URL: <https://nkibrics.ru/pages/summit-docs>.

<sup>3</sup> Пункт 15 XIV BRICS Summit – Beijing Declaration (Декларация XIV саммита БРИКС – Пекин). URL: <https://nkibrics.ru/pages/summit-docs>.

<sup>4</sup> United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/70/1, adopted on 25.09.2015.

In order to measure and assess universal health coverage (UHC), the World Health Organization developed an integral indicator, an index that takes into account the values of indicators grouped into four components: reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health; communicable diseases; non-communicable diseases; and access to health services.<sup>5</sup>

However, in addition to this indicator, other indicators are analyzed as part of monitoring the achievement of the sustainable development goals in the area of health care.<sup>6</sup> In this study, the following indicators were initially grouped and analyzed:

- indicators of financial provision (current expenditures per capita; current expenditures on health care from gross domestic product; share of citizens’ funds in current expenditures on health care);
- infrastructure indicators (provision of the population with doctors, nurses and hospital beds);
- generalized public health indicators (life expectancy; probability of dying between the ages of 30 and 70 from any of cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes or chronic respiratory disease; overall mortality rate of non-communicable diseases).

The sources of statistical data for the study were the World Health Statistics, published annually by the World Health Organization (WHO), and the WHO Global Health Observatory.<sup>7</sup> This made it possible to make the assessment and comparison of countries’ health care systems completely objective.

Due to the pronounced difference in the socio-economic situation of the BRIC countries and South Africa, the latter was not included in this study, the values of public health

<sup>5</sup> World health statistics 2016: monitoring health for the SDGs, sustainable development goals. Geneva : World Health Organization, 2016 ; Primary health care on the road to universal health coverage: 2019 global monitoring report. Geneva : World Health Organization, 2021.

<sup>6</sup> Хабриев Р. У., Коломийченко М. Е. Лекарственное обеспечение в амбулаторных условиях и интегральные оценки общественного здоровья // Проблемы социальной гигиены, здравоохранения и истории медицины. 2023. Т. 31, № 1. С. 11–15.

<sup>7</sup> The Global Health Observatory. URL: <https://www.who.int/data/gho>.



indicators in the Federal Republic of Brazil (hereinafter referred to as Brazil), the Russian Federation (hereinafter referred to as Russia), the Republic of India (hereinafter referred to as India), the People's Republic of China (hereinafter referred to as China) were analyzed.

When analyzing the values of individual indicators of financial provision of the health care system of the countries, pronounced differences in the values of the indicator "Current health care expenditures per capita" were identified: the value of the indicator in Russia is comparable with those in Brazil, but significantly higher than in India and China.

What is important is not only the expenditure per person, but also the proportion of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) that is spent on health care in a country. By this indicator, the situation is somewhat different: in Brazil, about 10% of GDP is spent on health care, in Russia and China – a little more than 5%, in India – about 3%.

A completely different situation is observed when analyzing the values of the indicator "Share of citizens' funds from current health care expenditures", the leader here is India (with the lowest value of the indicators "Current health care expenditures per capita" and "Current health care expenditures as a percentage of GDP" among the BRICS countries). The values of this indicator are again comparable in Russia and China, and significantly lower than the population's own expenditures on health care in Brazil.

The next group is infrastructure indicators. Russia is the leader in terms of bed availability. The value of this indicator is almost 1.5 times less in China, almost 3.5 times less in Brazil and 13 times less in India. Russia is also a leader in the provision of doctors, but in Brazil and China the values of this indicator are comparable and less than in Russia by about 1.7 times, in India the value is less by 5 times. The distribution by values of the indicator "Availability of nursing staff" is quite different: the leader is Brazil, Russia takes the second place with a slight difference, almost 2 times less than in Brazil, the value in China and 4 times less in India.

The pronounced ratio of physicians to nursing staff equal to 1:3 in Brazil is interesting, which clearly demonstrates the possibilities of transferring part of the workload (functions) to qualified nursing staff.

Thus, we have considered two components of the material support of the universal health coverage. Undoubtedly, it is impossible to compare the values of the financial provision indicators with the values of infrastructure, but it is possible to compile an aggregate average ranking of each country on the indicators considered and compare it with the OHC index and the ranking of each country on this indicator.

Russia is comparable to Brazil in terms of the average ranking for "material support" (finance and infrastructure), China takes the third place and India takes the fourth place.

In the next stage of the study, the obtained average ranking of countries was compared with the value and ranking of countries according to the UHC index. Russia and Brazil have almost the same UHC value and, accordingly, the same ranking on this indicator; India has a significantly lower value of material support indicators, UHC index and ranks fourth on these indicators. An interesting pattern is observed for China: having the third value (both absolute and ranking) in terms of material support of the health care system it has the highest value of the UHC index and, accordingly, ranks first in this group.

How does China manage to provide the highest level of health coverage among the BRICS countries at a lower cost? Of course, this is the result of work to promote and expand the means and methods of traditional Chinese medicine, recreation activities and their preventive orientation.

In the next step, UHC index values were compared with population health indicators, among which the following were selected: the probability of dying between 30 and 70 years of age from any of the cardiovascular diseases, cancer, diabetes or chronic respiratory diseases (risk of premature death from target NCDs); the overall mortality rate of non-communicable diseases (NCD mortality rate); and life expectancy at birth and at the age of 60.

UHC indicators are absolutely correlated with life expectancy rates. However, with equal UHC values, there is a marginal increase in life expectancy in Brazil.

The results of the health indicator analysis are thought-provoking: for the same UHC values, Brazil has a 40% lower risk of premature death from target NCDs than Russia, and a 30% lower mortality rate from NCDs. It should be noted that Russia has the highest values of these indicators among the BRICS countries.

There is a clear need to figure out and understand what the mechanism is that ensures the achievement of results in population health indicators.

Along with this study, a comparison was made of retail pharmaceutical expenditures<sup>1</sup> in different countries (countries were ranked according to the share of the population's funds for outpatient drug payments of total retail pharmaceutical expenditures into the following four groups: with a share of citizen payments of less than 30%; between 30% and 49%; between 50% and 70%; with a share of citizen payments of more than 70%) with UHC, risk of premature death from target NCDs; mortality rate of NCDs; expected life expectancy at birth and at the age of 60.

The following results were obtained:

- when comparing the share of citizens' funds for medicines and UHC, an inverse dependence was revealed;
- a direct correlation was determined between the share of citizens' funds to pay for medicines, the risk of premature death from target NCDs and the mortality rate of NCDs;
- the inverse dependence was also revealed when comparing the share of citizens' funds to pay for medicines and life expectancy (both at birth and at the age of 60), which is undeniable given the decline in health coverage and increasing mortality from non-communicable diseases.

The results obtained prove the impact of the level of payments of the population for medicines under outpatient treatment on the accessibility of medical care (UHC index) and population health indicators.

It is known that the Unified Health System (National Health System) of Brazil seeks to ensure the population's access to medicines. In particular, about 70% of the medicines for continuous use and about 70% of the prescribed medicines were provided free of charge.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Health at a Glance: Europe 2020: State of Health in the EU Cycle / OECD. European Union. P. : OECD Publishing, 2020. URL: <https://doi.org/10.1787/82129230-en> ; Health at a Glance 2021: OECD Indicators OECD. P. : OECD Publishing, 2021. URL: <https://doi.org/10.1787/ae3016b9-en>.

<sup>2</sup> Household expenditures for medicines and the role of free medicines in the Brazilian public health system / A. D Bertoldi, A. J. Barros, A. L. Camargo [et al.] // American Journal of Public Health. 2011. Vol. 101 (5). P. 916–921. DOI: 10.2105/AJPH.2009.175844.

Thus, this study allowed us to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the performance of health care systems in the BRICS countries, to determine the position of

the countries by individual indicators and to identify possible ways to improve the values of indicators in the Russian Federation.

**T. Ya. Khabrieva<sup>1</sup>**

## **BRICS IS A CIVILIZATIONAL PHENOMENON IN TERMS OF LAW AND LEGAL DOCTRINE**

BRICS is a new interstate association, gradual formation of which began in 2006, but it has already been showing high dynamics of expansion.<sup>2</sup> The economic potential of the BRICS is comparable to the so-called "Group of Seven" that personifies the leaders of the collective West, and in some respects exceeds its capabilities. However, significance of the BRICS for global processes cannot be assessed only by indicators reflecting the total economic potential of the member states. It is important to comprehend the cultural and humanitarian mission of the BRICS, which is clearly reflected in the title of the conference: "BRICS as New Space for Dialogue of Cultures and Civilizations." This perspective opens up vast vistas for social sciences in terms of rational development of both the BRICS phenomenon itself and the processes taking place in the world, including those within this association, related to its emergence.

The culturalological and civilizational contexts of the BRICS are extremely important for formation of the scientific understanding of integration processes and generation of the appropriate doctrine. Research programs can be different. Considering the BRICS through the prism of available doctrinal features of various types of civilizations<sup>3</sup> has significant prospects, with values underlying existence and activities of the BRICS to be focused on. Some of them have been announced officially. For example, com-

mitment to the principles of international law and recognition of the UN's key role indicates a sign of the traditionalist type of civilization to manifest. The tradition of seeing better times in the past,<sup>4</sup> the desire to revive the status and efficiency of international law and international legal institutions, to restore the old tradition of international legal communication, the role of principles of equality and justice as the foundations of international legal order can be considered as a feature of this type of civilization.

Herewith, the desire of the BRICS participants for accelerated growth can be treated as manifestation of a features of the technology-centered civilization. Sustainable growth as a value (common interest) for the BRICS participants is a sign of new-type civilizational development based on convergence of basic values of various civilizations.

Thus, there are prerequisites for the conclusion that, firstly, the BRICS reflects the processes of forming a new strategy (type) of civilizational development, which is based on convergence (but not unification) of values and cultural codes peculiar to different types of civilizational development; secondly, the BRICS is not only an international-legal innovation, but also, above all, a civilizational phenomenon, an artifact of a new-type civilization emergence. Recognition and understanding of this circumstance are the foundation for an appropriate definition of the nature, essence and form of this interstate association, as well as the strategy for the BRICS subsequent development.

Issues related to the BRICS become subjects of scientific research. They draw attention of not only political scientists, theorists and historians of international relations, economists and philosophers, but also experts in International Law and other legal themes.

It is worth noting contribution made by the Institute of Legislation and Comparative Law under the Government of the Russian Federation (hereinafter referred to as ILCL) to establishment of the national legal "BRICSology". In a large series of scientific papers dedicated to the theory and practice of legal support for integration development (EAEU, CIS, SCO, APEC, ASEAN), issues of evolution and formation of the legal foundations of the BRICS organization and activities were analyzed. Special attention was paid to international legal principles of the BRICS activities, ensuring collaboration among the member states in humanitarian, economic, energy, financial, investment, environmental and other areas. Legal aspects of the investment mode, as well as the mode of scientific and technical collaboration are explored.<sup>5</sup> Research on the legal dimension of the BRICS cyberspace gets of particular importance. Scientists from the ILCL and Chinese scientists jointly studied

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<sup>2</sup> The BRICS membership has already been expanded twice, in 2011 and 2023. The third expansion of the BRICS has been forecast.

<sup>3</sup> See: *Степин В. С. Современные цивилизационные кризисы и проблема новых стратегий развития. М., 2018.*

<sup>4</sup> *Степин В. С. Op. cit. С. 8.*

<sup>5</sup> See: *БРИКС: контуры многополярного мира / С. Е. Нарышкин, Т. Я. Хабриева, А. Я. Капустин [и др.] ; отв. ред. Т. Я. Хабриева ; зам. отв. ред. Н. М. Бевеликова. М. : Ин-т законодательства и сравнительного правоведения при Правительстве РФ : Издат. дом «Юриспруденция», 2015.*

basic principles of collaboration in the field of legislative regulation of the BRICS countries' Internet space, as well as measures for ensuring international information security and unification of rules related to settlement of problems arising in the cyberspace of the member states.<sup>1</sup>

Herewith, the search for new approaches and models to ensure geopolitical security, balanced development of the world economy, and preservation of the diversity of spiritual and legal cultures goes on. Studying issues to be addressed in the light of the membership to be expanded, as well as new forms of activity (in particular, transition to its own system of mutual settlements and increase in significance of the BRICS Development Bank) is being updated. The ILCL plans to further develop issues of humanitarian, economic, scientific and technical collaboration in the BRICS space, strengthening its international legal positions.

In Russia and abroad, amount of research on BRICS legal issues is low, most of them are focused on certain private issues of the legal agenda of this interstate association. Under conditions of increasing the BRICS influence on democratization of international relations and strengthening the international legal system, developing the BRICS domestic legal doctrine is still in demand.

In the domestic and foreign doctrine, there is no shared understanding on the issue of the BRICS international legal status, and main issues of the international legal situation and forms of activity continue to be discussed. The current situation can be explained by the fact that Russia's strategic documents, as well as similar acts of the interstate association itself, contain no definition of the international legal nature of the BRICS. Thus, in "The Concept of Participation of the Russian Federation" of 2013, it is envisaged that "the Russian Federation's long-term goal in the BRICS is gradual transformation of the association from a dialogue forum and a tool for coordinating positions on a limited range of issues into a full-fledged instrument for strategic and ongoing interaction on key issues of world politics and economics." "The 2023 Foreign Policy Concept" defines the BRICS as "the interstate association", within which interregional integration processes meeting Russia's interests are encouraged. "The BRICS Economic Partnership Strategy until 2025" mentions this interstate association as grouping.

It is not surprising that in the scientific literature there is a wide range of definitions claiming to explain the international legal nature of the BRICS. There are often attempts to "embed" the scientific search for the BRICS status in a number of informal "club-type" interstate associations usually including the G7, the Arctic Council and some other similar formats, which cannot be assessed otherwise than as considerable simplification. This approach results in erasing essential distinctions between the content of the informal clubs' activities, as well as their role and position in the interstate system. This approach is accompanied by the emphasis on the informal nature of the BRICS, which is popular in the Western doctrine, identifying it with a variety of numerous "multilateral summits". In many domestic studies of the legal nature of the BRICS, there is an attempt

to compare it with a kind of international intergovernmental organization (IIO), which has received international normative consolidation (draft articles on responsibility of international organizations of 2011), the definition of which is currently recognized in both domestic and foreign international legal doctrines.<sup>2</sup>

As can be assumed, this approach is due to the fact that recognition of an association as an IIO means its recognition as a functional international legal entity, which has the ability to exercise the most important rights (the right to enter into international legal relations with other legal entities, the right to representation, the right to conclude international treaties, etc.), as well as to be responsible (to comply with the norms of international law, etc.). In other words, the fact that an interstate association has the international legal status of the IIO makes it much easier to predict legal consequences of its activities in the interstate system.

In fairness, it should be noted that there are very few adherents of this approach. Most often, in the doctrine, statements about identification of the BRICS with the IIO or an integration association are formulated as a forecast for future.<sup>3</sup>

There is a position based on the provision about theoretical impossibility of the BRICS recognition as an international law organization and an international legal entity. It is proposed to define the association as a quasi-organization<sup>4</sup> or para-organization.<sup>5</sup> Apart from the details, both these viewpoints categorically reject recognition of the BRICS as the IIO and an international legal entity, since the informal nature of this interstate association of states in certain parameters (frequency of convening its summits, adoption of strategic documents, coordination of member states' actions) resembles an international intergovernmental organization, but, due to absence of other key features (absence of the constituent act in the form of the international treaty; lack of an organizational structure with appropriate powers; lack of independent rights and responsibilities), it cannot be recognized as such one.

It seems that when developing a scientific approach to determining the international legal nature of the BRICS, given further expansion, not only formal institutional legal parameters (the Charter, permanent bodies, legal personality, etc.), but also international legal elements of establishment of the new truly unique model of interstate collaboration as a result of evolution in conditions of formation of the multipolar world are needed to be considered. These include a number of important features that make it possible to talk about forming the international legal position of the BRICS and the member states of this association.

<sup>1</sup> See: Киберпространство БРИКС: правовое измерение / И. И. Шувалов, Т. Я. Хабриева, Фэн Цзинжу [и др.]; отв. ред. Дэн Руйпин, Т. Я. Хабриева; сост. Жун Фу, Н. М. Бевеликова. М.: Ин-т законодательства и сравнительного правоведения при Правительстве РФ: Инфра-М, 2017.

<sup>2</sup> See: Мантусов В. Б. Интеграционные процессы и сотрудничество России со странами БРИКС // Вестн. Российской таможенной академии. 2022. № 3. С. 9–23; Щербина Е. М. Роль БРИКС в создании многополярного мира // Таможенная политика России на Дальнем Востоке. 2023. № 4 (105). С. 15–24; Шинкаревич Г. Г. О правовом статусе БРИКС // Современное право. 2015. № 10. С. 140–145, etc.

<sup>3</sup> See: Балакин В. И. Европейский опыт региональной интеграции для Восточной Азии // Проблемы Дальнего Востока. 2012. № 4. С. 117–127; Щербина Е. М. *Op. cit.*

<sup>4</sup> See: Abashidze A., Solntsev A., Kiseleva E. Legal Status of BRICS and Some Trends of International Cooperation // Indian Journal of Science and Technology. 2016. Vol. 9 (36).

<sup>5</sup> See: Anufrieva L. BRICS: Legal Nature and Principles of Cooperation // Actual Problems of Russian Law. 2019. Vol. 1 (12). P. 123–133. The concept of international para-organizations was formulated and developed by Professor V. M. Velyaminov, an international lawyer (see: Международное право: опыты. М.: Статут, 2015. С. 507–539).

As it was noted, the most important parameter of the BRICS as an interstate association is the commitment once again confirmed in the Johannesburg Declaration II “BRICS and Africa: Partnership for Joint Accelerated Growth, Sustainable Development and inclusive Multilateralism” to respect the norms of international law, including goals and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, which is its cornerstone. The BRICS member states recognized the need for preserving the United Nations as the core of the international system, within which sovereign states interact in interests of maintaining peace and security, promoting sustainable development, promoting and protecting democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms for everyone, as well as promoting collaboration based on the spirit of solidarity, mutual respect, justice and equality.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, it can be argued that the BRICS member states have clearly outlined their position on compliance with international law not only in their mutual relations, but also in framework of the United Nations, and therefore in relations with other states and international organizations. They expressed their readiness to continue interacting with other states, for purposes of maintaining peace and security, promoting sustainable development, promoting and protecting democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms for everyone. Herewith, they will promote collaboration based on the spirit of solidarity, mutual respect, justice and equality, without claims to exclusivity or any form of coercion of other states.<sup>2</sup>

In this regard, it is important to emphasize that in the process of evolution, the BRICS has been acquiring features of a hybrid-type organizational structure, which includes annual summits, as well as meetings of representatives of the states at various levels (senior representatives in charge of national security issues; foreign ministers and heads of other line ministries and departments governing the NDB (New Development Bank)). Meetings of working groups on collaboration in various fields are held. Sherpa meetings are given an important place in the decision-making and collaboration process within the BRICS. During these meetings, delegates from the five countries prepare leaders' meetings, review the progress made over the past year and the course of joint actions, discuss possible implementation of previous action plans and identify priorities and principles for the next annual summit.

Finally, it is impossible to ignore establishment of the BRICS international civil-society institutions, which began with the Russian presidency in 2015. Currently, it is an academic track (the BRICS Academic Forum, which has turned into the platform for discussions and disputes by leading scientists of the member states; The Council of Expert Centres of the BRICS countries, which promotes expansion of collaboration in the field of research and capacity-building of interaction between the academic communities of the member states), as well as the BRICS Business Council, the BRICS Women's Business Alliance, the BRICS Working Group on the Digital Economy, etc.<sup>3</sup>

Collaboration of the BRICS member states is implemented in various forms of political and legal (including soft legal regulation) nature. Thus, summits, as a rule, adopt declarations that not only set tasks for development of interaction among the member states in agreed areas: for example, in the Johannesburg Declaration II “BRICS and Africa: Partnership for Joint Accelerated Growth, Sustainable Development and Inclusive Multilateralism”, this is development of partnership (in interests of inclusive multilateralism, joint accelerated growth, sustainable development), formation of the atmosphere of peace and development, increasing the number of humanitarian exchanges, institutional development. In certain provisions of the declaration, common international legal positions of the member states on certain topical issues of the international legal agenda can be formulated (support for the need to resolve the Iranian nuclear issue by peaceful and diplomatic means in accordance with international law, and recognition of the importance of preserving the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and UN Security Council Resolution 2231 in the interests of the international non-proliferation and ensuring peace and stability).

Besides, soft regulation instruments include joint statements by representatives of the departments of the member states (“Joint Communiqué of the Ministers of Economy and Foreign Trade of the BRICS Countries”; “The BRICS Statement on Strengthening the Multilateral Trading System and Reforming the WTO”), as well as framework agreements (“Framework Agreement on Partnership of the BRICS Countries in the Digital Economy”) and the so-called BRICS initiatives (“The BRICS Initiative on Trade and Investment for Sustainable Development”; “The BRICS Initiative on Strengthening Collaboration in the Field of Supply Chains”).<sup>4</sup>

Along with these forms of the relational nature, legal instruments capable of achieving their goals, based on the norms and principles of international law, are used in the BRICS activities. As an example, establishment by the governments of the five member states (the Federal Republic of Brazil, the Russian Federation, the Republic of India, the People's Republic of China and the Republic of South Africa), referred to “collectively as the BRICS countries”, of the New Development Bank (NDB) in Fortaleza (Brazil) on July 15, 2014. In Article 29 “Status” of the Agreement, in full compliance with the established practice of forming the IIO, it is determined that the NDB Bank is a full incorporated entity under international law, and in the territory of each member state – full legal entity, that is, it enjoys all the rights of a legal entity. It is envisaged that membership in the NDB is open to UN members in accordance with terms and conditions to be determined by an overwhelming majority of the Bank Management Board.

For the purposes of countering short-term pressure on the payment balances, providing mutual support and further strengthening financial stability, in Fortaleza, on July 15, 2014, the Agreement on Establishment of the Pool of Conditional Foreign Exchange Reserves of the BRICS member states was signed. It provides for that the Pool established is not an independent incorporated entity under international law and cannot conclude agreements, act as a plaintiff

<sup>1</sup> Йоханнесбургская декларация-II БРИКС и Африка: партнерство в интересах совместного ускоренного роста, устойчивого развития и инклюзивной многосторонности. URL: [https://www.mid.ru/ru/foreign\\_policy/news/1901504/](https://www.mid.ru/ru/foreign_policy/news/1901504/).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ковалева Е. И., Растопчина Е. Л., Божсков Ю. Н. Оценка экспортно-импортной деятельности БРИКС и ее перспективные направления // Журнал прикладных исследований. 2023. № 3. С. 87–93.



and a defendant in court, that is, it does not have the status of a legal entity. Herewith, according to the Agreement, for conducting transactions using the liquidity instrument and the preventive instrument, the Central Banks of the states participating in the Agreement will conclude the interbank agreement among themselves, which will define the necessary operational procedures and guidelines. So, for resolving financial issues, the BRICS member states used interna-

tional treaties, on the basis of which the specialized IIO was created, as well as the legally binding international agreement was concluded.

Thus, the BRICS legal framework gradually forms, and expansion of its membership indicates enhancement in its influence on democratization of international relations as an independent pole of world politics and increase in credibility in the interstate system as a whole.

A. D. Korol<sup>1</sup>

## THE ILLUSORY WORLD AS A PROBLEM OF MONOLOGUE EDUCATION (From the dialogue in education to the dialogue of cultures and civilizations)

A person has always been under illusions. This is eloquently confirmed by the words of the Persian Sufi poet Jalaladdin Rumi, "He sleeps a dead sleep, captivated by vanity. And by appearance, which is false and void."<sup>2</sup> Today's science, primarily social psychology and neuroscience, knows about causes of illusions much more than D. Rumi's poetic words. In the psychological literature, one of common mechanisms of interpersonal cognition, which distorts the reality adequacy, is exaggerating positive personal qualities of the object being cognized, with simultaneously underestimating negative psychological features (the halo effect). "The test subjects rated the beautiful as more confident, happy, sincere, balanced, energetic, amiable, sophisticated and spiritually rich, compared to those whom the experts rated as ugly or ordinary."<sup>3</sup> Known in psychology ethnic stereotypes (a German is a pedant, a Southerner is short-tempered, etc.), anthropological ones (the higher a person's height, the higher his/her status is perceived), the effects of primacy, novelty, categorization, etc. are also based on the simplified scheme of human perception of reality.<sup>4</sup>

At present, the global world makes the topic of illusions relevant and significant more than ever. In terms of social psychology, vulnerability of social thinking is determined by people's influence on each other: "In the group, runners

run faster, the audience laughs louder, and philanthropists become more generous. In self-help groups, people become even more determined to stop drinking, lose weight, and study better. Groups of people with similar religious views contribute to greater spirituality of their members."<sup>5</sup>

"As soon as we divide them into groups – athletes, cinematographers and mathematics professors, we immediately have a tendency to exaggerate intra-group similarities and intergroup differences."<sup>6</sup>

Illusiveness can be measured by the number of illusions per person per unit of time. Density of meanings per person can be equally considered a marker of illusiveness. Amounts of meanings decrease as the person's external limits expand, i. e. boundaries of personality are eliminated, and therefore availability and associated amounts of pleasure increase.

It is extremely difficult for a person to understand which is truth and which is fiction. Communications that "close" the doors of a person to own Self lead to barriers and distances, which are simulacra between the person and the outside world, between the inner person and the outer one.<sup>7</sup> The person constantly shuts himself off from reality, and perceives information about it only through the prism of an intermediary, for example, the mass media. Collectivity of phenomena determines the mass viewing by people of a huge billboard with news to appear there daily. And here, we cannot but recall the work by Tkhostov and Emelin about a small village to be in the focus of attention of the whole planet, and the entire continent to simultaneously fall out of the focus.<sup>8</sup>

One of modern aspects of illusiveness is the knowledge illusion as the result of the *joint interaction of people*. "We live in the knowledge illusion largely because we cannot draw a clear line between things inside our heads and outside them (at least since there is no clear demarcation line between them). That's why we often don't know what exactly we don't know."<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rector of the Belarusian State University (Minsk), Foreign Member of the RAE, Dr. Sc. (Pedagogical Sciences), Professor. The most cited scientist-teacher of Belarus according to the RSCI in the field of "Public Education. Pedagogy". Author of the innovative concept of dialogization of the education system. Published more than 250 works, among which over 50 are scientific and educational-methodological (inter alia in Chinese and English): "Dialogue Pedagogy: from Methodology to Training Methods", "Silence in Teaching: Methodological and Didactic Foundations", "Learning through Discovery: in Search of the Student. A Book for Teachers and Parents", "Man and His Meanings: Educational Notes", "Heuristic Tales. Learning through Discovery. In Search of Knowledge of the Heart", and others. Member of the editorial boards of a number of Belarusian and international scientific journals, the international editorial board of the "Thought and Word" series of the Institute of Philosophy of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Professor Emeritus of Foshan University (PRC), Vice-President of the Eurasian Association of Universities. Member of the Union of Writers of Belarus. Awarded diplomas of the Russian Academy of Education, the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus, the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, the Socrates Medal, the badge of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus "Excellence in Education", and others.

<sup>2</sup> Ирано-таджикская поэзия : [сборник] : пер. с фарси / [вступ. ст., сост. и примеч. И. Брагинского]. М. : Худож. лит., 1974. С. 154–155.

<sup>3</sup> Miller A. G. The Obedience Experiments: A Case Study of Controversy in Social Science. N. Y. : Praeger, 1986.

<sup>4</sup> Майерс Д. Социальная психология. 7-е изд. СПб. : Питер, 2021. С. 386–397.

<sup>5</sup> Майерс Д. О.р. cit. С. 382.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. С. 422.

<sup>7</sup> Король А. Д. Монологичность общения как проблема атомизации школы: герменевтический взгляд // Вопросы философии. 2023. № 10. С. 27–35.

<sup>8</sup> Емелин В. А., Тхостов А. III. «Квантовая механика» телевидения // Вопросы философии. 2011. № 11. С. 27–37.

<sup>9</sup> Сломан С., Фернбах Ф. Иллюзия знания: Почему мы никогда не думаем в одиночестве / пер. с англ. А. С. Сатунина. М. : КоЛибри, Азбука-Аттикус, 2017. С. 23.

“The knowledge illusion entails other harmful consequences. Since we think together, we usually work in groups. This means that *our individual contributions depend more on our ability to interact with others* than on individual mental capacity. *Significance of individual intelligence is overestimated.*”<sup>1</sup>

“Emergence of the knowledge illusion can be explained by the fact that we live in the community of information bearers and are unable to separate the data stored in our memory from the facts beyond it. We believe that all the information about the world around us to function is contained in our heads, but in fact this is not the case.”<sup>2</sup>

The topic of the knowledge illusion turns out to be associated with the problem of stereotypes in learning, which updates the need for considering illusiveness in the context of the education system.

Many authors have written about stereotypes in education. It is enough to mention famous “Social Psychology” by John Myers, with its huge variety of examples of biological and social stereotypes.<sup>3</sup> In numerous publications on this topic, scientific research, the subject of consideration is the psychological aspect and, accordingly, the analysis of mechanisms of socio-psychological stereotypes. However, there are practically no publications that, one way or another, link the reason for the growth of stereotypes with the education system.

A number of articles consider gender, socio-psychological stereotypes in education. For example, in the article “Completion problems can reduce the illusions of understanding in a computer-based learning environment on genetics,”<sup>4</sup> the results showed that students with lower prior knowledge performed better on completion tasks, while students with higher prior knowledge performed better on routine tasks. Incomplete problems led to the performance overestimation, that is, to the illusion of understanding, while finishing and ordinary tasks showed neither overestimation nor underestimation.

However, philosophical, methodological, and theoretical studies of the reasons for the growth of stereotypes through the prism of education, its methodology, and learning technologies are not observed in most of publications.

Let’s take a closer look at the reason for the most common stereotypes in terms of education treated as “knowledge transfer”. Pointedness or concentration **on an object** always causes **distortion** of vision. Seeing an object in all its details means seeing it close. Thus, being unable to see everything to surround the object itself – the so-called background. From here, the small island of knowledge that comes into view *is completed* by the brain *to a certain gestalt*. But it is completed according to a template, and therefore is a potential error.

Illusions of this nature are characteristic of both *physiological processes*, e. g. optical illusions, and social ones. Famous neurophysiologist Ch. Frith wrote that “our sense of instant and complete perception of everything in our view is false.”<sup>5</sup> Just visual illusions are based on the person’s abil-

ity to often see the object itself without noticing the background, so in the social aspect, seeing the particular rather than the whole is one of core reasons for stereotyping of human life.

**Focusing on an object** is a path to distorting knowledge, space and time, that is, “stopping the mind”, according to Buddhists. A striking example of social illusion is the **fundamental error of causal attribution**. The point is that an outside observer in an event tends to overestimate personal qualities of the subject responsible for the event without noticing the background, i. e. the situation that led to the event.<sup>6</sup>

The imbalance between the dispositive and the situational is similar to violation of the relationship between the background and the object, which is the cause of visual illusions. Thus, the basis of illusions is seeing the object without noticing its background. In other words, **the sign, the speaking is always a mistake.**<sup>7</sup> The very thought of anything means concentration, and therefore it is erroneous.<sup>8</sup> For example, according to Taoist philosophy, “Epiphany occurs when thought exhausts itself.”<sup>9</sup>

*Stratification of the background and the object, exacerbating distortions on the planetary scale, leads to stratification of the **personality** structure*, namely: processes of cognition, audibility of oneself and others, and objective comprehension of the worldview. *Loss of self-identity results in losing the meanings, and, consequently, in increasing stereotypes, radicalism.*<sup>10</sup>

Narrowing the inner space of meanings means narrowing the adequate perception of reality. *One’s narrowing space happens to be replaced with someone else’s*. People become **similar to each other**, and, in terms of psychoanalysis, reality is extension of our needs. *The needs constantly increase along with growth of new information amounts and the amounts of **pleasure** associated with the growth.*

Losing audibility of oneself and the other creates the distance between people, and, consequently, the distortion magnitude increases more and more, as the person’s outer limits expand.

### The background and the object.

#### From monologue to dialogue in education

Mass education is monological.<sup>11</sup> It translates a “sign” – multicultural nobody’s information without its “background”, its socio-cultural context. This leads to difficulties in perceiving people as representatives of various cultures and civilizations.

Any natural environment tends to minimize energy costs, and therefore the minimum energy cost for cognition is expressed in one of two views on human nature: “A person is a blank sheet” that needs to be filled with writings,

<sup>6</sup> Майерс Д. Оp. cit.

<sup>7</sup> Король А. Д. Молчание в диалоге как проблема философии образования // Вопросы философии. 2019. № 4. С. 6–11.

<sup>8</sup> Король А. Д. Педагогическая проблема диалога Востока и Запада: молчание в обучении // Мировое развитие: проблемы предсказуемости и управляемости : XIX Междунар. Лихачевские науч. чтения, Санкт-Петербург, 22–24 мая 2019 г. СПб. : СПбГУП, 2019. С. 145–150.

<sup>9</sup> Афоризмы старого Китая / пер. с кит. В. В. Малявина. М. : Наука, 1988. С. 59.

<sup>10</sup> Korol A. D. Dialogue education vs monologue education: to the problem of overcoming radicalism // Journal of Higher Education Theory and Practice. 2022. Vol. 22 (13). P. 254–263.

<sup>11</sup> Король А. Д., Бушманова Е. А. Образование для Человека. От скорости к ценности. Минск : Аверсэв, 2024.

<sup>1</sup> Сломан С., Фернбах Ф. Оp. cit. С. 151.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Майерс Д. Оp. cit.

<sup>4</sup> Completion problems can reduce the illusions of understanding in a computer-based learning environment on genetics / L. Mihalca [et al.] // Contemporary Educational Psychology. 2015. Vol. 41. P. 157–171.

<sup>5</sup> Фритт К. Мозг и душа: как нервная деятельность формирует наш внутренний мир / пер. с англ. П. Петрова. М. : АСТ : CORPUS, 2018.

or, as considered, the more (s)he is filled, the higher the result of his/her education.

Hence, the nature of conventional education – the transfer one – also reflects the minimum of psychological, organizational and other energy costs for cognition. The content of education is considered as a kind of experience intended to be transferred to the student, with its subsequent assimilation, however, it is not the experience, but information to be transferred, and it is “nobody’s” and therefore “alien” to the student. The student is the recipient of information to be given to him as a “ready meal” (laws, theorems, postulates, etc.), (s)he does not participate in “cooking” this “meal”. The transfer nature of education is *monological* in nature and is manifested in educational standards, programs, educational literature, as well as in the educational process. This hinders development of the student’s personality, his motivation for educational activities, increases the content volume of subjects, exacerbates the problem of maintaining the student’s health.<sup>1</sup>

In terms of psychology, monologue characterizes the directive style of interaction with people, high-level rigidity, aggressiveness, and psychoticism of the person. The factors in human behavior and communication that gain more and more influence today.

*Translating the “sign” – the humanity’s achievements without considering the socio-cultural background of the student himself – a priori leads to distortions in the vision of the world, the “closure” by the person of the path to oneself and to others, inability to the dialogue of cultures. Education based on a “sign” to be alien to the student, without its “background”, is the way to the global cultural and historical illusion, and therefore to the personality death.*<sup>2</sup>

The monologue of education not only strengthens the current stratification of the object and its background and the associated increase in the amount of stereotypes, it generates the inability to hear representatives of another culture, characterizes the departure from the holistic principle of designing education, leads to the person’s inability to conduct the intercultural dialogue.

The “sign” to be translated is the same, but each student has his/her own “background”. What can provide unity of the sign and its surrounding background? The unity of the sign and its background is always inside the student, inside the subject. The illusion based on the object and the information (the situation of monologue) steals meanings, while subjectivity returns meaning, implements the concept of the student as a “seed of an unknown plant”, which has a cultural-historical, anthropological, psychophysiological code. In this case, we face a completely different methodology, content and technologies of education, in which activity in cognition is not the teacher’s, but the student’s, and is based not on assimilation, listening, but on creating one’s own product, different from the product of other students.<sup>3</sup>

The product created by the student consists of two parts – internal and external. The external is what is directly materialized and made by the student: the written essay, the compiled algorithm, the invented slogan, the conducted experiment. And the internal part is what led to crea-

tion of the external one. Namely, how much the student has changed in course of his/her creative activity. How much (s)he has built up his creative, cognitive, organizational “muscles”. In other words, the external part of the product is the result of the student’s self-change, provides *integrity, inseparability between the student’s self-change and the knowledge (s)he generates*.

Creating a product is possible only in dialogue, and therefore consequences of cultural and historical illusions in education may be overcome by shifting the paradigm, by changing the methodology of content, teaching methods that will have meanings and contents, and not just methods.

The example of such a dialogical learning system is **heuristic learning**. So, the purpose of the heuristic learning system is discovering himself by the student – his meanings, purpose, and creative self-realization.<sup>4</sup>

It is impossible to self-actualize in the socio-cultural experience, more precisely, in the “ready” and “correct” information transferred to the student from the outside (from the teacher, from the textbook). Equally, it is impossible to self-actualize through “reflection” – imitation and duplication. The student’s self-actualization is possible in his/her knowledge of the objects of the surrounding reality and, as a result, creation by the student his/her own educational product, different from products of other students. The field of reality (fundamental educational object) is a common for the students object of cognition, which provides each of them with a personal result of its cognition, and ultimately the individual trajectory of education.

Fundamental educational objects are key entities reflecting the unity of the world and accumulating in themselves the reality of cognizable existence. Real educational objects include, for example: nature objects (water, air, etc.), culture objects (artistic texts, architectural structures, works of art), technical devices (computer, telephone, TV, etc.). These are the nodal points of major educational fields, due to which the real field of knowledge exists and the ideal system of knowledge about it is being constructed.<sup>5</sup>

In terms of education, fundamental educational objects are primary meanings of existence. Primary meanings are nodal points of the meta-object content of education, its structural basis. During the learning process, amount of these nodal points in the student continuously increases, which results in growing the amount of knowledge he comprehends, his personal experience and competencies.<sup>6</sup>

The primary (subjective) result of the student’s cognition of the field of reality is not complete. A kind of “mirror” for the primary product created by the student is the cultural-historical analogue. This cultural-historical analogue accumulates basics of the studied sciences, arts, native and world traditions, technologies, and other areas of human activity, which are reflected in academic subjects and educational fields. It is expressed in the form of concepts, laws, principles, methods, hypotheses, theories, etc., to be considered the humanity’s fundamental achievements. In comparison of the primary subjective product obtained by the student with socio-cultural knowledge, the student’s generalized educational product to be different from other

<sup>1</sup> Король А. Д. Стереотип как образовательная проблема.

<sup>2</sup> Король А. Д. Педагогическая проблема диалога Востока и Запада: молчание в обучении. С. 147.

<sup>3</sup> Король А. Д., Бушманова Е. А. Образование для Человека. От скорости к ценности.

<sup>4</sup> Хуторской А. В. Дидактическая эвристика. Теория и технология креативного обучения. М.: Изд-во Моск. ун-та, 2003.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. P. 88.

<sup>6</sup> Хуторской А. В. Метапредметное содержание образования с позиций человекообразности // Вестн. Ин-та образования человека. 2012. № 1. С. 10.

students' products is born. The knowledge accumulated by the humanity, or rather, the accumulated information, is not rejected by the student, but is the educational environment for comparing "his/her own" with "someone else's".

Heuristic learning based on dialogue combines the student's socio-cultural and subjective types of experience, provides the opportunity for the student to create "his/her own" product in dialogue with "someone else's" one, to build his/her own educational, and then life path.<sup>1</sup> The integrity of the student's representations of phenomena and objects of the surrounding world, the unity of the socio-cultural and the subjective in the student's education negates the very monological (one-sided) nature of the stereotype of perception.<sup>2</sup>

Vision of one thing, not the whole, is one of core reasons for stereotyping human life. And solution to this problem of "blindness" is in the area of solving the problem of the meta-objective approach in education based on working with real objects of reality, rather than their simulation and description in the form of theory.

*Using the example of the methodology of learning through discovery – heuristic learning – we see that integrity of the student's perception of the world and elimination of illusions are inseparable from the student's interaction with reality.* Getting rid of stereotypes is not facilitated by the student's study (transfer) of ready information on objects, devoid of a personal principle, which reduces the student's motivation to learn and communicate. The student's study of the objects of reality, and creation of educational products based on this, means the departure from object-centrism to meta-objectivity.

*Desobjectivation helps get rid of stereotypes, notes V. M. Rozin.*<sup>3</sup> Desobjectivation is expanding the viewing space of seeing objects of the external world, that is, the space for meta-objective vision, which allows a person to get rid of distortions, various kinds of aberrations of the internal vision.

**"I strive for holism, but not globality; I do not propose any system".<sup>4</sup> Globality, as the reason for gigantic illusion, constitutes the concentrate of communications. Holism, in turn, is meta-objectivity.**

The difference between the personal (obtained by the student himself in his dialogue with the cultural-historical analogue) and the impersonal resolves the key intrigue of communication – the line between the signifier and the signified. **Personal** knowledge is **meta-objective** and **active**, unlike the information received from the teacher, it gives its owner the opportunity for **getting rid of the stereotype**.

It should be noted that the student's personal knowledge, rather than the knowledge obtained from the outside, determines the methodological and methodical significance of the student's question in educational cognition. Heuristic dialogue is a dialogue, in which the dominant in questioning is the student's, not the teacher's.

**The student's heuristic dialogue** determines his/her special "silent status". *The form and condition of meta-*

*objective vision of the world, without distortion, is what is between the sign – the silence.* Silence returns the person his/her internal space of self-understanding and reflection, meanings and motivation, giving rise to new goals and questions.<sup>5</sup>

*Methodological, didactic and methodological basics of heuristic dialogue in designing and implementing education have been continued in our developments of methodological and didactic basics of silence in learning.*<sup>6</sup> The research shows the contours and the very possibility of existence of full-fledged didactics of silence as an integral science of learning, reveals its *methodology, content, methods, evaluation criteria*.

The student's *questions* aimed at the fundamental educational object (this is the methodological group of questions "What?") contribute to generating by the student a subjective educational product. *Proofs, refutations* (the methodological group of questions "How?") are the student's tool for comparing a subjective educational product with the cultural-historical analogue. *Simultaneous proof and refutation of an assertion*, compilation of a fragment of the dialogue, a dialogical heuristic task, constitute the methodological group of questions "Why?" and are the student's tool for generating the generalized educational product.

The meta-object as continuity is actualized in the student's question, not the answer. Hence, the knowledge of own ignorance is the unity of two opposites. "Si, have you probably studied a lot and learned a lot?" asked a disciple Confucius. To which Confucius replied, "No, actually I don't know much. But if I'm asked a question, I can always answer it by considering it from two opposite sides."<sup>7</sup> The similar tool is the student's question as a methodological and methodical tool for designing and implementing the system of heuristic learning based on dialogue.

One's Own – Someone Else's. Towards the dialogue of cultures

Translating the same information to different students leads to their alienation from the education transferred to them. Quite figuratively, this alienation can be found in G. Gibran's words. "Many teachings are similar to a window glass: we can see the truth through it, but it also separates us from the truth."<sup>8</sup> "Someone to be attached to other people's words and seek an answer in interpretations is like a fool who wants to knock the moon out of the sky with a stick or **scratch a corn without taking off his shoes**."<sup>9</sup>

*The glass that separates a person from the truth, as well as the shoe that separates the hand from the corn, symbolize the obstacle between "one's own" and "someone else's" in education. And the greater the obstacle, the more the student will be lost, monological, stereotyped.*

The student's alienation from the education transferred to him, in fact, the information, generates in future

<sup>1</sup> Король А. Д. Педагогика диалога: от методологии к методам обучения. Гродно : ГрГУ им. Янки Купалы, 2015. С. 114.

<sup>2</sup> Король А. Д. Стереотип как образовательная проблема.

<sup>3</sup> Розин В. М. Наука: происхождение, развитие, типология, новая концептуализация : учеб. пособие. М. : Изд-во Моск. психол.-социал. ин-та ; Воронеж : МОДЭК, 2008. С. 510.

<sup>4</sup> Panikkar R. The rhythm of being : the Gifford lectures. N. Y. : Orbis Books, 2010. P. 24.

<sup>5</sup> Король А. Д. От логики познания к логике общения, или Возможна ли дидактика молчания? // Вестн. Ин-та образования человека. 2016. № 2. URL: <https://eidos-institute.ru/journal/2016/200/Eidos-Vestnik2016-206-Korol.pdf> (accessed: 12.12.2023).

<sup>6</sup> Король А. Д. Молчание в обучении: методологические и дидактические основы. Минск : Вышэйш. шк., 2019.

<sup>7</sup> Конфуций. Беседы и суждения Конфуция / сост., подгот. текста, примеч., общ. ред. Р. В. Грищенко; предисл. Л. С. Переломова. СПб. : Кристалл, 1999. С. 300.

<sup>8</sup> Джебран Х. Избранное : пер. с араб. и англ. Л. : Худож. лит. Ленингр. отд-ние, 1986. С. 245.

<sup>9</sup> Афоризмы старого Китая. С. 58.

the adult's alienation from the surrounding world, full of cultural contexts and civilizational variations. The information transferred to the student contains the illusion "gene" intended for creating a **wall between one's own and someone else's**, which subsequently hinders value orientations in the modern multipolar world.

The education, in which the student discovers himself, destroys the wall between him and the world, destroys stereotypes and illusions. The illusion gene is the monological educational system, and, on the contrary, the birth of meanings in the student's heuristic dialogue with the outside world is a corrector of illusions.

Eliminating the gap between one's own and someone else's in education determines the choice of the priority of the holistic over the fragmentary in constructing the learning content. It implements the principle of meta-objective education.

Monologue in education is an accelerator of globalization, and hence polarization in the world. According to G. Tarde's theory, history is collision of imitation circles.<sup>1</sup> The more monological university graduates replenish countries' economies, the faster the course of history and the faster the inner space of a person closes.

### Conclusions

The major problem of today's world is its **illusiveness**. Man is full of stereotypes, as well as the history of mankind, its driving force is imitating some people by others. The sign as the object of history is the result of collision of imitation circles.

*Education should be focused on discoveries, and not on obtaining ready information, which is illusorily considered*

*knowledge. Knowledge is the result of the person's work to transform himself, a tool for deepening, not expanding, the person's external limits.*

Heuristic learning reveals to the student his/her self, namely, "only one who has comprehended self in himself can allow all things to be what they are."<sup>2</sup> While monologue is the decrease in critical thinking, which means it leads to the increase in stereotypes.

A discovery cannot be made in the phase of knowledge, fullness and sign, but it is made between the sign sections, in the interval of ignorance and silence. Or, following the words of the Arabic poet Rumi, "now I'll get silent, and let silence separate the truth from lies."<sup>3</sup> Knowledge in itself is a "stop of the mind", while the knowledge of one's own ignorance is the most valuable knowledge since the time of Socrates. It is like silence, or light in night colours, as well as the most valuable thing in writing is what is "between the lines". Discoveries are born in the phase of silence, on the edge of knowledge, and in fact, in the phase of ignorance, between two heterogeneous meanings, when a leap from one meaning to another is required.

The other pole in relation to stereotypes is the **meaning**. It is important to teach the student to reproduce his/her meanings and questions, which in itself is akin to preserving human congruity.

The dialogic nature of education is subsequently extrapolated to the dialogic understanding of the world in its diversity of cultural and civilizational meanings. The contextual understanding of the modern multipolar world, the ability to the dialogue between cultures and civilizations develops through non-monological education, heuristic learning that combines socio-cultural and subjective human experience.

O. I. Kostikova<sup>4</sup>

## FINE-TUNING OF NETWORKING IN THE LINGUOCULTURAL SPACE OF THE BRICS

In the Foreign Policy Concept of Russia, the term "network diplomacy" has been endenized since 2008, and the term "network alliance" – since 2013.<sup>5</sup> Both concern the deve-

lopment of bilateral and multilateral relations with states and interstate associations and international organizations as well; imply flexible forms of participation in multilateral structures in order to collectively seek answers to common challenges and replace block approaches to solving international problems. In 2016, the Foreign Policy Concept emphasized again that Russia's task was to "promote the formation of network alliances and Russia's active participation in them"<sup>6</sup> and reaffirmed the demand for network diplomacy, which at that time proved to be a progressive method of interaction with states and integration associations.

<sup>1</sup> Тард Г. де. Законы подражания : пер. с фр. М. : Академ. проект, 2011.

<sup>2</sup> Хун Цзычэн. Вкус корней // k2x2.info : [website]. URL: [http://www.k2x2.info/filosofija/aforizmy\\_starogo\\_kitaja/p6.php](http://www.k2x2.info/filosofija/aforizmy_starogo_kitaja/p6.php) (accessed: 14.12.2023).

<sup>3</sup> Cited in: Казе Э. Тишина в эпоху шума: маленькая книга для большого города / пер. с норв. [А. Мариловцевой]. М. : Альпина паблишер, 2017. С. 127.

<sup>4</sup> Deputy Director of the Higher School of Translation (faculty) of Lomonosov Moscow State University for Scientific Work, Innovation and International Scientific Cooperation, Head of the Section of French Language and Translation of the Department of Theory and Methodology of Translation, Ph. D. in Philology, Associate Professor. Author of more than 100 scientific and educational publications, translations of scientific and fiction literature, including: "The Science of Translation Today" (co-authored), "History of Translation. Practice, Technology, Theory. Essays on the History of Translation" (co-authored), "Translation Moscow" (co-authored), "Interpretation Course (French ↔ Russian)" (co-authored), "Educational and Methodological Complex on the Lexicology of the French Language" (co-authored), "Fundamentals of the General Translation Theory: a Short Course of Lectures" (co-authored), and others. Deputy Editor-in-Chief of the journal "Bulletin of Moscow University. Series 22. Theory of Translation", member of the editorial board of the international scientific journal "Babel: Revue internationale de la traduction", the editorial board of the "Russian Library in French", and others. Member of the competition committee of the Ministry of Digital Development of Russia, the World Interpreter and Translator Training Association (WITTA), Interdisciplinary Center on Research and

Training, Permanent Conference of University Institutes of Translators and Interpreters (CIUTI). Honorary Worker of Education of the Russian Academy of Education, visiting Professor at Guangdong University of Foreign Studies (PRC). Awarded the Order "Academic Palm" (France).

<sup>5</sup> Концепция внешней политики Российской Федерации : утв. Президентом РФ Д. А. Медведевым 12 июля 2008 г. // Министерство иностранных дел РФ : [website]. 2024. URL: [https://www.mid.ru/ru/foreign\\_policy/news/1670707/](https://www.mid.ru/ru/foreign_policy/news/1670707/) (accessed: 04.03.2024) ; Концепция внешней политики Российской Федерации : утв. Президентом РФ В. В. Путиным 12 февраля 2013 г. // Президент России : [website]. 2024. URL: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/17520/> (accessed: 04.03.2024).

<sup>6</sup> Концепция внешней политики Российской Федерации : утв. Президентом РФ В. В. Путиным 30 ноября 2016 г. // Президент России : [website]. 2024. URL: <http://www.kremlin.ru/acts/bank/41451/> (accessed: 04.03.2024).



The strength of network diplomacy and its concrete embodiment – network alliances – is the possibility to discuss global issues in various dialogue formats, including those not formalized into a particular organization. One of such formats is the BRICS multilateral association, which creation was initiated in 2006 by Russia, and it was one of the most significant geopolitical events in the early 21st century. Within a short time, the BRICS five countries “rightfully *established* themselves on the global stage as an authoritative structure which influence in world affairs has been steadily *strengthening*,”<sup>1</sup> having transformed today into the nine-nation alliance. The development of the BRICS+ format and multi-format cooperation with other countries encourage scholars to speak of a transcontinental governance mechanism with a broad agenda covering political, security, economic and social issues,<sup>2</sup> to fear it as a “disruptive power that poses normative and structural challenges to the existing liberal international order,”<sup>3</sup> and to see it as a creative power capable of setting common goals, balancing them and proposing the ways to achieve them despite the internal problems and contradictions among the member countries, and to recognize the deep and long-term impact of the alliance on the global economic order.<sup>4</sup> The Foreign Policy Concept of Russia, updated in 2023, lays special emphasis on “strengthening the potential and enhancing the international role of the BRICS interstate association,” as well as other interstate associations and international organizations and mechanisms with Russia’s significant participation.<sup>5</sup>

The results of the network diplomacy are tangible: the emergence of a variety of tools and mechanisms for developing multilateral cooperation to promote security, prosperity and development in the interconnected and globalized world. Since we are talking about the network interaction, the nature of interaction between the network actors is of particular importance: the diversity of connections, the multiplicity of directions and mutual contacts that make possible the circulation of different “flows” – ideas, information, knowledge, etc. What matters here is that the whole may have greater significance than the simple sum of its parts. Put it differently, a network is capable of acquiring properties that its constituent elements do not possess individually. In systems science, this ability is called emergence. A striking example of emergence is consciousness as a special property of the nervous system that its constituent elements do not have. Emergence is the best asset of the network structures, resulting in their many advantages:

openness, allowing the creation and development of a larger network, common tools for information exchange, network management, and the ability to establish new connections.<sup>6</sup> At the same time, the unpredictability of the emergent properties makes it difficult to mathematically model the life activity of network structures; the same feature, well known in biology and medicine, is characteristic of living systems: it is a mistake to believe that the more we know about the particulars, the better we will understand a complex structure.<sup>7</sup> It is a difficult task to model the emergent properties of the BRICS network alliance in the long term, but it is obvious that if the intended goals of interaction “for the benefit of the citizens of the member countries” are achieved, we can expect the emergence of a new, fairer architecture of international economic relations, constructive management of world processes, and expansion of the network of partnerships based on mutual benefit, respect and consideration of each other’s interests.

The BRICS potential as a network alliance lies in its diversity and ability to combine traditions based on the shared values, and due to transcontinental dimension, cooperation among the member states has a special weight and significance.

The BRICS member states realize different development models, have different historical roots, political systems, but perhaps the heterogeneity of their linguocultural space is of particular interest. In this case, following D. S. Likhachov, “space” is understood not just as a certain geographical territory, but above all as “the space of the environment, which has not only length, but also depth.”<sup>8</sup>

According to the most conservative estimates, this space includes more than 300 nationalities and ethnic groups and more than 3,000 languages and dialects.

The depth of the BRICS linguocultural space is embodied by the product of the long-term work of the human intelligence, which reflects the cognitive and creative activity of many generations – language; it is a unique repository of human experience and history of the ethnos speaking it. Language is the embodiment of culture: it allows to fix and consolidate in texts, legends, customs, traditions a set of values, norms, ideals, characteristic for a social community (ethnos, nation, society), providing the meaning of human and society existence.<sup>9</sup> The preservation of a nation’s language in humanitarian culture texts provides cultural continuity.<sup>10</sup>

The depth and heterogeneity of the BRICS linguocultural space is both a rich resource and a serious challenge for the implementation of the inclusive multilateralism strategy and interconnectivity<sup>11</sup> (see BRICS Economic Partnership Strategy 2025). As early as 2001, the UNESCO Uni-

<sup>1</sup> Выступление Президента РФ на заседании саммита БРИКС в расширенном составе 23 августа 2023 г. // Президент России : [website]. 2024. URL: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/72089> (accessed: 04.03.2024).

<sup>2</sup> Chakraborty S. Significance of BRICS: Regional Powers, Global Governance, and the Roadmap for Multipolar World // *Emerging Economy Studies*. 2018. Vol. 4, iss. 2. P. 182–191. URL: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/2394901518795070> (accessed: 04.03.2024).

<sup>3</sup> Beeson M., Zeng J. The BRICS and Global Governance: China’s Contradictory Role // *Third World Quarterly*. 2018. Vol. 39, iss. 10. P. 1962–1978. URL: <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2018.1438186> (accessed: 04.03.2024).

<sup>4</sup> Hopewell K. The BRICS – Merely a Fable? Emerging Power Alliances in Global Trade Governance // *International Affairs*. 2017. Vol. 93, iss. 6. P. 1377–1396. URL: <https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iix192> (accessed: 04.03.2024).

<sup>5</sup> Концепция внешней политики Российской Федерации : утв. Президентом РФ В. В. Путиным 31 марта 2023 г. // Министерство иностранных дел РФ : [website]. 2024. URL: <https://www.mid.ru/ru/detail-material-page/1860586/?lang=ru> (accessed: 04.03.2024).

<sup>6</sup> Гарбовский Н. К., Костинова О. И. Сетевое взаимодействие в переводческой деятельности // *Вестн. Моск. ун-та. Сер. 22. Теория перевода*. 2015. № 3. С. 3–21.

<sup>7</sup> Садовничий В. А. Педагогические заметки о современном образовании. Избранные выступления. М. : Изд-во Моск. ун-та, 2023. С. 225.

<sup>8</sup> Лихачев Д. С. Избранные труды по русской и мировой культуре / сост. и науч. ред. А. С. Запесоцкий. 2-е изд., перераб. и доп. СПб. : СПбГУП, 2015. С. 21.

<sup>9</sup> Запесоцкий А. С. Образование: Философия, культурология, политика. М. : Наука, 2003. С. 151.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. С. 263

<sup>11</sup> Стратегия экономического партнерства БРИКС до 2025 г. // Министерство экономического развития РФ : [website]. 2024. URL: <https://www.economy.gov.ru/material/file/636aa3edbc0dce2356ebb6f8d594cb0/1148133.pdf> (accessed: 04.03.2024).

versal Declaration on Cultural Diversity recognized cultural diversity as “a source of exchange, innovation, creativity, <...> as necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature.” In the “Declaration of the Rights of Culture”, developed by a team of scientists of SPbUHSS under academic supervision of D. S. Likhachov, cultural cooperation, dialogue and mutual understanding of the peoples of the world are defined as a necessary condition for the prevention of international and ethnic conflicts, a guarantee of justice and democracy in the context of human-creative, peacemaking and civilization-building cultural diversity on the planet.<sup>1</sup> But mutual understanding is impossible without mutual knowledge: the fact that conflicts are largely the result of intolerance generated by ignorance<sup>2</sup> is eloquently illustrated by the current urgent issues. The existing opportunities for exchanging information and exploring differences are not commensurate with the depth and diversity of the BRICS linguocultural space, neither in quantitative nor qualitative terms. Meanwhile, one of the conditions for the possibility of intercultural dialogue (following V. A. Lektorsky understood as a metaphor) – “conviction in its fruitfulness, that is, the attitude to the need to expand the ways of understanding the world and human, to the importance of going beyond one’s own cultural limitations and at the same time recognizing the equal participation of partners in the dialogue.”<sup>3</sup> The existence of certain economic and political conditions enabling all participants to influence the process and outcome of the dialogue is another important condition for participation in it and a guarantee of balanced positions on the way to finding mutual understanding, compromises and consensus. How to Ensure Equitable Dialogue in the Heterogeneous Linguocultural Space of the BRICS? What constants should be at the basis of the fine-tuning of the BRICS universe by analogy with the fine-tuning of our Universe, which emerged as a result of the evolutionary principle of self-organization of molecular and galactic subsystems in the process of a certain combination of physical and chemical elements with the only possible and necessary parameters and values?

Among the fundamental constants is the presence of the three dimensions in BRICS networking. *Cultural* and humanitarian ties are one of the three main trends, along with *politics* and security, as well as *economics* and finance, in which the BRICS member countries seek to strengthen their cooperation. The cultural and humanitarian component is no less important than the other two, because “historical experience convincingly shows that without the necessary level of general culture, the exact sciences requiring great intellectual tension do not develop properly, and projects implemented without humanitarian expertise lead to man-made disasters.”<sup>4</sup>

However, the “specific weight” of the cultural and humanitarian dimension in the association’s governing documents is disproportionate to other agendas, in particular

the financial and economic one. The Johannesburg Declaration-II, signed at the end of the XV BRICS Summit, shows that at that time there was a lag in the implementation of the plans already outlined in this direction (see cl. 81. “We reaffirm our commitments under all the instruments and Agreements signed and adopted by <...> in the field of culture and *commit to operationalizing* the Action Plan (2022–2026) *as a matter of urgency* (emphasis added. – O. K.) through the BRICS Working Group on Culture”).<sup>5</sup>

Speaking at an enlarged meeting of BRICS leaders last August, V. V. Putin stated the need for “a serious conversation about the future of culture in the world, about preserving and multiplying the world’s cultural heritage.”<sup>6</sup> The development of humanitarian ties in general is among Russia’s priorities for cooperation in BRICS. One of the strategic goals of the Russian Federation in BRICS is to expand the Russian linguistic, cultural and informational presence in the largest countries of the world, which are the partners of the Russian Federation in the association.<sup>7</sup>

Such tasks can be realized in different ways. For example, by expanding the area of study and dissemination of the Russian language in the BRICS member states, “creating a favorable institutional environment for the expansion of the Russian culture and the Russian language in foreign countries, including the activities of the Russian schools and cultural centers.”<sup>8</sup> However, this path is thorny because of its asymmetry, manifested both in the disproportionality of the concepts of the Russian language / Russian culture, and in the “promotional” approach to the sphere of influence of any language, weakening the principle of “dialogue-ness”. Another way is to work on the international image of the country with a rich history, traditional and dynamically developing modern culture by stimulating interest in music, films, literature, through the creation and distribution of its own cultural products of high quality and ensuring wide access to them, supporting and preserving multilingualism and the principle of linguistic and cultural diversity.

Translation, which is based on co-creation and co-working, cognition of the “foreign” against the background of the “own” and awareness of the “own” in comparison with the “foreign”, is always an open dialogue. By solving the tasks of raising awareness, understanding and recognition of each other’s culture in the BRICS linguocultural space, translation in this case is able to fulfill another fundamental cultural creation mission – to contribute to the maintenance, preservation and improvement of the languages of small peoples, and they are the majority in the BRICS linguocultural space. “We must protect the entire sphere of culture, wrote D. S. Likhachov, – is it possible to be indifferent to the fate of the culture of small peoples living

<sup>1</sup> Лихачев Д. С. Оp. cit. С. 503.

<sup>2</sup> Годдард Ч. Диалоги и конфликты культур в меняющемся мире // Диалоги и конфликты культур в меняющемся мире : XXI Междунар. Лихачевские науч. чтения, 25–26 мая 2023 г. СПб. : СПбГУП, 2024. С. 55.

<sup>3</sup> Лекторский В. А. Мультикультурализм и диалог культур // Лекции и доклады членов Российской академии наук в СПбГУП (1993–2013) : в 3 т. / сост., науч. ред. А. С. Запесоцкий. СПб. : СПбГУП, 2013. Т. 3 : Доклады и выступления. С. 389.

<sup>4</sup> Запесоцкий А. С. Оp. cit. С. 249.

<sup>5</sup> Йоханнесбургская декларация-II. БРИКС и Африка: партнерство в интересах совместного ускоренного роста, устойчивого развития и инклюзивной многосторонности (Сэндтон, Гаутенг, ЮАР, 23 августа 2023 г.) // Министерство иностранных дел РФ : [website]. 2024. URL: [https://www.mid.ru/ru/foreign\\_policy/news/1901504/](https://www.mid.ru/ru/foreign_policy/news/1901504/) (accessed: 04.03.2024).

<sup>6</sup> Выступление Президента РФ на заседании саммита БРИКС в расширенном составе 23 августа 2023 г.

<sup>7</sup> Концепция участия Российской Федерации в объединении БРИКС : утв. Президентом РФ В. В. Путиным 9 февраля 2013 г. // Министерство иностранных дел РФ : [website]. 2024. URL: [https://www.mid.ru/ru/foreign\\_policy/news/1744621/](https://www.mid.ru/ru/foreign_policy/news/1744621/) (accessed: 04.03.2024)

<sup>8</sup> Стратегия государственной культурной политики на период до 2030 года : утв. распоряжением Правительства РФ от 29 февраля 2016 г. // Правительство РФ : [website]. 2024. URL: <http://static.government.ru/media/files/AsA9RAyYVAJnoBuKgH0qEJA91xP7f2xm.pdf> (accessed: 04.03.2024).

in the environment of numerous peoples possessing state power?"<sup>1</sup>

Our country has a rich experience accumulated during the period of intense activity of the publishing houses "Progress", "Mir", "Raduga" in the Soviet era. Today, in India, books by Soviet authors published by these publishing houses in English, Hindi, Marathi, Malayam, Tamil, Telugu, Bengali and other Indian languages have become a desired collector's item and a subject of discussion in online communities. Children's literature, classics, textbooks of the Soviet era are still very much in demand: for some people it is a nostalgia for their childhood years, others appreciate the quality of scientific literature and still use it in preparation for exams for engineering faculties, others see these books as real art objects, as well as thanks to talented artists-illustrators.<sup>2</sup>

The soft power of translation made decades ago still works effectively for the benefit of the dialogue among cultures. This fine-tuning constant is very significant, which is very well realized, for example, by our BRICS partner, the PRC. President Xi Jinping's ideas about the importance of translation activities in strengthening China's coopera-

tion with other countries, building a community of common destiny of mankind, are now embodied in special government grant programs aimed at introducing Chinese culture and literature, traditions and worldview, philosophy and history through translations into different languages of the world, sometimes performed by Chinese translators in tandem with native speakers of the target languages. These observations lead us to the following two issues of fine-tuning of interaction within BRICS that need to be considered in the future, namely training and formation of translation personnel capable of ensuring that the rich cultural heritage of the Russian Federation is represented in the BRICS languages, as well as targeting cultural interaction, including through translation, at the youth of the BRICS countries, who represent a huge potential for growth.

In conclusion, let's quote the lines from the Decree signed by Empress Elizabeth Petrovna on the establishment of the Moscow University, which became the university law: "Any good comes from an enlightened mind, and evil is eradicated thereby." We believe that this commandment succinctly reflects the vector of the cultural and humanitarian measurement of cooperation between the BRICS countries.

V. A. Lektorsky<sup>3</sup>

## THE NEW SPACE FOR THE INTER-CULTURAL DIALOGUE WITHIN BRICS

I wrote previously that the globalization process as it had been practiced in the recent past, did not only come to a standstill but also became a threat to the very human existence.

Globalization as it was understood and practiced included several components. First, expansion of the contemporary market economy to all the regions of the world, accompanied by origination of transnational corporations that do

not take into consideration the existing national and state borders. Second, universal penetration of modern communicative technologies into all the countries of the world: television, the Internet, mobile communications, digitalization and use of the Artificial Intelligence systems. Both generate global mass culture that, as the theoreticians of globalization thought, should push out traditional culture developing within nation-states.<sup>4</sup> However, it was clear that the project of globalization understood in such a way was really nothing but the plan of Westernization or even "Americanization" as it was acknowledged by the well-known American political scientist Henry Kissinger.

Really, the globalization process as it was carried out was a threat not only for the existing nation-states but for the human as such. Globalization does not only destroy inter-state borders but also the human life world, not only an individual of this or that culture but humans in general as well. The growing inclusion of humans into the global information and communication network is not only an opportunity to establish contacts with other people and cultures but also the growing network of dependencies. The opportunities for manipulations with the mind, people management, large-scale production of disinformation are expanding.

We can only oppose the dehumanization of humans and culture in case if we manage to preserve the traditional human values and at the same time adapt them to the today's realities, including challenges created by the development of science and technologies. And the traditional values exist and transmit from one generation to the other within the framework of the existing national cultures. These cultures differ from one another. The understanding

<sup>1</sup> Лихачев Д. С. О.р. cit. С. 509.

<sup>2</sup> See: Sreedharan D. How Soviet Children's Books Became Collectors' Items in India Thanks to nostalgia, the literary legacy of the USSR has a long afterlife // Atlas Obscura. 2021. 14 Apr. URL: <https://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/soviet-childrens-books-in-india> (accessed: 04.03.2024).

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<sup>4</sup> Лекторский В. А. Вызовы современного глобального мира: чего ждать, на что надеяться, что делать // Глобальный мир: системные сдвиги, вызовы и контуры будущего : XVII Междунар. Лихачевские науч. чтения, 18–20 мая 2017 г. СПб. : СПбГУП, 2017. С. 110–114.

of the world and humans differs in them. But all of us have some common ideas that are questioned today by global challenges. The variety of traditional cultures is not a flaw or a shortcoming but a condition for survival and further development of mankind.

Today, the existing cultures have to react to the challenges of globalization and adapt to them by self-development. It may turn out that the resources for such an adaptation will be different in case of different cultures. The beyond-pragmatic values cultivated in Russian culture may play a positive role when searching the exit from the dead-end of contemporary "cognitive capitalism".

Today, the protection of humans means preservation and development of traditional culture, and the latter supposes protection of national identity, consequently, national interests, including protection of economy, science, art, education.<sup>1</sup>

However, it is important to keep in mind that cultures cannot successfully develop when isolated. As M. M. Bakhtin underlined, "culture exists on the border". Fruitful development of culture supposes its interaction with other cultures within the framework of inter-cultural dialogue.

I'd like to attract attention to some special features of such a dialogue.

Cultures as a whole cannot have a dialogue. "Dialogue of Cultures" is a kind of metaphor. Only individuals, groups of people, communities, social institutions may join a dialogue of this kind.

There is no fruitful dialogue as to the systems of fundamental values of this or that culture or worldview mindsets. As the latter ones refer to cultural identity in the basis of individual identity. The real dialogue between cultures is possible only in case if we are speaking about the solution of certain practical issues, and when the understanding of the issues themselves and possible ways of dealing with them supposes various approaches related to different cultural optics. Cultures offer different perspectives for viewing the same issues.<sup>2</sup> Comparison of the said perspectives may be fruitful. In the course of such a dialogue, different cultures do not lose their identity but develop it.

It should be said that the inter-cultural dialogue of Russia with the countries of Western Europe has been fruitful for its participants during the recent 300 years. We are speaking about science, and fiction, and music, and painting. At the same time, the cultural identity of our country was not diluted in Western culture, on the contrary, it acquired the real individuality and originality. German professors were the first members of the Russian Academy of Sciences. And in the 20th century, it was impossible to imagine the world science without the Russian scientists' contribution. As it is impossible to imagine the world literature without Dostoevsky and Tolstoy, and the world music without Tchaikovsky, Mussorgsky, Rakhmaninov.

Today, new opportunities are opening up for the inter-cultural dialogue. The bloc called BRICS including countries from the East and the South has come into being. These countries including Russia have common economic and geopolitical interests, common intention to oppose attempts of Western countries to place them under their influence, break their cultural identity. BRICS is a new center of economic, technological and scientific development, with which prospects for transformation of the whole global geopolitical space are tied. Not only interaction in economy and technologies is fruitful within BRICS. Inter-cultural dialogue may be no less fruitful. For example, such a dialogue has been successfully going on with China over the recent 20 years. I am a participant of this dialogue. My students fruitfully interact with Chinese philosophers. Some of them live and work in China. Russian philosophers and experts in cognitive sciences take part in conferences dedicated to the issues of mind arranged in recent years in India by the Dalai Lama. It should be said that the understanding of mind in the Buddhist philosophy opens up new ways for research of this greatest mystery of philosophy and science as it is acknowledged by participants of these events.

The new stage of inter-cultural cooperation is coming. The circle of participants of the inter-cultural dialogue has greatly expanded after BRICS origination and development. And that means a new stage in the development of culture as a whole, i. e. a new stage in the human development that is impossible outside culture.

<sup>1</sup> Лекторский В. А. Глобализация и национально-культурная идентичность // Обозник : [website]. 2018. 24 окт. URL: <http://www.oboznik.ru/?p=46891>.

<sup>2</sup> Лекторский В. А. Глобализация и национально-культурная идентичность.

A. G. Lisitsyn-Svetlanov<sup>1</sup>

## LEGAL BASIS AND PROBLEMS OF DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW MULTIPOLAR WORLD: NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL REGULATORY ASPECTS

Recent decades have been marked by an unprecedentedly rapid change of political eras. It started with the collapse of the bipolar world. The proclaimed era of globalization was quickly replaced by objectively inevitable economic crises that defined a new dominant – national interests. New centers of economic power were being formed in the world arena, which at the same time began to gain political weight adequate to their economic capabilities.

Today they are most strongly represented by China, India and the Islamic world. The African continent is declaring aloud its place in world geopolitics. Having their own cultural and civilizational codes, different from the established and previously dominant trans-Atlantic community, they necessitate the search for *new* approaches to building a *new* world order adequate to the *new* multipolar world.

The inevitability of the formation of the new world order was dictated with even greater force by the military actions unfolding in Ukraine with the practical involvement of NATO countries. The disruption of political, economic and humanitarian ties between states, political deformations in the activities of international organizations, destruction of economic ties in the world market, forced migration and deformation of relations in the cultural sphere have led to the need of rethinking many institutions of not only international but also of national law, as well as the principles of interaction of national legal systems.

The events that unfolded after the beginning of the SMO as a localized military confrontation developed into a “pre-world military conflict”. The concept of “*pre-world military conflict*” is proposed for the purposes of legal assessment of the ongoing military actions insofar as Russia, on the one hand, and Ukraine and the “collective West”, on the other, have not declared a state of war in any order and forms known to the world practice.

Every day of the modern military confrontation between Russia and the “collective West” destroys the last bastions of the concept of the United Nations, as military force, not peaceful coexistence, has become the main factor in relations between the founding members of the UN. We are wit-

nessing the destruction of both direct inter-state relations based on the principle of peaceful coexistence and institutional structures – international organizations. That which is happening naturally raises the question of the future fate of the UN and its specialized agencies.

The current military confrontation will end sooner or later, but the problems with the “Ukrainian settlement” will not be the only ones. What is now called the proxy war, or “pre-world military conflict”, has destroyed not only the world’s political infrastructure, but also the institutions of law on which the rule of law was built. This destruction is profound, as it concerns not only the disavowal of the sources of international law, but also the traditional principles of national legal systems. The development of the crisis leads to understanding that the state faces the task of serious restructuring of the system-forming institutions of the national legal system, development of legal policy concepts in relation to the renewal of the general world order and legal basis that ensure the functioning of political and economic integration processes.

Partial accomplishment of these tasks has already begun and the importance of what has been done is demonstrated by the events that began with the Special Military Operation (SMO). Others require a quick solution to ensure that the military phase of the crisis can be ended and that Russia is guaranteed to be among the leaders of the post-war settlement. The third category of tasks is related to building of the legal order for a certain historical perspective, not excluding in the future a new crisis associated with another war.

Among the legal issues resolved in 2022, two amendments to the Constitution of the Russian Federation should be highlighted. This is the amendment on inviolability of borders – cl. 2.1, Article 67 and the amendment to Article 79 of the Constitution on the decisions of interstate bodies contradicting the foundations of the state system of the Russian Federation. Projecting the above amendments onto this day and looking into tomorrow, one can fully appreciate their merits. In the first case, they exclude any possibility of negotiating and signing agreements that change Russia’s borders at the time of admission of the four new federation subjects, and within their administrative boundaries, i. e. including territories currently under the control of the Kiev regime.

The amendment to Article 79 of the Constitution, in addition to providing legal protection against diplomatic and information aggression, i. e. what has come to be called hybrid or proxy wars, lays the foundations for the development of both domestic legislation ensuring its sovereignty and the development of treaty law.

Formation of the de facto anti-Russian coalition by the United States and the European Union introduced the concept of “collective West” into political life. With the beginning of the SMO, the political plans of this coalition received a new normative formulation, expressed in acts of various levels adopted by the U. S., a number of its allies and the European Union.

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The destruction of the existing world order can be illustrated by the examples from world politics, military expansions, humanitarian boycotts and economic sanctions. The latter will make particular problems for the development of the new multipolar world, as they are linked to basic economic relations enshrined in national and international legal systems. Considering the problem of imposition of anti-Russian sanctions by the “collective West” in the context of restructuring of legal regulation in the foreign economic sphere, it should be noted the effectiveness of prompt adoption of anti-sanctions measures in the Russian Federation. They are reflected in a number of systematically adopted normative acts, the legitimacy of which, from the point of view of international legal regulation, is based on such universally recognized institutions as “reciprocity” and “retorsion”. However, the positive value of the measures taken at present, and their preservation at the beginning of the process of peaceful settlement, objectively cannot serve as a sufficiently adequate basis for building a new model of regulation of foreign economic relations.

As for the system of normative acts adopted by the countries of the “collective West” and the EU, they are initially aimed at breaking foreign economic ties and, as such, cannot serve as a platform for creation of positive regulation of the foreign economic relations. Procedural problems should also be highlighted. The adoption of many of these measures by legislative bodies, primarily in the United States, objectively implies a complex process for their reform. A similar situation is possible in cases where normative acts are adopted by consensus, as is the case in the EU. Without fundamental reforming of the existing regulation, the basis for a treaty process to establish a new economic legal order is not realistic.

Noting the destruction of the world order created by the United Nations, and assessing the possible shape of the future, it is necessary to work out not only political, but also *legal* positions to address at least three issues. First, what is to be done with the still extant “construct” of international law and, above all, with the UN, the Security Council and the UN specialized agencies. Secondly, to work out *legal solutions* for the development of international structures friendly to Russia, where BRICS occupies a special place. Thirdly, taking into account the accumulated experience of interaction with the European Union, to develop *legal principles* of relations between the Russian Federation and members of international organizations of any type, on the one hand, and the relevant organizations as such.

It is necessary to emphasize the importance of legal concepts in relation to political ones because legal decisions are not only necessary to formalize the political agreements adopted, they must also serve as a guarantor of the enforceability of the agreements adopted.

It is now obvious that the role of bilateral treaty relations as a mechanism for the formation of a new legal order is increasing. A bilateral treaty not only creates a clear and mutually acceptable legal basis for the relationship between the two countries, but can become a core to which other states will be interested to join.

In historical retrospect, the creation of regional organizations is quite understandable and explainable from any position: geographical, ethnic, political, economic, etc. All continents provide examples of legal diversity of regional organizations. At the current stage, Russia, developing regional cooperation, initiated the creation of BRICS. The BRICS organization by a number of parameters goes beyond the traditional notions of international regional organizations and, first of all, by the fact that it does not have a geographical community of member states, which is very important for the implementation of economic tasks and their legal support. This circumstance indicates its special status. Objectively, the special status of this organization is given by its economic, socio-political, demographic and civilizational characteristics. The totality of these features can be considered as a certain step towards the realization of the idea of creating a model of a multi-polar world. At the same time, guided by the existing notions of international organizations, the BRICS in its organizational and legal forms is still able to fully respond effectively to contemporary international contradictions and challenges. Moreover, BRICS is opposed by a well-oiled EU-NATO international grouping backed by US military capacity and money. Moreover, all these elements are firmly organized in the legal sense.

Thus, to predict the picture of the future world order, where Russia must retain its position as a great power, it is necessary, firstly, to solve not only a number of political, economic and military problems, but also to develop a concept of reforming its national regulation for the external contour of emerging relations. Secondly, to have *legally organized allies* to implement the idea of a multipolar world based on the ideas of equality and diversity. Thirdly, to become an initiator in the formation of new legal institutions adequate to the tasks of forming a new world legal order.

Ye. I. Makarov<sup>1</sup>

## EXPANSION OF THE BRICS INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION IN 2023–2024, NEW OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS FOR THE BRICS TRADE UNION FORUM

In the fall of 2023, during the ordinary 15th BRICS Summit, its participants, the heads of state of Brazil, Russia, India, China and the Republic of South Africa approved several applications to the international association, which expressed the desire of the governments of Argentina, Egypt, Iran, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Ethiopia to join BRICS. It should be noted that the number of officially submitted applications is significantly higher than those listed above for which an agreed decision has already been made. The diplomats of the BRICS countries, especially the South African party, as the 2023 chair, had a difficult task to select some of the applications and lay down the membership mechanisms that will apparently have to be used in the future. This stage was passed – at the end of the summit it was announced that applications from six new members had been approved, five of which (excluding Argentina) confirmed their intentions by the end of 2023 and were involved in the process of becoming members.

This process, for all its formal simplicity, is quite labor-intensive and complicated in practice. The complexity is related to the fact that in 2024 the BRICS presidency plan proposed by the Russian Federation envisages more than 200 different events, ranging from ministerial and departmental meetings with preparatory rounds, an extensive program of events through inter-parliamentary, business, trade, expert, trade union and other non-governmental, scientific, educational, sports, cultural, youth, women's and other organizations, the mechanisms of preparation and conduct of which have been shaped over the past fifteen years. It is an extremely complex and resource-intensive task to get involved in all elements of the multilayered interaction taking place within the preparation for the summit, and sometimes on the independent tracks of cooperation. Each such meeting requires not only the participation of delegates from the BRICS countries, but also preparatory work with draft documents, extensive organizational preparation, overcoming language barriers and, of course, understanding of common goals, problems and ways of solving problems. Ultimately, during these contacts each participant and each organization must find and work out a benefit or outcome that justifies the time and resources spent.

Understanding the complexity of gaining real membership in BRICS will come to the new participants in time, hopefully by the end of the Russian presidency this process will be completed.

It would be a mistake and misconception to view applying for membership as a purely formal process. It is clear that making such decision is influenced by both external conditions – the emerging multi-component geopolitical situation – and internal motives, the combination of which leads to the application. Much has been said and written about the geopolitical situation. Discussions of the transition from a “unipolar system” to a “multipolar world” are on everyone's lips, there are quite categorical assessments of the “end of the Eurocentrism era” and others like them. Such political formulas are not born from nothing. Objective comparative economic indicators of the development of countries, divided into three worlds in the 19th century, have blurred the boundaries of these conventional “worlds”. This happened not only in the reports of consulting agencies and organizations deriving a variety of comparative indices. First of all, this happened in the development subjects themselves, which, after gaining independence and overcoming political colonialism, found themselves facing the intractable problems of economic neocolonialism, from the power of which it was impossible to escape only through their own efforts.

Large national states, which faced with internal problems of overcoming poverty, economic development, improvement of education and health care systems, as well as with the need to solve many other problems, find themselves managed by the existing world financial system, by international capital, large transnational corporations, international organizations that are supposed to assist their establishment and development, but in fact only putting new layers of networks on these countries to restrain their growth, imposing on them the rules and conditions which are sometimes in direct opposition to their national ambitions. Loans with additional conditions and obligations, “development” programs with imposed participation of large foundations and corporations in the sphere of health care, agriculture, regulation of demographic policy, education, poverty reduction – all these mechanisms of neo-colonial policy, worked out for decades, sooner or later, usually in the process of gaining economic stability, force the nationally-oriented elites of the Third World countries to look for the ways to bypass them, the ways to gain sovereignty and true liberation from the now international, global colonial dependence without the traditional metropolis, but with all its signs and attributes of containment and coercion.

It was in the 1920s of this century that the processes of searching for an alternative system of relations to replace the hegemonic and globalist one were in demand to such an extent that applications to join the BRICS became widespread. The hopes of the new BRICS members are primarily related to the principles of BRICS policymaking and decision-making, about which much has been said and written. The principles of equality and mutual respect, non-interference in internal affairs, recognition of the right to choose

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one's own civilizational identity are the minimum that guarantees the acquisition of political subjectivity for new members. They also see attractiveness in economic prospects, namely, in receiving loans from the funds of the New Development Bank, without political conditions and under-hand agreements. They see mutual settlements in national or digital currencies that are not linked to the existing dollar-based global financial system as very encouraging. And in general, diverse interaction, which is based on an interested dialogue, counter interest, have much more prospects in mutual relations than the "rule-based order" dictated by "partners" from the countries of the "golden billion".

A few words about the trade union movement in the countries which applications have been approved for the BRICS membership. The BRICS Trade Union Forum, founded in 2012 on the sidelines of a high-level conference under the auspices of the ILO in Moscow, is certainly interested in ensuring that the interests of workers in these countries are protected, at least within the parameters of the fundamental conventions developed by the International Labor Organization on a tripartite basis, and that workers in these countries are represented in the Forum by their traditional organizations – trade unions. Without delving into the national peculiarities of the labor legislation of the new member countries, it is possible to single out among them the states where trade union activity is not permitted, or is built on a model markedly different from the traditional trade union model we are accustomed to. These include the UAE, Saudi Arabia and, to a certain extent, Iran. Based on the principles of non-interference in internal affairs, associate membership in the BRICS Trade Union Forum may be granted to the organizations representing workers' interests that are not trade unions. This approach, at least, will be promoted by Russian trade unions as new organizations gain membership.

The main task to be solved during the admission of new members to the BRICS Trade Union Forum is to ensure that the workers of the new member countries are represented and have a voice in the discussion of problems and in the development of solutions. It should be mentioned that the Rules of the BRICS Trade Union Forum, adopted in the revised version in 2022, will need to be supplemented with a special annex describing the procedural points related to the admission of the new member organizations. In the Forum's practice, all technical work to fill in the content of the next year falls on the shoulders of the leading trade union center of the presiding country. In 2024, all substantive issues are handled by the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia, including formalizing the admission of the new members to the Forum.

In addition to the domestic legislation, the process of the new members integration will be greatly influenced by the state of the economies of the accession countries, the level of welfare of the bulk of workers, the employment structure, national and cultural customs, and other issues placed by workers in the focus of their working life. In this respect, the differences of the new member countries from each other are quite noticeable. While Saudi Arabia ranks 11th in the world ranking in terms of industrial output with a population of 35,210,000, Ethiopia ranks 75th with a population of 124,757,000. Such marked differences will be reflected in the tasks that the workers' representatives of each particular country will set for themselves and the problems

that they will bring to the fore in developing joint solutions. At the same time, whatever the national priorities of delegates from different countries may be, the principle of decision-making in the Trade Union Forum, based on the rule of consensus building, will make it possible to find a balanced agreement on any issue under discussion.

Many experts discussing the first steps of BRICS enlargement began to talk about this phenomenon as a continuous and rapid process that will inevitably lead to the formation of a new political-economic reality in the near future. They believe that in five years, the geo-economic and political environment will be fundamentally different from the current one. I'm not inclined to share these predictions. If the changes are going to happen so rapidly, the process of adding new members to the BRICS will not be the main catalyst for such events. From where we stand today, the main goal is not so much to increase the number of member countries or the number of trade union centers in those countries that have joined the Trade Union Forum, but to fine-tune the expansion process itself and integrate the new members into inter-union interaction. The abstract ideas of growing the scale of the BRICS association and the Trade Union Forum as part of it will not be an end in itself.

Over the years, since its creation, BRICS has had no expansionist goals. I can't recall an instance where our membership organizations in the Trade Union Forum promoted the ideas of expansion for competitive purposes or confrontation. Whether it was China's initiative to hold BRICS meetings in the BRICS+ format, or South Africa's practice of using an expanded outreach meeting format. The goals of openness, informing, participating in discussions without any hint of the need to unite to fight anyone have always been prioritized. Of course, except for poverty, inequality, underdevelopment, epidemics and other economic and social plagues of social and political life.

The BRICS Trade Union Forum will undoubtedly follow the BRICS expansion policy developed at the summits and will make every effort to integrate new membership organizations into its work, however, the observers and experts are unlikely to see any great advances in this regard. On the sidelines of the BRICS Trade Union Forum, the issues of attitudes towards globality and globalization have been discussed many times. This issue became particularly prominent after the BRICS+ initiative, the specific boundaries of which were never formalized and could be understood both extremely broadly, at a globally significant level, and more narrowly, in an applied sense, within the framework of, for example, the implementation of China's One Belt, One Road initiative. The term globalization can hardly be applied to the BRICS Trade Union Forum because of its compromised linkage to economic globalization in the interests of cross-border movement and the use of capital, followed by political power over national sovereignties, legislations and civilizational choices of different countries. The term of becoming global, which has a more precise and politically neutral meaning, is more acceptable.

By now, in the trade union movement, globalization has taken its final form and is realized through the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), headquartered in Brussels, and through several global union associations built on a sectoral basis. The creation of the ITUC, formed in 2006 through the merger of the International Confederation of

Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) and the World Confederation of Labor (WCL), was the final stage in the unification of major trade union forces that share the ideas of trade union independence and liberalism. The founders went through their genesis, put forward the slogans “Freedom through Economic and Political Democracy” and others, and gradually moved away from the social doctrine of Christianity, responding to the challenge of secularism. During the period of the USSR and the block confrontation, the ICFTU, in particular, distinguished itself by its anti-communist stance. After the ITUC formation, the world trade union movement made an attempt to get rid of politicization and strengthened its positions, especially after the entry of trade unions of the former socialist camp and the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia. The new single global inter-union structure was able to build a trade union policy harmonized with sectoral unions and gain leverage over international trade union affairs in the UN structures and other global institutions.

If in this context we discuss the emergence of a new global trade union structure on the basis of the BRICS alliance, a set of political and technical problems must be solved in order to gain global status. Without getting into details, it can be noted that the trade union organizations

being members of BRICS did not consider their structure as a base for such a global project until recently, as there were no sufficient grounds for it. However, further developments in the international environment, the position of global sectoral unions and other factors relating to the economic and political components of the international trade union movement may offer opportunities for development in this direction.

Note that the problem of forming a capable global center of the labor movement has no easy solution. The history of the world trade union movement clearly points to the marked impact of the world politics on such processes. The division of the world trade union movement on ideological grounds in the 20th century took place in the post-war period, and the attitude of trade unions to the Marshall Plan and the political struggle that injected into the program documents of the largest national trade union centers of the Western countries, formed on the ideas of social-democratic reformism, a considerable charge of anti-communism, which actually turned them into an instrument of political struggle, were of no small importance in this process. Discussions on the further development of the world trade union movement continue and will certainly be covered in the trade union press.

S. G. Musienko<sup>1</sup>

### “HOMO BRICS” AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF “HOMO EURAMERICANUS”

Dmitry Sergeyevich Likhachov argued that: “Without the ability to address each other, we lose ourselves as a people. How to live without the ability to name? In general, to notice a phenomenon is to give it a name, to create a term, so in the Middle Ages, science was mainly engaged in naming, creating terminology. The name was knowledge. When the island was discovered, it was given a name, and only then it was a geographical discovery. There was no opening name.”<sup>2</sup>

Therefore, the theme of today’s Likhachov Conference: “BRICS as the New Space for Dialogue Among Cultures and Civilizations” seems to me very relevant and timely.

Olivier Roqueplo, Doctor of Sciences in History and Politics, Sorbonne University (Paris) at the 2023 Likhachov Conference, in his article<sup>3</sup> made a request for a very

interesting theme, in my opinion: Introduction to Homo Euramericanus Problem, in which the author says that the European crisis is caused by the appearance of the so-called Homo Euramericanus. “Who is no longer French, European, or North American, but represents a transatlantic ersatz culture.”

It seems that consideration of problems and prospects of the formation of a new global platform of cultural cooperation within BRICS (science, culture, art, education, economy, law) should begin with definitions and terminologies according to D. S. Likhachov.

What are you made of, “Homo BRICS?”

According to Likhachov, “if people inhabiting some geographical territory do not have their own integral cultural and historical past, traditional cultural life, their cultural shrines, then they (or their rulers) inevitably have a temptation to justify their state integrity with all kinds of totalitarian concepts, which are all the harsher and more inhumane, the less the state integrity is determined by cultural criteria.”<sup>4</sup>

This portrait, prophetically given by Likhachov, exactly corresponds to the EU portrait, in particular, the one we have observed since 2020. It is important for us to avoid illusions about the EU as a partner at the beginning of the journey of building the new space for dialogue among cultures and civilizations of the BRICS.

Therefore, it is important to learn more deeply the assessments of the European reality, through understanding

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<sup>2</sup> Лихачев Д. С. Я живу с ощущением расставания... // Комсомольская правда 1996. 5 марта. URL: [https://www.lilhachev.ru/pic/site/files/fulltext/izbrannoe\\_misli\\_o\\_jizni/0022.pdf](https://www.lilhachev.ru/pic/site/files/fulltext/izbrannoe_misli_o_jizni/0022.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Роккло О. Мысль Д. С. Лихачева и культурный кризис французской элиты XXI века. Введение в проблему Номо Euramericanus // Диалоги и конфликты культур в меняющемся мире : XXI Междунар. Лихачевские науч. чтения, 25–26 мая 2023 г. СПб. : СПбГУП, 2024. С. 112–122.

<sup>4</sup> Лихачев Д. С. Культура как целостная среда // Лихачев Д. С. Избранные труды по русской и мировой культуре. 4-е изд. СПб. : СПбГУП, 2022. С. 22.

and the French thinker O. Roqueplo, in order not to fall into the trap of not having a common cultural Code for the BRICS. Understand what the EU is all about.

Even the least ephemeral attempts of the hegemony to unite most of Europe (the Frankish Empire, the Holy German Empire, the Papal theocracy of the 13–14th centuries, the Austro-Spanish, and then the Austro-Hungarian-German-Italian Habsburg monarchy, the Bourbon family pact), each of them had its own cultural past, traditional landmarks and spiritual shrines. All these attempts to create Europe were based on national traditions, but also and above all on the Roman Empire, the true matrix of the two parts of Europe: Latin Catholic and Greek Orthodox. Following the thought of Likhachov, it can be argued with good reason that the power and cultural depth, and hence the strong legitimacy of these imperial structures, ensured both the level of violence limited by the culture level itself and the uselessness of raw violence as a source of power.<sup>1</sup>

The Napoleonic Empire is a pan European construction, which is much more rigid than its predecessors, exactly for the reasons indicated by Likhachov: it is an empire that has no stable cultural foundation and does not know exactly what it is (the French Empire, Franco-Italian Empire, Neo-Carolingian Empire, the Neo-Roman Empire? An ideological empire embodying the French Revolution and the Enlightenment?).<sup>2</sup>

After a period of true Prussian stability under Bismarck (*Kleindeutsche Loesung*) the Second Reich in 1891 entered a cultural crisis, which gradually led it to pan-Germanism (*Grossdeutsche Loesung*). Since 1915, the Second Reich completely lost German cultural landmarks and became a conquering hegemonistic empire that began to absorb Austria-Hungary, annexed Poland, the Baltic States, made Romania, Ukraine, Finland satellites and no longer had borders. Therefore, the level of violence was higher than in the French Empire.<sup>3</sup>

The Third Reich has a particularly high level of violence for the same reason, but even more acute. From 1941 onwards, it no longer had a cultural base, it was no longer a Great Germany because it was moving towards an increasingly distant East that it wanted to colonize, it was simply a pan-Germanist, that is, ideological, military empire that did not know where its cultural center of gravity was: was it still Berlin and Prussia? Aryan Scandinavia? The mythical Gothic Ukrainian-Polish Empire of the ancient king Germanarich? Or even a neo-pagan empire? No cultural tradition allows it to become stable, and this explains its destructive and self-destructive vocation.<sup>4</sup>

Finally, the last of these pan-European constructions is the EU. After a period of formation, as part of interstate cooperation (EEC, 1957–1992), it turns out to be a new hegemonic and expansionist union, but clearly less assertive. But above all, it is not based on any one element of culture. The evidence for this is very clear. Symbols that are themselves culture vectors are irrelevant in the case of the EU. The famous flag with twelve stars is one of the only symbols used and recognized, and it doesn't even officially refer to anything but the idea of abstract and vague unity (any God-like religious reference is explicitly rejected).

The symbol '€' is just the designation of the Eurodollar. As for the euro banknotes, they depict architectural models that are not in reality. These uprooted symbols are exemplary. The EU has never claimed to belong to the Roman Empire, nor to its cultural or historical heritage. It is surprising that in ancient times Europa was a nymph with the bull-Zeus, and that for 17–19th centuries, Europe was everywhere depicted as a crowned nymph with a sword and a globe, associating with the throne, crowns, noble horse, temple, book, artistic and scientific instruments, that is, with the instruments of culture (according to the iconographic tradition established by Cesare Ripa).<sup>5</sup>

But the EU ideologues explain: "Antiquated, extremely hermetic today, extremely Christian, too imperial or even imperialist, extremely armed and therefore militant allegory seems to have been intentionally left outside images and doomed to certain oblivion."<sup>6</sup> They might add that it is also 'extremely European, too cultural and too truthful.' Thus, these symbols are unknown to the EU, a true denial of culture. The more the EU develops, the fewer cultural landmarks it has. It was a fan of the European studies, François Hollande, who in 2012 forced the removal of Ancient Greek and Latin from schools, and is there anything more European than these languages, which have united all the European peoples for 2,500 years?<sup>7</sup>

But that's not all. I had the opportunity to meet with Philippe Pershock several times, an extremely socially and politically influential ideologue at the EU level, now a member of the European Parliament, who is considered the main leader of the Europeanist movement in France, primarily among the Parisian elite. O. Roqueplo's discussion with him in 2010 was devoted to the EU symbols and cultural and historical landmarks. Pershock clearly expressed the thought that the EU is an innovative project that is self-sufficient and therefore has no cultural and historical landmarks. According to him, the EU has no past, it exists only in the present and the future. The EU is based on ideology (liberalism, human rights, federalism, the ideology of peace, that is, not pacifism, but Atlanticism) and international treaties that are applied by a bureaucracy of lawyers who specialize in technocratic jargon that is intentionally abstruse.<sup>8</sup> This ideology, according to the ideologue, should be regularly replenished with the political aspirations of the elites of the new joining countries, since these elites are still under the charm of (futuristic one for them) the project, but not under its application: "The EU behaves like a screwed-up teenager who does not know what to do with his changing body. However, it is in search of new dreams from the countries that might join it that it will grow and embrace its role in the world."<sup>9</sup>

Hence the constant and dangerous expansionism that allows the EU to measure forces with others (Russia, Turkey, the Arab world, Africa) to reassert its ideology through victory: be it electoral, be it military, be it mixed (= color

<sup>1</sup> Рокplo O. Op. cit. C. 120.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Рокplo O. Op. cit. C. 120.

<sup>6</sup> Gosselet S.-K. Représentation de l'Europe // Encyclopédie D'Histoire Numérique de L'europe. URL: <https://ehne.fr/fr/encyclopedie/th%C3%A9matiques/les-arts-en-europe/repr%C3%A9sentation-de-l%E2%80%99europe>.

<sup>7</sup> Рокplo O. Op. cit. C. 120–121.

<sup>8</sup> Рокplo O. Op. cit. C. 121.

<sup>9</sup> Perchoc P. L'utopie est à nos portes // Voixeurop. URL: <https://voixeurop.eu/fr/utopie-est-a-nos-portes>.



revolution).<sup>1</sup> As it was written in Euro-media and constantly repeated about Georgia, Ukraine, Moldova and other countries, “democracy won, therefore the West and the EU won.” This is the meaning of the existence and legitimacy of the EU. This expansionism is not peaceful, and when it does not win (in Turkey, Belarus, Serbia, Ukraine, and the Russian Federation), it immediately labels another country as an enemy<sup>2</sup> even if reciprocity on the part of these countries is not true.<sup>3</sup>

Moreover, the idea of an “adolescent EU” curiously confirms the idea of a neocracy from the previous chapter. It may even help to understand Homo Euramericanus’ unhealthy interest in gender theory and LGBTism.<sup>4</sup> It is a general cultural regression to adolescence and childhood on the part of French leaders, an involution.

In this respect, following Likhachov’s logic, we can conclude that the EU potentially can be even worse and more dangerous than the Third Reich, because it even has no cultural fantasy. In 2021, a book by historian H.-G. Soutou reveals a hidden part of the EU history.<sup>5</sup> He shows that the first real application of the idea of the European Union took place during the domination of the Third Reich, and that it was not just a German project, but a construct in which the Italian Fascists, who were the real driving force, took a very active part. The reason for this lies again in the connection between culture, legitimacy and violence, identified by Academician Likhachov. Like the Second Reich, the newly unified Italy had a culturally blurred foundation, so Italian fascism oscillated between the Italian nation and the new Roman Empire. It was this second concept, as Soutou shows that formed the basis of the first European Union of the 1940s. However, this first European Union was also a vast network of Western European Catholics, centrists and socialists who acted on their own will, and it was they who enforced the idea of a specifically Europeanist anti-Soviet and anti-Anglo-Saxon entity, whereas the Third Reich was originally much smaller (Nordic) and much larger (worldwide) than their pan-European union. We can also note the continuity of people and ideas between this political structure of 1942 and the EU of 1992, as the archetypal example of François Mitterrand shows.<sup>6</sup>

This story has been forgotten and erased from the memory of the generation after 1950, but its potential development seems to repeat itself before our eyes.

Today, the EU chimera turned into a hydra with countless suckers, seems to be on its way to becoming an empire with totalitarian tendencies. The unelected European

Commission at the head of the political entity, which since 2020 has become autonomous from the EU member states and devoid of any cultural basis, began to turn into a dictatorial and militant technocracy: first by libertarian governance of the virus, then by the suppression of mass demonstrations against its policies and, finally, by its very militant impulses together with ultranationalist and culturally invertebrate Ukraine against Russia, still relying on its culture and deep history.<sup>7</sup>

This pan-European empire, which has no cultural basis and is therefore unstable, is also obscure: it calls NATO its defense system, the Anglo-Saxon ‘pillars’ of which are not included to the EU with the same headquarters in Brussels. We are dealing with a culturally ‘wandering’ empire: neither European nor truly Anglo-Saxon, this time reminiscent of the three brutal attempts of the hegemony that preceded it.<sup>8</sup>

In reality, the EU is just a geopolitical mirror of Homo Euramericanus, a human without culture, homeland, and borders. It doesn’t even have a geographic center of reference. Who in the EU can consider Brussels a real capital and center? Brussels is a city cut in two parts, where Belgians struggle between the Walloon and Flemish districts. The USA, New York and California, not to mention London, are actually more of a cultural center for EU leaders than any other place in the EU. Thus, the EU is already a true Euromerica, threatened with direct annexation by its dominant cultural pole.

In general, the EU is an entity that avoids the cultural dimension in every sense of the word. Therefore, it returns to the form of ultra-archaic political construction, potentially close to barbarism, both from its own anti-cultural basis and from its anti-historical neocratic elites. The EU is not Europe, but anti-Europe, because there is no Europe other than in culture, history and memory of the ages. The ideology of the Europeanists is liberal-libertarian technodemocracy. It has a policy of Europeanization of their members. In other words, it condemns anything that is not of this ideology, “not European”. But who can believe that an ideology born in the 1970s has anything to do with Europe, its three thousand years of memory and culture?<sup>9</sup>

In fact, every true scientist and every truly cultured person in Europe is a real European. It is such people who are lacking today; they are being pushed aside and replaced by Homo Euramericanus. While Nicolas Sarkozy, the 23rd president of the French Republic argued that the African person had not made enough history, it seems that the elites of France and the EU, that is Homo Euramericanus, have already left it for good,<sup>10</sup> while the “Homo BRICS” have yet to emerge?

Based on the imperfect experience of integration structures of post-Soviet countries: CIS, the Union State of Belarus and Russia, the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), the issue of at least discussing the space of dialogue among cultures and civilizations within the BRICS is urgently on the agenda. Not to be likened to the EU, with its amazing metamorphosis of culture.

In this connection, the case of 1996 comes to mind, when the parties, having failed to agree on a common sys-

<sup>1</sup> Мусиенко С. Г., Осипов М. В. Привкус цветных революций. М.: Беларусь, 2023. С. 400.

<sup>2</sup> Patten C. Russia’s hell-hole enclave. There is a centre of organised crime in the middle of Europe // The Guardian. 2001. 7 Apr. ; Roqueplo O. La Russie et son miroir d’Extrême-Occident : l’identité géopolitique de la Russie ultra-périphérique sous le prisme de l’Oblast’ de Kaliningrad. Étude géographique et géopolitique 2018. Chap. IV. URL: <https://hal.science/tel-02080112>.

<sup>3</sup> Роклю О. Op. cit. C. 121.

<sup>4</sup> It is recognized as an extremist organization, and its activities are prohibited on the territory of Russia.

<sup>5</sup> Soutou H.-G. Europa! Les projets européens de l’Allemagne nazie et de l’Italie fasciste. Paris: Tallandier, 2021.

<sup>6</sup> F. Mitterrand was a right-wing French Catholic lawyer and high-ranking civil servant who faithfully served the Vichy regime during the Franco-Nazi Europeanist cooperation, and then became an anti-communist socialist, supported May 68, surrounded himself with 68 people when he became president in 1981, and devoted himself to building the EU by signing the Maastricht Treaty in 1992. His seemingly contradictory career is quite consistent from the point of view of Europeanism.

<sup>7</sup> Роклю О. Op. cit. C. 121.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

tem of values, tried to agree on the cooperation between Belarus and Russia, the newspapers had already written that: "April 2, 1996 will go down in history as the day of establishment of the Community of Sovereign Republics."<sup>1</sup>

Then there was the scale of publications in the various press: "Once again we are in the SSR!"<sup>2</sup> "There are only three letters left of the USSR"<sup>3</sup> complete incomprehension – "SSR? CIS? Community?"<sup>4</sup> and other incisive articles. Only then the entity became – the Union State of

the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus. We should be more attentive to the Symbols.

The great thinker D. S. Likhachov said: "Anyway, culture is a huge integral phenomenon that makes humans, who inhabit a certain space, a people, a nation out of just a population. The concept of culture should include and has always included religion, science, education, moral and ethical standards of behavior of people and the state."<sup>5</sup>

V. V. Naumkin<sup>6</sup>

## BRICS AND THE ARAB WORLD

Without pretending to present a well-grounded theoretically coverage of this topic here, I would only like to emphasize several lines, along which the relations of BRICS with the Arab world may be built and have already started forging. And they are necessary, taking into account the growing weight of this region, to form the successfully operating global economic, cultural and civilization cooperation platform of the countries of the Global South (GS), which we are speaking about.

**First line:** via the process of development by the Arab states (AS) that joined the association (we'll use this neutral word for it for a while, just for convenience) of the economic opportunities provided by membership in it, including participation in various integration projects. The AS such as Egypt, the UAE and Saudi Arabia that joined BRICS in the early 2024 have big economic potentialities, resources, developed basis and experience, and one can suppose with assurance that their having all that will most likely help the evolution of BRICS itself in deepening cooperation between the AS as well as combining their efforts to develop collective cooperation with countries not being BRICS

members. These are, first of all, the GS states interested in development of cooperation with them as well as shifting towards joining BRICS in future. Evidently, the consequences of limitations and restrictions related to the sanctions imposed by the states of the collective West against certain member states of the association will be overcome within the framework of this process. At the same time, BRICS membership does not suppose infringement of international obligations undertaken by the AS. Some collective projects, including in investing, are reviewed in the reports of some of the participants of the Conference. I'd like to mention that even those AS the status of which is determined as *neutral with friendly signs* as the UAE. Further in my report, I'll speak about the Emirates as an example of the country that did not join American and European sanctions against Russia, continuing their partnership with Russia.

**Second line:** via the use of the BRICS potentialities for normalization and development of relations between the AS-members of the association, on the one side, and conflicting with them other states – BRICS members or not being BRICS members, on the other side. A lot had already been done for resolving conflict situations and addressing conflicts even before the AS joined BRICS, but they will have to intensify their efforts using new, recently opened opportunities in some areas and just launch them in some others. One should also mention that BRICS membership may help to prevent turning the existing disagreements in economic, political, cultural and civilization fields into conflicts, to find the necessary solutions. In this context, one should mention, for example, the respective processes in the Saudi-Iranian relations initiated and supported by the People's Republic of China, though in general there are still unresolved issues in the relations between Iran and the Arab states of the Gulf. Anyway, the potential of BRICS in this sector may be in demand.

**Third line:** via the use of BRICS potentialities for achieving assuredness and easing the balancing in relations with such global partners as simultaneously the United States (they are the guarantor of security for the UAE to a considerable degree, to say nothing about the role in trade and investments), and Russia and China, and for decrease of dependence on the former.

**Fourth line:** via optimization of the priorities in cooperation with certain BRICS states on the two-way track, including with other new partners, to achieve the maximum

<sup>1</sup> Обращение Президента Республики Беларусь А. Г. Лукашенко к белорусскому народу // Сов. Белоруссия. 1996. 2 апр.

<sup>2</sup> Вновь мы в СССР! // Комсомольская правда. 1996. 3 марта.

<sup>3</sup> От СССР остались только три буквы // Коммерсантъ-Daily. 1996. 3 марта.

<sup>4</sup> СССР? СНГ? Сообщество? // Свободные новости плюс. 1996. 5–12 апр. № 14.

<sup>5</sup> Лихачев Д. С. Культура как целостная среда. С. 28.

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profits from the realized projects. Review of the UAE relations as a new member of the association and India as an “old” member as an example gives an opportunity to show how successfully the asymmetry of their interests and potentialities is being overcome. But before moving to this part of my report, I’ll touch upon several general questions. I’ll mention, for example, that if there are no serious disagreements between member states in the field of values, the level of dissociation in politics may be fairly high. This is certified in particular by voting of their representatives at the UN General Assembly (detailed examination of this issue is not one of my tasks).

Usually the construction and real estate market (notwithstanding several elements of overheating) is named among the promising fields of the UAE cooperation with other states within BRICS. Joining the association expands the horizons for investment projects and helps their renewal.

As for the intensive development of relations between India and the UAE, it began about 10 years ago when Narendra Modi became the Prime Minister of India. In 2015, he became the first head of the Indian government in 34 years to visit the UAE (before that, in 1981, the country was officially visited by Indira Gandhi). In 2015, the relations between New Delhi and Abu Dhabi were elevated to the level of *strategic partnership*, and since then the UAE have been one of the most often visited by Modi countries – 7 visits already (with only the United States visited more – 8 times). The last Modi’s visit to the UAE took place recently – on February 13–14, 2024.

My colleagues studying the issues of cooperation of the AS that joined BRICS in the beginning of this year, with the founders of the association, usually attract attention to the fact that the status of strategic partnership given to them was supported by a number of agreements, one of the most important of which is the *Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement* (CEPA) signed in 2022. According to this agreement, both countries agreed to cancel over 95% import duties, which led to a considerable growth of the two-way trade that in 2023 amounted to USD 85 billion. At the same time, the UAE supported the association’s trade de-dollarization course, in which trading with India occupied an important place. The Local Currency Payments (LCP) Agreement was signed with India in 2023 and already in December 2023, India confirmed the first in history settlement of payments in Rupees for the oil that came from the UAE.

The two countries striving for diversification of trade and other ties that clearly characterizes their position, did not limit themselves by the BRICS framework and even before that they in particular had joined another association, to wit I2U2 (India, Israel, UAE, USA), which had been announced in the course of the meeting of the ministers of foreign affairs of the four countries in October 2021. Encouragement of investments in such sectors as energy sector, transport, space, public health and food safety was announced as the group’s aim. Notwithstanding the versatility of the association, I2U2 was often called “The Near East QUAD” in foreign mass media. For some reason, this event did not cause a loud information resonance like in case of BRICS. Thus, the I2U2 project was not even mentioned in the course of Modi’s last visit to the UAE. By the way, in the course of the Indian Prime Minister’s visit,

a bilateral investment agreement was signed, it is expected to increase the flow of investments from the UAE to India. Now, Abu Dhabi is becoming the fourth in size source of direct foreign investments into the Indian economy, and the BRICS organizers may enter it into the list of the association’s achievements.

I’ll add that during that visit another “inter-governmental framework agreement” was signed referring to the launched during the G20 summit in New Delhi in September 2023 economic corridor India – Near East – Europe. This inter-regional initiative is aimed at the integration of the trade routes from India to Europe via the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Israel to provide a quicker transit of goods.

But this agreement is a challenge for BRICS to a certain extent, the analytics view it as an alternative to the Chinese project “One Belt and One Road”. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the statement by the Indian minister of foreign affairs after the Prime Minister’s visit as to the results, contains unimportant details about certain agreements, other countries – participants of the project were not mentioned. The project as such is at the primary stage of development now, and the conflict in the Near East will most likely interfere with the implementation of the project.

The general picture is improved by measures to develop military interactions of New Delhi and Abu Dhabi, first of all, in maritime security in the Indian Ocean. This sector acquires special importance with the deteriorating situation in the region as the background in the context of the going on war in the Gaza Strip, Houthis’ attacks on the merchantmen in the Red Sea and potential escalation of the conflict and its expanding to the other parts of the Near East. My colleagues – experts in economics think that proceeding from this longer periods of delivery of energy resources, bigger expenses for charter of vessels and possible growth of oil prices may be a significant risk for the economic growth of India. Because of that it is important for the country to coordinate the activities with the key regional players such as the UAE in order to provide protection of the country’s interests.

In order to illustrate the diversified approach of the two partners to military cooperation, one can point at the air force joint exercises conducted on January 23–24, 2024 over the Arabian Sea, “Exercise Desert Knight” in which the Indian Air Force, French Air and Space Force and UAE Air Force took part. After that New Delhi and Paris came to an agreement to activate naval cooperation in the south-west part of the Indian Ocean.

When analyzing the Emirates-Indian cooperation, one cannot fail to take into account the fact that the 3.5-million Indian diaspora makes nearly 40% of the whole UAE population and money transfers of its representatives to India amounted to over USD 20 billion in 2023.

The Emirates diplomats play an important intermediary role in settlements of disputes, in which some new BRICS members are involved. Already in 2018, before the UAE and Ethiopia joined the association, the Emirates helped to settle disagreements between Ethiopia and Eritrea. And on January 1, 2024, Ethiopia and Somaliland signed the agreement providing Addis Ababa with the access to the Red Sea as an answer to Ethiopia’s acknowledgement of Somaliland’s independence. It was officially announced that the agreement “will strengthen security, economic and po-

litical partnership between countries.” In the current situation, experts point at the importance of the forming conditions for the further strengthening of the Abu Dhabi’s role in the countries of the Horn of Africa taking into account the exclusive relations of the UAE with Somaliland and their now beginning to strengthen ties with Ethiopia.

The reviewed material allows to judge the giant development potential that BRICS has and the advantag-

es the GS states received from its strengthening and expanding, in particular, the Arab world states. The association gives its members an opportunity to conduct sovereign independent policy and increases the attractiveness of membership in BRICS as well as helps economic growth and preservation of the uniqueness and originality, cultural and civilization identity of its member states.

**A. D. Nekipelov<sup>1</sup>**

## **TRANSFORMATION OF THE GLOBAL ECONOMY IN THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE TRANSFER TO THE MULTIPOLAR WORLD**

### **The Linear Logic of the World Economy Structure’s Development**

The market economy is atomistic by nature. Its basis is formed by network, horizontal ties between individuals independently taking economic decisions. Surely, there are also hierarchically structured groups of people. Vertical relations reflecting various roles of the participants in taking decisions and bringing them into life are predominant inside such collective formations.

One of such significant groups acting in market economy is a capitalist company, the functioning of which is ideally subjected to one aim – the maximization of profits. At the same time, it is not difficult to notice that origination of any company is mediated by an individual choice – it is made by its every employee when they are employed. Though companies are themselves being the participants of horizontal market interactions with other subjects of economic activities.

The state is another most important source of hierarchical relations in market economy. From the point of view of nature of the examined form of economic structure, the functions of this authority for the society management seem rather limited: they come down to protection of private property rights and guarantee of carrying out deals made by natural persons and legal entities. In this sense, the state’s powers are subjugated to the task of effective functioning of exchange relations, being of network character in their essence. In case of such understanding, the geographical borders of states do not seem so important; the important thing is that the performance of the above-mentioned state’s functions should be provided on any territory.

Already Karl Marx paid attention to the fact that the international character of the capitalist society is related to its atomism. Hence his well-known quotes about proletarians

having no Fatherland and class interests of capital dominating over its national interests. According to the theoretical provision fitting well in the narrative, the economic relations are the basis, and the state subjugated to the interests of the ruling class – capital together with culture are included in the superstructure of the social system.

The principal secondary nature within the framework of the examined approach to the issue of the state borders’ configuration does not mean that their certain shapes have no real economic consequences. Any state’s necessity to mobilize means to finance the activities directed to perform the above-mentioned minimalist functions, inevitably leads itself to origination of taxation systems different in different countries. This in its turn becomes the reason for differences in the environment for carrying out economic activities in different states, and that directly affects the forming in them price ratio and as a result the transnational flows of goods, services, financial resources.

In the course of the technological progress, accompanied by expanding of the production scales, such a heterogeneity of the environment for economic activities on the globe is more and more conflicting with the very nature of the market economy. If the institution of state is meant only to provide the required conditions for the market’s functioning, then the natural reaction to the more and more expanding transnational economic relations should be the aspiration of nation-states to achieve formation of one common for the whole globe legislative and regulatory environment for business by joined efforts. In the financial system, this ideally implies consecutive movement to establishment of the unified global taxation system as well as complete refusal from using customs duties and all kinds of limitations for trans-border movement of the factors of production. In case of such an approach, the increase of the extent of homogeneity of the market environment is viewed as a direct and inevitable result of the technological process. As a matter of fact, this is the “linear” nature of this approach.

It is interesting that a similar conclusion about the inevitable disappearance of “state barriers” under the pressure of the technological process and formation of a uniform economic space was expanded by V. I. Lenin to the principally different social system – socialism. Really, his well-known quote about the “global cooperative of nations” is nothing else but the socialist variant of “the end of history”. Though here it is necessary to keep the following in mind.

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In contrast to capitalism, socialism by definition is not an atomistic society. The fundamental relations within its limits are not horizontal (between individual economic agents) but vertical (between members of the association and association as a whole). As a consequence of that, transfer from local interests of certain countries to the common interest of “the global socialist community” turns out to be not so simple.<sup>1</sup>

### **The Real Course of the Global Economy's Development**

The real course of the global economy's development fully confirmed the thesis on the internalizing force of the technological process. Consecutive build-up though with well-known fluctuations of all kinds of international economic relations is viewed over the long historical period of time: trans-border flows of goods and services, capital and labour. At a certain stage, this process leads to the origination of transnational structures, within which inter-company distribution of labour becomes international.

The general result of such a development of events is more and more close interweaving of national production and economic systems and the formation on this basis of the more and more integrated global economic and technological system. At the production stage, the degree of such integration is manifested in such natural indicators as the share of the received from abroad raw materials, services of physical capital and labour in creation of certain kinds of products. In the environment of the market system, the derived from them economic indicators of the internationalization process are the shares of cost of foreign goods in the retail commodity circulation in the country, foreign capital in national investments, export and import of goods and services in the gross domestic product, etc. At the same time, the tightness of mutual international production and economic ties objectively cannot be the same in various sectors of the global economy. In this case, we see the effect of both special features of spatial location of producers and consumers, and levels of technological development of various areas.

It is more difficult in case of the institutional side of the production's internationalization process, reflecting the degree of the homogeneity of the conditions for economic activities in different parts of the globe.

In the environment of free competition capitalism, the process of homogenization of the global economic space developed fairly quickly. The two factors played an important role in it. First, the economic role of the state decreased consequently during this period in comparison with the age of centralized feudal states. This role gradually came down the performance of the two above-mentioned functions – protection of property rights and provision of

the effect of sanctions in case of infringement of contract obligations (the state as a “night guard”). The requirement in resources necessary for carrying out these limited functions was relatively unimportant (it will be enough to say that in the early 20th century the usual share of the state's expenses in the gross domestic product amounted to approximately 10 percent), and because of that the existing differences in tax rates and customs duties only limitedly affected the choice of domestic and foreign partners. Second, the most important factor providing the high level of homogeneity of global economy during that period was the existence of actually unified monetary system on the territory of the whole globe based on the value of gold, the gold standard.

The state of affairs started changing with the transition of the market economy into the stage of imperfect competition (“monopolistic capitalism” in Marxist terms), which became evident in the last quarter of the 19th century. The role of state in particular changes in this environment: it gradually changes from the “night guard” into the most important subject of economic activities. Maintaining socio-political stability becomes its task inside the country, and protection and promotion of the interests of national capital on the international scene. Interweaving of internal and external functions turns the state into a powerful tool for providing competitiveness of national economy.

Strategic competition of capitalist states becomes a new phenomenon for the global economy. It leads to strong inter-state collisions, most dramatically manifested during World War I and later World War II. The result was disintegration of the global economy into two socioeconomic sectors for a fairly long period of time – capitalist and socialist. Relations of three kinds different in their socioeconomic content form within the global economy – inside each sector and between them.

Transition to the stage of imperfect competition capitalism is accompanied by considerable changes in the world monetary system that ends in complete transfer from the gold standard to credit (fiat) money. The important result of this process is appearance of the state's new powerful tool for influencing the economic life of the society – the monetary policy. Such a development of events is not accidental; it directly derives from the changed role of the state. Considerable decrease of transaction expenses was the factor pushing to introduction of new national monetary systems, it was provided by them. The possibility to realize these advantages appeared in connection with the economic power and derived from it trust that the institute of state acquired in the new environment. However, the consequences of changes in the monetary field were not limited by that.

Disappearance of one common – gold – basis of the world monetary system disturbed the homogeneity of the global economy in this field and from the point of view of the “linear logic” meant institutional regress. The negative consequences of the fragmentation of the global monetary space were softened by making the US Dollar the world reserve currency. Serious advantages proceeding from such a position of the national currency for the United States make this system dependent both on the degree of responsibility of the country-emitter's to the rest of the world, and – in a farther perspective – of the ratio of economic powers in the world.

<sup>1</sup> This became apparent when the world was divided into two socioeconomic systems. The conclusion about as if objective aspiration for the autarkic development of centrally planned socialist economies that was rather widespread in the Western economic science, is definitely an exaggeration. However, the experience of the countries from the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance that united a considerable part of the socialist world countries, undoubtedly certified that exactly the nation-states were the main subjects of international economic relations, speaking in them on behalf of respective nations. In that environment, there were no opportunities for gradual increase of the homogeneity of conditions for economic activities: they could become such only in case of refusal from nation-states as such. However, in a wider context it corresponded to the Marxist idea of historical inevitability of the institution of state dying.



In view of the reasons, the analysis of which is beyond the subject of my report, the sector of the centrally managed socialist economies stops functioning in the early 90s of the 20th century, and the economic activities everywhere subjugate to the market laws. During this period, the idea of inevitability of the globalization process based on liberalization of all sides of economic activities – production, trade, finance – is acknowledged practically universally. The powerful development of transnational structures and related to their functioning formation of international value added chains is also viewed as certification of the role of nation-states being “doomed” to progressive decrease.

It would seem that the world economy’s development returned to the “linear logic” determining the steadfast movement of the global economy to the fully homogeneous state – “the end of history”. It is not accidental that discussions of formation – even if not in the very near future – of the one world government have increased dramatically exactly during this period.

However, it is not difficult to notice that such a “come-back” became a result of not so much the actions of forces “not dependent on the will and mind” of certain actors as the focused determined efforts of the most developed states: liberalization of economic activities allowed them to secure their leading position in the world at this stage. In fact, the de-etatization was about the states not referred to the countries of the “Golden Billion”; the power of the latter ones even increased. Though one cannot but acknowledge that in the medium term the profits from the process of globalization – access to up-to-date technologies and forms of carrying out economic activities, familiarization with higher consumption standards – were witnessed in less developed countries as well. Long-term negative consequences of the process of globalization for them are becoming clear only now: dependent position in transnational value added chains, limited opportunities for independent economic policy, vulnerability to sanctions imposed by the most developed states.

It is paradoxical but the decline of the process of globalization of the world economy also started by the will of the developed Western states. The reason was exactly the change of the balance of powers on the global arena (first of all, the rise of China) as well as the negative consequences for the said states of the previous staking on leaving the real sector of economy and complete liberalization of financial activities. The 2007–2009 global financial and economic crisis was the “trigger” here that led to cardinal changes in their economic policy.

### **Fragmentation of the Global Economy as the Economic Side of the Process of Transition to the Multipolar World**

A certain number of researchers think that it is unjustified to speak about the reversal of the process of economic globalization. At the same time, they as a rule refer to the fact that the well-known decrease of the number of transnational economic ties after the global financial and economic crisis is temporary.

It is quite possible to agree with the latter statement: there is every reason to believe that the scientific and technological process will be accompanied by expanding of production activities’ scales in future as well, and also the ar-

reas of product sales and application of the factors of production, including beyond nation-states. However, in case of such understanding, the process of globalization does not in any way differ from what has been defined by the term of “internationalization of economic activities” in economics for a long time already. It seems that it becomes qualitatively specific only in case if it is connected, as it was mentioned above, with the movement to a more homogeneous economic (market in today’s conditions) environment. And exactly with this point of view there are grounds to say that the period of fragmentation of the global economy’s structure has come to replace economic globalization.

It is evident that the global economy’s entering this period does not accidentally coincide with the more general process of transition from the unipolar world to the multipolar world, practically being its component part. This process is by necessity characterized by fierce competition of states (“strategic competition”) in the course of which not only purely economic interests but cultural and civilizational ones will be manifested (and are already manifested). Taking into account a big number of states in the world, and them considerably different from one another by the level of development, resource, scientific and production potential, the period of the global economy’s fragmentation will be characterized by the increased level of uncertainty, danger of large-scale inter-state conflicts. It is confirmed by the today’s events in the Ukraine and the Near East.

The difficulty of the process being experienced is defined by the variety and non-triviality of tasks to be solved by all countries in the course of it.

The understanding of state interests (including as to the allocation of resources taking into account the international distribution of labour) will be seriously corrected. When taking decisions on the advisability of enhancement of international specialization and possibilities to increase the production’s efficiency, a considerably bigger importance will be given to evaluation of risks related to increase of dependence on partners from other states.

The aspiration to create areas of stability allowing to maximally use the economy’s potentialities at the expense of the scales opened by the technological progress, will help to form coalitions of states characterized by the increased degree of homogeneity of the economic space. Such integrational associations in their turn will claim to be the “poles” of the new multipolar world.

The process of reformatting the global community as a whole and global economy in particular will inevitably lead to renewal of the international economic cooperation institutions both within the framework of certain groups of states and the whole globe. Such trends are already clearly visible today in the monetary field. The composition and comparative role of reserve currencies are changing, digital currencies are introduced not related to national financial authorities, the use of “soft” national currencies in trans-border settlements of payments is becoming more active, the possibilities of formation of new “international currencies” are actively reviewed. In this connection, it is important to keep the following in mind.

As it is well-known, one of the main issues of the group choice is the inevitably appearing “cyclicality”: in order to take rational decisions, the group members should decide how they are going to take them. It is clear that in such

an environment the balance of interests may not be the result of a multistep iterative process. And what is more, such a balance itself may turn out rather shaky: not only changes in the interests of certain group members but also in their ideas of what interests should be coordinated may lead to disruption of this balance. Luckily, there is also some power operating in the established groups, as a rule giving the minimally required sustainability to the reached agreements. Refusal from them is often fraught with bigger losses for the group members than problematic profits from their change.

Thus, one should expect a long period during which a new structure of the global community will be formed as well as institutions mediating inter-relations of its actors both at the global level and within separate coalitions. Changes in the arrangement of the world economy will be one of the important parts of this process. Both single states and their associations are to expect a difficult search for their places in the new architecture of the global communi-

ty. It is evident that the process will be of a complex game character.

BRICS plays an important role here. Today, the consolidation of states in this organization is determined by their common understanding of the necessity of restructuring on the basis of the new principles of the global community as a whole and global economy in particular. Surely, they are already striving now to build their relations on this new basis and thus take upon themselves the functions of the most important pole being in the process of establishment of the multipolar world. However, it can be assumed that in the course of these principles' acquiring the universal character, the today's BRICS partners will find themselves as members of various international coalitions – future poles of the global community. Apparently, the historical role of BRICS in this regard consists in playing the role of the main testing ground for working out new, just principles of relations for various states and their coalitions within the global community.

**R. I. Nigmatulin<sup>1</sup>**

## LANDMARKS FOR PHASED TRANSITION TO SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROWTH IN RUSSIA

The socio-economic strategy established in Russia over the past ten years has become unpromising and even dangerous, especially after the multifaceted break with the West.

Until the majority of Russia's population and intellectuals realize that the current leadership of the socio-economic block of the Government and corporations are brining the country's economy further and further to a dead end. Which means that realization will come when the exit is weighted by social collapses.

Our economy is growing slower than the economy of the most countries. According to the World Bank, in the period from 2013 to within 10 years the average annual GDP growth was 0.9%, and in the world it was 3.1 times higher, including in Poland 4.7 times higher, in South Korea 3.2 times higher, in the USA and EU 2.7 times higher, in China 7.5 times higher. After 2012, the real incomes of the bulk of the population are not growing.

Manufacture of the means of production has been destroyed. The leaders of the economic block of the Govern-

ment and corporations have turned the domestic machine building industry into an assembly workshop of parts produced abroad. They also turned domestic agriculture, which provides only 4–5% of GDP, into an agricultural holding of Western technologies, Western seed and breeding stock. Only 6% of the seeds were left to domestic production.

A serious threat to the country's technological sovereignty has emerged.

Although GDP grew by 3.5% in 2023 and personal income grew by 4.5%, but this was achieved at the expense of procurement to support the military sector amid a significant increase in government expenditures. This growth cannot ensure the improvement of the socio-economic situation of the bulk of the country's population living poorly by European standards.

The current strategy ensures small investments in fixed capital, which cannot ensure economic growth through new non-resource industries and learning to use new technologies. This strategy maintains the poverty of Russia's population and the glaring socio-economic inequality between citizens and between regions. Moreover, even those investments, which are invested in fixed capital, cause 1.5 times lower *economic growth* and 1.5–2 times higher *investment inflation* compared to Europe.

Under the current socio-economic order, the Russian Government is failing in its main task of creating conditions for human development. Our expenditures on education, science, scientific and technical development and health care as a *share of GDP* are two times less than in Europe and other developed countries. In addition to low funding, these areas are being destroyed by ridiculous bureaucratic reforms of a pernicious nature. And that's for more than 30 years.

Since 2000, the number of public schools, hospital organizations has decreased by half. The number of academic researchers continues to decline. In terms of their number per capita, we rank 29th.

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We have come close to a demographic catastrophe due to low birth rates and the highest mortality rate in Europe. Natural population loss exceeds 0.5 million people per year. The working age mortality rate exceeds the European level by 2.8 times among men and two times among women. According to the rating of the authoritative international magazine *Lancet*, which is determined by 33 indicators, Russia is 119th among 187 countries in terms of *population health*.

In the next 10 years Russia will experience an acute shortage of labor resources as workers of all qualifications, as well as engineers, technologists and designers.

The strategy of the last ten years has become futile and even dangerous especially after the multifaceted break with the West.

Until the majority of Russia's population and intellectuals realize that the current leadership of the socio-economic block of the Government and corporations are brining the country's economy further and further to a dead end. Which means that realization will come when the exit is weighted by social collapses.

Since 2012, the President of Russia has been issuing May Decrees that set actual national development goals for the Russian Federation. In particular, the 2012 Decree set the following goals for fulfillment by 2020: to create 25 million high-tech jobs, to overcome poverty, middle class – more than 50% of the population. These goals have not been achieved to date. The goal was to achieve a minimum wage of 24 thousand rubles/month and an average wage of 70 thousand rubles/month. But even with cumulative inflation from 2012 to 2023 exceeding 220% (price increases of more than 2.2 times), this level of wages has not yet been reached.

The 2018 Decree prescribed the following goals to be achieved by 2024: sustainable population growth, life expectancy of 78 years, poverty reduction by two times, becoming one of the top ten countries in the world in terms of quality of education and R&D, etc. The deadline for achieving these goals from 2024 was later pushed back to 2030 due to the coronavirus pandemic and the SMO.

But also these goals cannot be achieved even by 2030 unless the socio-economic order is changed, and this requires the following measures consisting of seven items.

1. Change of personnel policy in the economic block of the Government and state corporations. Elevate the role of engineers and specialists who have shown real achievement in manufacturing. Remove from the leadership those who, contrary to the repeated warnings of specialists, brought the Russian socio-economic sphere to its current dire state. Take out those who initiated the reforms that destroyed education and science (including after 2010) and thus destroyed the foundation of socio-economic efficiency.

1.1. Abandon the current personnel policy of appointing managers who have not completed the necessary steps of learning the profession and leadership experience. Major scientists, specialists and engineers should occupy leading positions in the leadership of sectoral ministries.

1.2. Restore and develop the engineering education system by restoring physical and mathematical training at secondary schools and polytechnic universities.

1.3. Prepare measures to prioritize the training of engineers, technicians and skilled workers. Raise their prestige

and salaries, increase the salaries of university and vocational school teachers by two or three times, making them the same for all regions.

1.4. The leadership of ministries responsible for education and science, the management of educational and scientific institutions should be carried out by specialists with real scientific, educational and practical experience. The rise of Russian education and science is not connected with a variation of the Bologna and other systems, but with the restoration of the leadership of those who *lecture, teach and research*.

1.5. In order to implement the national projects in the sphere of education, science and culture, it is necessary to increase consolidated budget expenditures thereon by two times within 5 years, reaching at least the level of the new EU countries: 8% of GDP for education, 2.5% of GDP for science, and 1% of GDP for culture.

2. For economic growth at a rate of 3–5% per year due to the growth of non-resource goods production, for creation of new industries and mastering new technologies, it is necessary to abandon the accumulation of resources in reserve funds of more than 15% of GDP, abandon the budget rule and use resources for “investment attack” with the growth of investment in fixed capital (IFC) at a rate of 5–7% per year.

2.1. With the current structure of productive forces, their provision, low efficiency, weak human resources and systemic corruption, the relative growth of investments  $\Delta I$  will cause an additional impulse of investment inflation  $\Phi_c$  at the level of  $\Phi_c \approx 2 \Delta I$ , which is twice higher not only than in the EU countries, but also in Turkey.

2.2. Therefore, simultaneously with the growth of investments, it is necessary to improve the personnel composition of managers of enterprises realizing investments, managers of financial institutions and the system of selection of investment projects.

2.3. To increase the efficiency of investment in the Russian economy, which is 1.5 times lower than in the EU countries and other developed and developing countries, it is necessary to increase expenditure on scientific and technical development from 5% to 10% of GDP, to oblige the main “production” ministries and large state corporations to have their own supporting design and research institutes, staffed with scientists and engineers. All strategic decisions and projects should be tested and authorized by these institutions.

3. Reform the tax system by substantially reducing taxes on production and business (especially on the part of profit that goes to investments in fixed capital), shifting them to the large incomes of individuals and their rich property, taking into account world practice. In particular, implement the following measures, which have been implemented long ago in growing economies:

3.1. The share of the consolidated state budget should increase from 34% to 45% within five years, and in other five years to 50% of GDP.

3.2. Introduce a progressive income tax scale with non-taxable income up to 20 kP / month, and increasing rates from 13 to 30% as income rises, and substantially increase taxes on rich property and rich inheritance. This will make it possible to achieve the above European levels of GDP shares for state budget expenditures (item 3a), including education, science, culture and health (see item 1d).

3.3. Within five years, gradually reduce the VAT rate by two times, canceling VAT refunds to exporters of raw materials.

3.4. It is necessary to redistribute tax revenues in favor of regional and municipal budgets, increasing the share of taxes left in the producing regions.

3.5. Enforce controls and restrict the export of capital abroad, separating it from paying for imports.

3.6. Mobilize the banks' funds, which amount to more than 120 trillion rubles. Bankers' income should be at the expense of the implementation of production projects, while income from speculative operations should be subject to high tax rates. Banks should improve the system for selecting investment projects and controlling the use of loans.

3.7. Simplify tax reporting.

4. Develop and implement a national project for the development of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), including for import substitution of goods that we can produce at our enterprises. The contribution of SMEs to GDP should grow from 20 to 40–50%, following the example of developed and developing countries.

5. Ensure a balanced economy. To accomplish this the following measures are necessary:

5.1. Since the prices for raw materials, fuel, electricity and metals in our country are twice as high as in the United States in terms of purchasing power parity and in relation to the prices of national goods, it is necessary to achieve a significant reduction in the domestic market. For this purpose, unreasonable expenses and losses from inefficient management should be taken out of prices, and excessive taxes and other state deductions should be taken out of domestic prices, transferring them to the export part of raw materials, the physical volume of which exceeds domestic consumption by 2–4 times.

The following balance sheet ratios should be used.

- The price of 1 kg of plain bread should be equal to the price of three liters of gasoline.

- The minimum monthly wage should be equal to the cost of 1,000 liters of gasoline or 6,000 kW×h of electricity.

- The minimum monthly wage must be equal to 50% of the average wage.

5.2. Introduce mechanisms to reduce costs, to better control prices, which should moderately exceed costs, and to control the wage fund, which should moderately exceed the price fund of consumer goods.

5.3. Introduce mechanisms to redistribute the income of companies and enterprises in favor of paying the bulk of workers so that the incomes of 95% of the population increase from 45 to 60% of GDP (they amount to 70% in the new EU countries). At the same time, these incomes should be balanced with the production of goods and services and their imports, taking into account the advice given by Ludwig Erhard, the leader of the economic miracle of post-war Germany: “buyer demand should moderately outstrip production capacity.”

6. The following measures are needed to overcome the acute demographic crisis associated with the highest mortality rate in Europe and falling birth rates.

6.1. Increase health care expenditure from 3.7% of GDP to the European level of 7.5% within 5 years.

6.2. In addition to improving the welfare of the population, there is a need for a program to support motherhood and childhood with a significant increase in its financing (from 1 to 2% of GDP) within five years. It is necessary to double the maternity capital for each child born and monthly payments to mothers of two or more children under the age of 7 at least half of the average median payment in the region. Additionally, social expenditures on preschool and school education, children's leisure, physical education and sports will need to be increased by 1% of GDP.

Some of the funds for this purpose can be provided by the small-family tax which was 6% of taxpayer income until the 1960s.

6.3. In order to overcome the crisis due to the acute shortage of labor resources, it is necessary to develop a program to attract immigration of labor resources from the republics of the former USSR that share the civilizational values of Russia.

6.4. To implement all the above measures, the country's leadership must get out of the captivity of imaginary economic advances. The people and their leaders must show political will. There is no doubt that the vast majority of the Russian people will support such will. Financial, scientific, organizational and methodological problems are *solvable*.

M. Okoli<sup>1</sup>

## BRICS+ AS A NEW SPACE OF CULTURES AND CIVILISATION

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1992, 'the tectonic plates of geopolitics have been shifting' and with current geopolitical tensions new alliances and potential rivalry among world powers seeking influence in Africa and other regions of the world, 'we may see the world becoming more multipolar'. Despite the plethora of multilateral institutions, multipolarity has become a cliché as member states forge new alliances to address perceived injustices in the existing system.

BRICS+ as a new space of cultures and civilization emerged from the Russia-India-China strategic triangle called RIC. The group was promoted by Russia ostensibly to challenge the perceived hegemony of the West, thus, renewing old ties with India and fostering the newly discovered friendship with China.

### The relevance of BRICS in the 21st century multilateralism

BRICS member countries share the desire for the world to accord them a larger role through their common platform for global reform. Although the framework of BRICS is more or less informal, that is, without a Secretariat as in the case of most multilateral organizations, the organization seems to be assuming greater significance due to its philosophy and principles of equality. The major roles of BRICS are derived largely from statements issued at Summits. Over the years, BRICS has focused on highlighting the need for emerging powers to have a greater voice in global governance. In the wake of the global financial crisis, the joint statement by BRICS leaders in 2009 contained strong declarations on the importance of coordinating financial policy through the G20 and the need to reform international financial institutions to create a "greater voice and representation" for emerging economies, including a more transparent process for leadership selection. The BRICS countries indeed have deepened their partnership over the past years, developing a real organization out of a mere idea, to prove their capacity to create new financial institutions with equal opportunities. As a result of the removal of Russia from the global SWIFT payment system in 2022, the BRICS are working towards new financial infrastructure, alternative payment, and internet networks to assert the multipolarity of the world economy.

From all indications, the emergence of BRICS and the level of commitment it demonstrates in the pursuit of its goals of economic development among its members, has indeed, shown that BRICS has come to stay. Being founded on the principles of equality of member states, and the right of access to development funds, developing countries and

emerging economies consider the relevance of BRICS as a relevant global institution. Many countries will soon come to terms with BRICS due to the significant influence it commands on global socio-economic affairs in the build-up to the emerging world order. One major characteristic identical to BRICS member countries revolves around their population, natural resource endowment, and economic potential.

### XVI BRICS Summit

XVI BRICS Summit will be held in October 2024 in Kazan, Russia. Russia currently assumes the leadership of BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa plus five (5) new members (Ethiopia, Egypt, Iran, the United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia) that ascended unto the association in January 2024.

Until the forthcoming XVI summit next October, Russia has already lined up a comprehensive pack of activities aimed at building an appreciable image and direction and creating a better future based on its historical developments and contemporary geopolitical realities for the association.

In an exclusive address, Russian President, Vladimir Putin outlined the main priorities for the Summit, with the theme of strengthening Multilateralism for Equitable Global Development and Security.

During the year, Russia plans to hold over 200 events in three key areas of BRICS cooperation: politics and security, economy, and finance, as well as cultural and humanitarian contacts. The BRICS summit scheduled to take place in Kazan, the Russian Federation in October 2024, will be the culmination of Russia's chairmanship.

One of the crucial tasks is to ensure the integration of new participants in the BRICS mechanisms without compromising their efficiency. To implement the Johannesburg II Declaration, Russia will devise the modality of establishing the category of BRICS partner states and create a list of potential candidates to present the report at the Kazan summit. In addition, Russia will contribute to the comprehensive implementation of the Strategy for BRICS Economic Partnership until 2025 and the Action Plan for BRICS Innovation Cooperation for 2021–2024.

As the first step, Russia plans to ensure that the decision adopted during the XV summit, held on August 22–24, 2023, in South Africa to expand BRICS membership becomes a reality, as a particularly important step to strengthen the position of BRICS which epitomizes the diversity of the multipolar world. Both the The Kremlin and the Foreign Affairs Ministry have indicated that more than 30 countries have expressed interest in establishing close ties with BRICS.

The second step will see Russia hosting several major international cultural events, including the World Youth Festival, the Games of the Future which is a mix of physical sports and cybersports, and the sports games of the BRICS countries.

Both games will be held in Kazan, the capital of the Republic of Tatarstan (the Games of the Future in February, and the BRICS Games in the summer of 2024).

Already, during a cabinet meeting on 24 January 2024, Putin had directed relevant government ministries and de-

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partments to draft proposals on the expansion of cooperation with BRICS colleagues in the 'climate area, joint developments in the area of monitoring climatically active gases and measuring the carbon balance of ecosystems, including the development of systems for collection and processing of data for estimation of human-caused and natural flows of greenhouse gases and other climatically active elements.<sup>1</sup>

The cabinet is also to develop mutual recognition of tools and technologies in this field by BRICS nations. Another area of work is laying the groundwork for the development of joint technical scientific solutions aimed at easing the human impact on the environment, climate, and adjustment of economies and the population of member states to climate changes. The order should be executed by 3 June 2024.

Certainly, for the forum to expand its geography even further, there is a need to use the most advanced technologies for possible remote participation from anywhere in the world. And, as an approach to consolidating the BRICS scope of activities and as an explicit indication of collective teamwork under Russia's presidency, the Federation Council (the upper house of the Russian Parliament).

Speaker Valentina Matviyenko has added her voice to BRICS 2024. For the first time within the Fourth Eurasian Women's Forum from September 18 to 20 in St. Petersburg, Matviyenko proposed a special session on women – the BRICS Women's Forum. She stated *inter alia* "As part of the fourth forum, we plan to hold the BRICS Women's Forum for the first time. This BRICS Women's Forum will present both the results of existing projects and new initiatives, which will strengthen partnerships between the BRICS member countries, including the women's agenda."<sup>2</sup>

### Prospects and Opportunities for BRICS Expansion

In the latest BRICS summit, some of the observations and objectives were spelled out in the declaration: "With the addition of six new members, BRICS now has 30 percent of the world economy within its collaboration, with a combined GDP of US\$30.76 trillion. It also constitutes 40 percent of the world's population. The necessity of expanding trade and investment among the BRICS member states and strengthening their relations was emphasized by the summit leaders. By 2050, leaders at the summit hope to account for 50 percent of the world's GDP, which will fundamentally change the economic landscape."<sup>3</sup> "It is estimated that by 2040, the BRICS group will account for more than 50% of the global GDP, because enlargement within the BRICS plus framework through the integration of several large countries will facilitate the achievement of about 50% of the global production of goods and services. And, 'in March 2022 experts from the IMF had warned that the heavy financial sanctions imposed on Russia could threaten to gradually weaken the dominance of the US dollar, lead to a more

multilateral international systems and encourage the emergence of small currency blocks based on trade among a certain group of countries. Already, it is noted that the BRICS countries have established a contingency reserve arrangement (CRA), a mechanism aimed at ensuring liquidity for member-states when they are confronted by short-term balance of payment crises."<sup>4</sup>

In this regard, BRICS offers a model of economic integration that motivates countries to join. Scholars have argued that the use of a single currency that is being contemplated or local currencies in trade exchange among members could be an effective counterbalance to the monopoly or dominance of the US dollar. It is assumed that the dollar system, with its great deal of volatility, systematically undervalues the currencies of Third World countries. In addition, 'elevated interest rates and stronger dollar make it more expensive for African countries to service dollar-denominated debt, something that has pushed many countries into debt distress'. The fact that Egypt, Ethiopia, and other countries of the Global South are joining BRICS could mean that they are gradually moving away from the dollar-based system of global trade, experts told the *Jeune Afrique* news magazine. 'For Africa, the use of the dollar in trade means that countries have no chance to trade with each other in local currencies.'<sup>5</sup> In the context of this article discussion, it is important to state that BRICS African members (Ethiopia, Egypt, and South Africa) could be used as the gateway into the vast African markets. BRICS has to necessarily leverage this to deepen Africa's trade integration and effectively implement the agreement through policy advocacy and strategy development. It could utilize trade integration processes in close collaboration with the Regional Economic Communities and specialized African trade chambers across Africa.

### Challenges

The potential and success story of BRICS, notwithstanding, there are significant challenges towards actualizing its goals in a globalized economy. First, is the fact that the prosperity of the world is dependent on energy and market, and whereas BRICS has this comparative advantage to some extent because of Russia's energy and India's and Chinese markets, the growing rivalry between the United States and China, the two largest world economies pose significant challenges for the growth and prosperity of BRICS.

Secondly, the dominance of the US dollar in the global financial system constitutes a significant challenge to the BRICS group, especially when it comes to introducing its currency in financial institutions worldwide. Besides, the US dollar is also the dominant currency in the global stock markets, as well as markets of goods, bank deposits, funding of development projects, and loans.

Despite China's significant power in global trade, the Yuan accounts for less than 2.5% of global transactions, less than the dollar share of about 40%, and the Euro, which is at the level of 36%.

### Conclusion

The BRICS, which academic experts referred to as a grouping of developing nations, initially focused on economic

<sup>1</sup> Перечень поручений по итогам встречи с участниками III Конгресса молодых ученых. URL: <http://kremlin.ru/acts/assignments/orders/73317> (accessed: 16.04.2024).

<sup>2</sup> tass.ru : [website]. URL: <https://tass.ru/obschestvo/19785811> (accessed: 16.04.2024).

<sup>3</sup> Shehu A., Okoli M. BRICS and the Global South Cooperation // Global Research. 2024. 15 Febr. URL: <https://counterinformation.wordpress.com/2024/02/15/brics-and-the-global-south-cooperation/> (accessed: 16.04.2024).

<sup>4</sup> Shehu A., Okoli M. Op. cit.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

cooperation, has evolved into a significant player in global politics. The organization's disposition as a competitor to the Western influence in the global economy and its pursuit of reforms aligned with the national interests of its members have gained traction and offered greater attraction and motivation for countries to join. With substantial contributions to global GDP, strategic placement, and influence in international trade and security, BRICS plays a crucial role. However, challenges include the lack of a formal charter for admitting new members and existing conflicts, such as those between China and India, which may hinder the association's development. A collaborative approach between major members is crucial for BRICS to overcome internal conflicts and achieve its objectives.

There are prospects, opportunities, and challenges for such partnerships within the framework of BRICS. However, the organization has struggled to have the kind of geopolitical influence that matches its collective economic reach. It also embodies a synergy of cultures and explores a model of genuine multilateral diplomacy. Its structure is formed in compliance with the 21st century realities.

Efforts within its framework are based on the principles of equality, equity, and mutual respect, fairness, and justice.<sup>1</sup> Russian Federation has taken over the BRICS presidency for 2024 from South Africa and that will be a game-changing incident in contemporary international relations.

C. Okray<sup>2</sup>

## BRICS+ AND THE VISION OF A NEW INTERNATIONAL ORDER

### The collapse of bipolar world order and the ontological impossibility of a unipolar world order

The collapse of the bi-polar world order after the fall of Berlin wall was celebrated widely, in a global euphoria, and many in the western hemisphere were quick to celebrate the definitive victory of pax Americana. Yet, the more than 30 years that have passed since then have not produced the expected environment.

Not only have the power asymmetries become exponentially larger, leading to much more damaging conflicts, but also, and more importantly, the leadership of pax Americana was not as successful as expected. In the status-quo ante, i. e. the previous bi-polar global order, the US and USSR, as the leads of two blocks, were both checking and also balancing each other's power, hence creating circumstances to either prevent or solve crises. In the unipolar global order, the US, or the group of developed Western democracies it leads, either could not effectively meddle in or consciously refrained from intervening to global crises and conflicts since the fall of the Berlin wall.

Simultaneously with the new post-bipolar world order, leading liberal political thinkers had declared the end of the history, arguing that western style liberal democracies were the ultimate and most developed political system, placing liberal democracy in a position of unquestionable supremacy.

However, liberal democracies are also still in great dilemmas. Even in the developed nations, the liberal democracy is experiencing ontological problems, leading to doubts about its very future. The last round of US presidential elections, and the developments that took place shortly after it, make a case in point.

The debate now evolves more around the sustainability of democracies into the future.

In the decades since the collapse of the Berlin wall, the rising power asymmetries between the North and

the South, between the developed west and the rest, between the wealthy and the poor have lead to rising walls between these two ends.

The very idea of 'nation state' made a strong comeback in many corners of the world and border walls started rising again. The tension between Hungary and the rest of the EU is a vivid example.

Rising border walls are generally considered a result of mass involuntary immigration, there to bloc the moving masses. Yet, the causality is also vice versa: rising walls also provoke more intimidation and deprivation, leading to stronger immigration movements.

The legacies of armed conflicts as well as economic failures are among the reasons of mass immigration, but it wouldn't be wrong to argue that both parameters are also connected to rising asymmetries between the wealthy North and the global South.

Rising national borders, deteriorating transnational immigration as well as their reasons and results make a chaotic matrix of problems that very negatively effect the working of a healthy international order. This also creates an enemy for the development of democracy in the global South.

Adding more drama to the scene, the intergovernmental bodies established after the Second World War are not functioning properly. The UN is well intended but largely ineffective, due to the fact that it has no muscles without the consensus of the Security Council. Even when there is consensus, as we have recently seen in the resolution calling for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, there is no power of enforcement.

The same is valid for many of UN's agencies, working in diverse fields from refugees to environment to conflict resolution. Since the global architecture still largely relies on these bodies for certain areas, those areas continue to be troublesome.

It is in this environment that the need for a new, polycentric global architecture emerged.

In recent years, we have observed three important points:

- a unipolar world order creates power asymmetries, making checks and balances impossible;

<sup>1</sup> Shehu A., Okoli M. Op. cit.

<sup>2</sup> Vice President of the Marmara Group Strategic and Social Research Foundation (Istanbul, Turkey), Founder and Chairman of the Board of UDAŞ International Consulting Inc., Chairman of the Turkish-British Association (Ankara). Awarded the Honorary Title of Knight Commander, by the order of the President of the Italian Republic.

- rising nationalisms are worsening the situation, contributing to more inequalities;
- the divide between the developed North and deprived South is leading to chronic problem areas, from immigration to environmental degradation.

When we add the other, auxiliary factors that contribute to these three points, such as the ineffectiveness of inter-governmental organisations, the need for a quest for a new global order appears more urgent and vital than ever.

Therefore, a return to a multi-centred global architecture has become a vital necessity today, to come over the impasses that we face in many different realms. But establishing that architecture is not easy. First, a balancing act is needed.

That balancing act currently comes as opposition of Russia and China to certain proposals at the UN Security Council, or else, in the form of economic competition between the US and China, among others. But these are individual realms, limited to their specific contexts. A concerted balancing structure is needed to make possible a pluralist global environment that may consequently make possible a new, multi-centered global architecture.

BRICS has emerged for the new polycentric global architecture.

When BRICS first emerged, it was hailed more as an economic power block that represented the interests of so-called emerging, developing economies. This largely was a result of the fact that all the five economies that made BRICS were economic production powerhouses – and still are. But today, BRICS mean more than economy and trade.

BRICS today has an emerging concerted political action, and that action, despite still underrated by Western establishments, proves to be resilient. Yes, BRICS still needs time to mature its dedication to certain political agendas. Yet, as its recent enlargement has shown, it is today an intergovernmental alliance that has an established vision and roadmap. Once the vision is there, the rest would come.

More importantly, and consequently, BRICS have started to define their own global agendas. BRICS nations are not merely re-active any more, but pro-active. Rather than attaching to the agendas established by other global powers, many BRICS nations today pursue and extend their own agendas. The case opened in The Hague by South Africa against Israel is one good, successful example.

The recent enlargement of BRICS to include 5 new member countries is a welcome step in the way to establish the multi-centred global architecture that I referred above. The newcomer nations all have their merits, their peculiar hinterlands and their independent political agendas, that would contribute to the global power of BRICS+. Yet, the diverging priorities of each of the newcomers, and peculiar rivalries between some of them, would make the task a complicated one.

At this stage, BRICS+ should also think about crafting a better-designed organizational structure, a secretariat, that would transform it into a continuous, governance-based entity, from its current form of a periodic conference. While doing this, BRICS+ members should not sacrifice the rather co-operative spirit that makes it unique and special. A continuous secretariat will make possible many tasks and functions to be governed independent from each member country, while remaining strictly under their supervision.

Before I conclude, I would also touch upon an essential issue. What makes BRICS+ special and successful? It is its transactional nature. That nature enables the inclusion of many different countries with different cultures, values and political systems. Still, establishing some sort of a shared values proposition, while strictly maintaining the transactional nature, would only make BRICS+ stronger than it is today. At the end, we may come from different political systems, but we shouldn't forget there is more shared values than what many others suppose about us, which brought us together today. We should not be reluctant to open up to new horizons, while remaining dedicated to our founding spirit.

## E. Rakhmatullozoda<sup>1</sup>

### IRAN AND BRICS: REALITIES, EXPECTATIONS AND PROSPECTS

In the modern world, where globalization with all its vicissitudes and multipolarity are becoming increasingly noticeable trends, the formation and strengthening of interregional associations is of particular relevance. One such grouping that is attracting the attention of the world community is

the BRICS group, that includes Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, and to which Egypt, Iran, the UAE and Ethiopia joined earlier this year. These countries, possessing significant economic, political and cultural resources, strive to form a new world order based on justice, equality and mutual respect.<sup>2</sup>

Iran, a country with a rich history and a unique geopolitical position, has recently shown particular interest in co-operation with the BRICS group. This is explained not only by Iran's desire to diversify its international relations, but also by common views on many world problems, including the need to reform the international financial system, counteract unipolarity and strengthen the role of developing countries in world processes.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Professor of the Department of Diplomacy and Foreign Policy of the Republic of Tajikistan in Tajik National University, Dr. Sc. (Political Sciences), Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan (1990–2001), State Counselor to the President of the Republic of Tajikistan on Foreign Policy (2001–2016), Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Tajikistan to the Kingdom of Belgium, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, permanent representative of the Republic of Tajikistan to the European Union and NATO (2016–2023), Honored Worker of the Republic of Tajikistan. Author of a number of books on international relations, including: “UN Peacekeeping in Tajikistan”, “Preventive Diplomacy: Panacea or Mirage?”, “United Nations Peacekeeping and Preventive Diplomacy: Central Asia, Tajikistan and Afghanistan”, “Islamic Civilization in Tajikistan” (co-authored), and others. Awarded the Order “Sharaf” I class (Tajikistan), the Order “Ordre national du Mérite” (France), the Medal “From the Grateful Afghan People”, two Gold Medals of the Islamic Organization on Education, Science and Culture.

<sup>2</sup> Hurrell A. Hegemony, liberalism and global order: what space for would-be great powers? // *International Affairs*. 2006. № 82 (1). P. 1–19; Stuenkel O. *The BRICS and the Future of Global Order*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2015.

<sup>3</sup> Cooper A. F., Farooq A. B. BRICS and the Global South: Contested or Convergent? // *Third World Quarterly*. 2015. № 36 (4). P. 741–756.

In recent years, relations between Iran and the BRICS countries have intensified significantly. This is reflected in increased trade volumes, cooperation in the fields of energy, science and technology, as well as joint efforts to resolve regional and global conflicts. Particular importance is attached to the development of transport corridors, such as North-South, which connect Iran with Russia and India, opening up new opportunities for economic interaction.<sup>1</sup>

However, Iran's cooperation with BRICS faces a number of obstacles. The sanctions imposed on Iran by Western countries limit the opportunities for full-fledged interaction in the economic sphere. In addition, differences in approaches to solving international issues sometimes lead to disagreements between Iran and individual BRICS members.<sup>2</sup>

In this context, the concept of "Dialogue of Civilizations" plays a special role, presupposing mutual understanding and respect for cultural and religious differences, as well as the desire for peaceful coexistence and cooperation. Iran, being one of the initiators of this idea, sees in it the basis for building mutually beneficial relations with BRICS and other countries of the world.

In light of the above, it seems that the study of the realities, expectations and prospects of Iran's cooperation with the BRICS group is of undoubted interest. At the same time, consideration of the concept of "Dialogue of Civilizations" put forward by Iran in the early 2000s, analysis of the reflection of its fundamental principles on the process of implementing Iran's foreign policy, especially in the light of statements about the stalling of this idea, will provide us with a good opportunity to get to the bottom of the truth.

Iran, even before the formation by other BRICS members of a group under this name, had a long history of interaction with them, which spanned several decades, and with some of these countries – several centuries, or even millennia. These relations developed against the backdrop of a changing geopolitical situation and mutual interests of the parties in various fields, including economics, energy and politics.

Since its creation at the beginning of the 21st century, the BRICS group has attracted the attention of Iran as a potential partner for cooperation. Interaction has developed primarily in trade, especially in the field of oil and gas, since Iran is known to be one of the largest energy producers in the world. The BRICS countries, in turn, are interested in diversifying their energy sources and strengthening energy security.

In the 2000s, relations between Iran and the BRICS countries deepened, especially those with Russia and China. These countries have become Iran's key trading partners, as well as important players in the development of its infrastructure and energy sector. Iran has also sought to strengthen ties with India and Brazil, especially in technology and agriculture.

For many years now, against the backdrop of increasing pressure from almost comprehensive sanctions from Western countries, Iran has been increasingly actively looking for ways to cooperate with other states, and here BRICS represents an attractive alternative to traditional Western

partners. In this context, Iran's participation in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), where the BRICS countries play a leading role, has acquired particular significance. In such a situation, Iran's entry into BRICS as a full member was a completely predictable, logical step which happened, as noted earlier, in January of this year.

Even before this event, the country's intellectual elite and Iran's political science community, both domestically and abroad, analyzed the consequences of this step, scrupulously highlighting its pros and cons. Based on this analysis, we will try to find out the attitude of Iranians towards issues related to BRICS.

Iran perceived the emergence of "new forces" (as the Iranians call them. – *E. R.*) represented by China and India, as well as the full return of Russia to the international arena and formation of BRICS by them, as a change in the balance of power in international affairs and an intensification of the trend towards the formation of a multipolar world.

Another distinctive feature of the process of "demanding change" initiated by BRICS is considered to be certain directions or nuances of the foreign policy of the main members of BRICS – China and Russia. For example, it is noted that "Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era" refers to the "Chinese Dream" by analogy with the "American Dream". With the creation of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the "One Belt, One Road" project, China shows its intention to strengthen its international position through cooperation with "new forces", inviting, for example, in 2017 Egypt, Tajikistan, Kenya and Mexico to the "BRICS Plus" project.<sup>3</sup>

A similar problem affected other states of the group, for example, Brazil. It spoke out in 2003 against the US's demand for a military base in Amazonia and worked hard to prevent the US from establishing a similar base in Colombia. Also in 2003, Brazil repeatedly opposed the US attack on Iraq in very strong terms. As for South Africa, a country that is called Africa's Gateway and that independently produces 23% of Africa's GDP, in recent years it has made a lot of efforts to maintain its dominance in the surrounding region and has successfully resisted the expansionist policies of the United States. It perceived BRICS as an anti-American organization.

The creation of BRICS showed the presence of a will to change the existing world order. At the first BRICS ministerial meeting in 2009 in Yekaterinburg, it was emphasized that "the Ministers once again confirmed that today's world order must be based on international law and strengthening the principle of multipolarity."<sup>4</sup>

Iranian analysts point out that Iran's membership in BRICS means cooperation with two countries with the largest population in the world, three nuclear states, two permanent members of the UN Security Council, the largest, in terms of territory, state, the first powers of Latin America and Africa, the second economy in the world and a number of other preferences, although the main political issue between Iran and BRICS remains the confrontation, albeit to varying degrees, with American monopolarity. It should probably be especially emphasized that all current BRICS

<sup>1</sup> *Esfandiary D., Tabatabai A.* Triple-Axis: Iran's Relations with Russia and China // *International Affairs*. 2018. № 94 (3). P. 509–528.

<sup>2</sup> *Vaez A.* Iran's Tangled Web of Foreign Relations // *Foreign Affairs*. 2019. № 98 (2). P. 86–97.

<sup>3</sup> For more information, see: [https://www.jmsp.ir/article\\_102465.html](https://www.jmsp.ir/article_102465.html) (accessed: 18.04.2024).

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

members, with the exception of Russia, are members or observers of the Non-Aligned Movement. Tehran believes that Iran's voice in BRICS will be louder, since the voice of Iran alone is the voice of half a percent of the world economy, and the voice of Iran being a member of BRICS is the voice of 27% of the world economy.

Speaking about the economic potential of BRICS, the authors emphasize that during the financial crisis of 2008, the importance of the organization increased many times over. Between 2008 and 2011, the growth rate of developed countries was 0.29% when the BRICS indicators were 6.87%. The economies of the member countries played the role of engine in ridding the world of this crisis and economic depression. This case showed that BRICS has the power to save humanity from such a crisis – the largest since 1930.<sup>1</sup>

However, the current world economic order is designed to please the United States and the West as a whole, which can be illustrated with one example. Despite all the indicators we've talked about, the BRICS members hold 11 percent of the voting power in the International Monetary Fund, while the US alone holds 17 percent. That is, within the framework of the Bretton Woods Institutions, the BRICS members are not assigned the very first roles at all.

Nevertheless, Iran's current relationship with BRICS is characterized by a desire for increased cooperation in various areas, including trade, investment, technology and education. Iran is interested in using the experience and resources of the BRICS countries to implement its economic and social projects, to strengthen its international position, as well as to create a multipolar world order and strengthen regional and global security.

In addition to economic and energy cooperation, Iran and the BRICS countries are also developing collaboration in the field of security and politics, striving for a more equitable international order. This convergence of interests contributes to deepening the dialogue between Iran and the BRICS group at various international platforms.

Iran seeks to strengthen and expand economic ties with the BRICS group, considering this cooperation as a key element of its foreign economic strategy. Iran's economic expectations of interaction with BRICS cover several key aspects.

Economics is the main area of cooperation between Iran and BRICS. Countries in the group are among Iran's major trading partners, with China and India accounting for a significant share of Iran's foreign trade. These states actively interact with Iran in the field of energy, including the import of oil and gas, as well as the development of infrastructure and technologies for the production and processing of hydrocarbons.<sup>2</sup>

Iran is interested in increasing the volume of mutual trade with the BRICS countries. This includes not only energy exports, but also the supply of Iranian goods and services in sectors such as agriculture, chemicals, engineering and tourism. In return, Iran seeks to import high-tech products, equipment and consumer goods from the BRICS countries.

The country is primarily interested in attracting foreign direct investment from the BRICS countries to develop its economy. Particular attention is paid to investments in in-

frastructure projects such as transport, energy and communications, as well as in high-tech industries, including petrochemicals, biotechnology and information technology. Iran hopes to use the investment to modernize its industry and increase its competitiveness in the global market.<sup>3</sup>

As part of its Belt and Road Initiative, China is actively investing in infrastructure projects in Iran, including railways, roads, ports and energy facilities. Russia and Iran are cooperating in the field of nuclear energy, inter alia within the framework of the project for the construction of the Bushehr nuclear power plant.<sup>4</sup>

Under international sanctions, Iran is interested in expanding financial cooperation with BRICS. This includes the ability of access to banking services, loans and investment funds, as well as the development of mechanisms for mutual settlements in national currencies to reduce dependence on the US dollar. Speaking in Johannesburg, Iranian President Raisi emphasized that his country supports the BRICS desire for de-dollarization and greater use of national currencies.<sup>5</sup> This strategy is very close to the heart of Iran. Cooperation within the BRICS New Development Bank could provide Iran with additional opportunities to finance infrastructure and development projects.<sup>6</sup>

"With Iran's membership in this group, most of the country's export problems will be solved through the huge market of member countries. We will also be able to solve many problems associated with the import of equipment..." "One of the other opportunities being opened up to us is to use the potential of the North-South transport corridor"<sup>7</sup>, notes one of Iran's specialized websites. With the launch of this corridor, Iran will have additional 20 billion US dollars in income.

Iran seeks cooperation with BRICS in the field of advanced technologies, including nuclear energy, space research, nanotechnology and information technology. Technological exchange and joint research projects can help to develop Iran's innovative potential and strengthen its scientific and technological cooperation with the BRICS countries.

In general, Iran's economic expectations from cooperation with BRICS are aimed at strengthening economic independence, diversifying sources of growth and integrating into the global economy. The successful development of economic relations with BRICS can contribute to the sustainable economic development of Iran and strengthen its position in the international arena.

In the political sphere, Iran views cooperation with BRICS as an important element of its strategy to strengthen its international position and counter pressure from the West. Iran's expectations from political interaction with BRICS include a number of aspects.

The country maintains a dialogue with the BRICS countries on issues of international security, regional stability and the fight against terrorism. Other member countries, in turn, advocate a fair solution to the issue of the Iranian

<sup>1</sup> For more information, see: [https://www.jmsp.ir/article\\_102465.html](https://www.jmsp.ir/article_102465.html) (accessed: 18.04.2024).

<sup>2</sup> *Esfandiary D., Tabatabai A.* Op. cit.

<sup>3</sup> *Koolae E., Zargarinejad G.* Iran and BRICS: A Realistic Appraisal of Iran's Foreign Policy in the Multipolar World // *Iranian Review of Foreign Affairs*. 2017. № 8 (1). P. 7–34.

<sup>4</sup> *Vaez A.* Op. cit.

<sup>5</sup> *Mahdi S. Z.* Economics and politics: What BRICS membership means for Iran. 2023. URL: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/world/economics-and-politics-what-brics-membership-means-for-iran/2977551> (accessed: 17.04.2024).

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> For more information, see: <https://mag.pouyanbroker.com/benefits-of-irans-membership-in-brics/> (accessed: 17.04.2024).



nuclear program and support efforts to resolve conflicts in the Middle East.

Supporting the idea of a multipolar world and striving for cooperation with BRICS in order to weaken the hegemony of the United States and its allies in the international arena is one of Iran's main goals. Iran expects that strengthening ties with BRICS will help to promote an alternative agenda in global politics and strengthen international cooperation based on mutual respect and sovereignty of states.<sup>1</sup>

Ensuring regional security and stability, especially in the Middle East, is another important goal of Iran. Iran hopes that BRICS will support its position on issues such as the fight against terrorism, conflict resolution in Syria, Iraq and Yemen, as well as on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.<sup>2</sup>

Iran counts on the support of the BRICS countries in the issue of peaceful uses of nuclear energy and protection of its right to develop a nuclear program in accordance with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). The Islamic Republic of Iran expects that BRICS will oppose unilateral sanctions and pressure from the United States in connection with its nuclear program.<sup>3</sup>

The desire for active participation in international organizations and forums together with BRICS, such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the Group of 77 and the Non-Aligned Movement, is the essence of another area of foreign policy of Iran, which expects that cooperation with BRICS will help to strengthen its position in these organizations and contribute to the promotion of joint initiatives in the international arena.<sup>4</sup>

In general, Iran views cooperation with BRICS as an important tool for strengthening its international status, countering external pressure and promoting its interests on the global stage.

Energy cooperation is central to Iran's relations with the BRICS group, given Iran's significant resources and the growing demand for energy in the BRICS countries.

In general, Iran views cooperation with BRICS in the energy sector as an important factor in strengthening its economic and political position, as well as a means of diversifying its energy markets and attracting investment in this sector.

Thus, cooperation between Iran and BRICS has significant potential in various fields, which opens up prospects for deepening interaction and implementing joint projects.

1. The energy sector remains one of the main areas of cooperation between Iran and BRICS, given the rich hydrocarbon reserves in Iran and the high demand for energy resources from the BRICS countries.

2. Expanding trade relations and attracting investment from the BRICS countries can help to diversify Iran's economy and strengthen its economic sovereignty. Cooperation may cover sectors such as agriculture, mechanical engineering, chemical industry, tourism and high-tech industries.

3. Iran has a strategic geographical location that can be used to develop transport corridors connecting the BRICS countries with the regions of the Middle East, Central Asia and Europe.

4. The exchange of knowledge and technology between Iran and the BRICS countries can contribute to the devel-

opment of scientific and technological potential and innovation. Possible areas of cooperation include joint scientific research, development of advanced topics in the field of information technology, biotechnology, nanotechnology and space research.

In general, the prospects for cooperation between Iran and BRICS cover a wide range of areas, which opens up opportunities for deepening interaction and implementing joint projects that contribute to the sustainable development and prosperity of all parties involved.

Along with this, although cooperation between Iran and the BRICS countries has significant potential, there are considerable obstacles and challenges that can create serious problems on the path of fruitful cooperation with the BRICS countries.

One of the main obstacles to Iran's cooperation with BRICS is the international sanctions imposed against Iran, especially by the United States. Sanctions limit Iran's access to international financial systems, impede trade and investment, and create risks for foreign companies doing business with Iran. Let's take a look at the opinions of Iranian experts:

"The accuracy of the Iranian claim that BRICS membership is a 'historic achievement' can be tested by how much foreign direct investment the country receives from member countries of the organization. Given the huge European and American sanctions imposed on Iranian banking and economic institutions, it is very difficult to imagine that public and private enterprises [of member countries] will be willing to risk their operations in the West."<sup>5</sup>

"Experience has also shown that once Iran is under pressure from fewer sanctions, the BRICS countries show more willingness to cooperate with Iran... In general, the prospect of enhanced cooperation with BRICS without sanctions is much greater than in a situation with sanctions. Therefore, in order to cooperate with BRICS, the general positioning should be the complete lifting of sanctions."<sup>6</sup>

"Strengthening economic ties with Europe will become the basis for maintaining balance in relations and absence of dependence on BRICS. If Iran is under EU sanctions, given the close cooperation of many BRICS members with the European Union, they will be less willing to cooperate with Iran."<sup>7</sup>

Despite common interests, there are political differences between Iran, positions of which are sometimes rigidly dictated by the conservative ruling majority operating with "revolutionary" rhetoric, and the BRICS countries on a number of regional and international issues. These differences can influence the depth and breadth of cooperation.

Differences in economic structures and levels of development between Iran and the BRICS countries may create difficulties in coordinating joint projects and mutual investments. In addition, competition for markets and resources may become an obstacle to cooperation in some areas.

In general, overcoming these obstacles and challenges will require coordinated efforts on the part of Iran and

<sup>1</sup> Koolae E., Zargarinejad G. Op. cit.

<sup>2</sup> Esfandiary D., Tabatabai A. Op. cit.

<sup>3</sup> Vaez A. Op. cit.

<sup>4</sup> Stuenkel O. Op. cit.

<sup>5</sup> Sariolghalam M. Will BRICS membership recast Iran's foreign policy? // Middle East Institute : [сайт]. 2023. URL: <https://www.mei.edu/publications/will-brics-membership-recast-irans-foreign-policy> (дата обращения: 18.04.2024).

<sup>6</sup> For more information, see: [https://www.jmsp.ir/article\\_102465.html](https://www.jmsp.ir/article_102465.html) (accessed: 18.04.2024).

<sup>7</sup> For more information, see: <http://irdiplomacy.ir/fa/news/2021985/> (accessed: 18.04.2024).

the BRICS countries, as well as flexibility and innovative approaches to cooperation.

And here each of us will think that at the beginning of the new millennium, Iran once again recalled its civilizational roots and, through the mouth of its President Sayyid Muhammad Khatami, put forward the idea of a "Dialogue of Civilizations" as opposed to Mr. Huntington's theory, and that humanity has no other way than to learn to talk to each other.

However, some time after the UN declared 2001 the Year of Dialogue of Civilizations, somewhat pessimistic assessments of the situation appeared stating that there were no real results towards the acceptance of these ideas.<sup>1</sup> Iran, despite the reshuffles in its governments, changing reformers to conservatives and vice versa, never forgot about its civilizational responsibilities and actively promoted this idea wherever possible. It seems that now, with the expansion of BRICS – a process that is far from over – there is

an opportunity to begin a dialogue among members of this organization representing diverse cultures and civilizations and adhering to the principles of multiculturalism and mutual respect. Considering that there are 40 states that have expressed interest in joining BRICS, the importance of such a dialogue will only increase. I hope that we will soon witness the kind of dialogue that humanity is waiting for.

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**O. Roqueplo<sup>2</sup>**

### BRICS+ AND HISTORY OF THE WORLD ORDER: CULTUROLOGICAL THINKING OF "TSARS OF THE WORLD"

The world will change its basis, we who were nothing will become everything.

*The International (French version)*

The International lyrics were of special importance for anti-colonial struggle. This struggle with majority of the world nations involved was carried out both against colonial seizures and military occupation and against the ideology that justified them, as well as against destructive cultural invasion. These anthem lyrics meant that colonized peoples identified themselves with the proletariat and were struggling for their place in the world. This was the third world with the Bandung conference having become the embodiment thereof.

2022 and flat refusal of Asian, African and Latin American countries from sanctions imposed on the Russian Federation, despite the demands and threats of the Euro-American world and *Homo euramericanus*, is likely to signify the end of the colonial era that began in the eighteenth century. Anti-colonial struggle is passing over to another stage, the stage of BRICS+: "We were everything, let's become everything again." Indeed, the history and memory of BRICS+ great peoples are that they remember that they were the leading world states before the colonial era. Understanding of BRICS+ position today first of all means studying of great historical cycles and, in particular, the history of the *world order*, a notion that is poorly understood

and poorly defined today. The world order will be considered here from the cultural point of view, that is not as a simple Anglo-Saxon legal and political concept, but as a very profound cultural, symbolic and even spiritual issue. Our hypothesis is that the group BRICS+ is an attempt to unite civilizing countries so as to restore the world order after 250 years of colonial chaos that have destroyed the essential cultural ties between states and peoples.

To begin this study, we offer first of all to characterize and determine the location of the historical era we have just come out of, and of that we will enter in 2022 (I). After that we will analyze traditional cultural visions of the world originating from the main BRICS+ countries and will evaluate their difference from the North Atlantic colonizing world, in order to demonstrate that only BRICS+ countries have a cultural potential to create real world order (II). Finally, we will consider the meaning of BRICS+ actions in relation to the cultural notion of the world order (III).

This is definitely a vast issue, and this is only the beginning of thinking and preliminary areas of research. The idea of D. S. Likhachov will serve as a guide for us in our attempt to comprehend fundamental nature of evident and, primarily, not evident cultural preconceptions that predetermine the behavior of nations and states with respect to each other.

#### The World We Knew Was Born As a Result of the Seven Years' War, and We Face the New Seventeenth Century

The monopolar world is not exclusively the result of the end of the USSR. We are citing a great text of Sun Yatsen, known as the speech in Kobe on Pan Asian world, to understand

<sup>1</sup> Попов В. В. Почему пробуксовывает диалог цивилизаций? // Вестник МГИМО–Университета. 2012. № 4 (25). С. 147–154.

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that the world we knew before 2022 today did not appear in 1991. In his speech in Kobe it is shown almost the same as in 1924. The Chinese president noted that the world is divided into two parts, between that what he called the World of Might and the World of Right. The World of Might is a colonizing world consisting of the West European countries headed by Great Britain and the USA that pursue the same policy and are raised in the same world. In opposition to them is the World of Right, which, according to the president, includes Asian countries that once formed part of Mongol Empire: China, Iran, Turkey, Afghanistan and the USSR, which, as Sun noted, broke from the colonizing Western Europe and came back into the fold of Asia in 1917. Sun adds Japan (by mistake) and Egypt (fairly) to the World of Right. Sun describes the world that was under threat of colonial conquests, both direct and indirect, and that was reshaped by them. That is why he refers to the World of Right, that is to the historical Chinese and Mongolian law, which was another way to organize the known world in accordance with traditional and long-term concepts. Hold that thought. In other words, the speech in Kobe continues to be relevant 100 years after it was written. Ethiopian war of 1935–36 differs little from wars in Iraq, Syria or Libya in the twenty first century.

Since the time of their total victory in the Seven Years' War in 1763, the British have laid down the groundwork for peace in India, which, unlike the Pyrenean empires, extended indirectly to the entire Planet. The British colonialism sometimes supported by other states has imposed its legal, economic and, first of all, cultural order wherever it came. A British man has never become acclimatized as Pyrenean people, and has never mixed, on the contrary, he imposed his own laws, rules and habits. He established what Likhachov called a "wall of disunity", the impenetrable cultural border that is a close companion of the very strong aggression of destruction.<sup>1</sup>

Colonialism destroyed all traditional political and cultural links that structured the rest of the world, in particular, very strong links that united great civilizational empires (Ottoman Empire, Iran, India, China) with peripheral states having common cultural origin (for example, the links between Ottoman pole and Sahara people; links between Chinese pole and Indo-China). These were not mere links of political vassalage, but a whole number of intellectual, religious and symbolic ties that made it possible for the nations to be well-informed about the world through the counting pole which provided the existential cultural and psychological stability for them.

The West European rationalism and positivism imposed by the injury of colonial seizures have ruined cultural guides of Asian and African peoples, and symbolic measurement of the world was washed out. As a matter of fact, for all these peoples the world appeared to be in a state of complete cultural chaos. Here is the world that Sun described to us in 1924. After 1945 this world basically remained unchanged, because the English colonialism was just transferred to the North American imperialism, that in fact was directly derived from it. Of course, USSR and then PRC tried to offer an alternative to such colonizing world. One often speak about bipolarity within the period from 1945 to 1990. USSR was a balancing state, a counterbal-

ance to the colonizing unipolar world rather than the second equal right pole, as it has always lacked commercial power which would support global leadership economically. From 1763 to 2022, the world remained structured as the Anglo-Saxon colonizing world, if not by form, then at least in substance and in the mental sphere. Official decolonization only meant that the former colonies were again integrated into the same colonizing structures with a slightly better status. It does not mean that the world structure suffered any drastic change.

This era ended in 2022. As in 1700, Russia has to make a choice, because it is between several worlds. The Western European cycle opened by Peter the Great in 1700 has just terminated, and a new cycle opens in 2022. This time Russia is likely to turn towards China, an idea Sun called to in 1924. However, resemblance between the world of 1700 and the world of 2024 is obvious all around the world. Great powers of the seventeenth century are making an impressive return to the global stage: Turkey, Iran, China, India and heirs of the luzo Spanish empire, that is Brazil, Argentina and Mexico.

### Multipolarity in Cultural Traditions of Former Empires: the Image of the "Tsars of the World"

In the 21st century, the speculations on multipolarity should be held on the other level and by models other than the UNO. At a deeper level it is necessary for us to bear in mind the sustainable models which, therefore, are rooted in the history and culture of peoples. Since ancient times quite a lot of civilizations have already thought in terms of the well-balanced multipolar worlds. Here are a few examples that will give us food for thought.

One of the most ancient models known to us is a Persian model. According to the ancient tradition, *in the palace of the Sasanian shah there was a separate room with four thrones: his own and one throne for each of three other sovereigns of the known world – the Roman emperor, the Chinese emperor and the Khazar (or Turkic) Khagan.*<sup>2</sup> It follows from these data that the Sasanian cultural and geopolitical thought was of the opinion that the world consists of four equal rights each of which is reigned by one tsar who is equal to the Persian one. Such vision stands in sharp contrast to ethnocentricity we got accustomed to in Western Europe. The Sasanian shahinshah not only recognized his tsars as theoretically equal to him and not only allocated places to them, but these tsars also represented the realms that were totally strange to the Iran civilization and were even enemies (especially the Romans). This means that the Persians, using the title of the Tsar of tsars, were able to unite other empires, other civilizations, other worlds, and imagine collegiality or even a kind of brotherhood among these emperors in ideal vision, as such emperors were to be able to sit together in kind mutual understanding. This is a bright example of conventional thinking, where real world meas-

<sup>1</sup> Лихачев Д. С. Два типа границ между культурами // Лихачев Д. С. Очерки по философии художественного творчества. СПб. : Русско-Балтийский информ. центр «БЛИЦ», 1996. С. 97–102.

<sup>2</sup> Grenet F. Religions du monde iranien ancien // Annuaire EPHE. Section des sciences religieuses. 2003. № 110 (2001–2002). P. 207–211 ; *Idem*. À propos de la restauration de la 'Peinture des Ambassadeurs' à Samarkand (c. 600). Retour sur une oeuvre majeure de la peinture sogdienne // Comptes rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-lettres, séance du 21 décembre 2018, à paraître 2020. P. 1847–1869 ; *Idem*. A Historical Figure at the Origin of Gesar of Phrom Frum Kesar, King of Kābul (737–745) // The Many Faces of King Gesar. Tibetan and Central Asian Studies in Homage to R. Stein / ed. by M. Kapstein, C. Ramble. Brill, 2022. P. 39–53.

urement and real multipolarity among the four idealized emperors are achieved.

Persian vision is not alone in that. It had a natural impact on the Arabian vision of the world. It is known that the Arabs traditionally treated peoples of the North (for example, the Turks) and the South (for example, the Indians) with contempt in the name of the climate theory. However, for instance, on the "Six Tsars" wall painting in Quseir Amra the Umayyad Crown prince is surrounded by basileus, Sasanian shah, Abyssinian Negus and the Spanish king Roderic. The other two tsars are obviously the maharaja Dahir and the Turkic Khagan. This is a family vision of the world, as the shah, basileus and Khagan are the ancestors the Crown prince lays claims to, and other sovereigns are shown as equal to them.<sup>1</sup> Ibn Haukal, the geographer, also agreed that the world consists of four empires: Iran (= Islamic world), Rome, India and China.<sup>2</sup> Thus, the Arabs of the classical era also thought of the world in a multipolar way, that is on a totality of the worlds, that are very different in terms of culture but equal by symbolic dignity.

Byzantine vision did not differ much and was equally multipolar in its substance. Byzantine tsars considered themselves the center of the world, however they always recognized the Persians and then the Arabs as equal to them. Since 900, they recognized as equal to them the German Roman Empire. They also recognized dignity of the Khazar khan and sent him the most valuable presents as to the other emperor, and took his princesses as wives.<sup>3</sup> The reason is simple: Byzantium was surrounded by other empires representing various civilizations but having the equivalent level of might and culture.

Mongolian vision of Genghis Khanids was completely independent and different from Byzantine, Iran and Arab ones. Mongol Empire made the nearest approach to becoming a real world or at least All-Eurasian empire. This empire thought of its great spaces not as of the monolithic structure but as a totality of various empires connected with genealogical links of brotherhood: Yuan Empire (Mongolia and China), Chagatai Empire (Central Asia), Ilkhan Empire (Iran), the Golden Horde Empire. This is a universal empire that is, therefore, a symbolic image of the whole world. This empire recognizes a well-organized internal pluralism. It goes without saying that there is a hierarchy among these structures: Yuan ranks above all, Iran depends on them directly, and Chagatai is in indirect dependence. However, at the other end of the Steppe the Golden Horde is taken as an independent, yet fraternal and equal state, and we also see a multipolar model here.<sup>4</sup> Of course, the dynastic and ethnic connection is of great importance here. But we shall see now that this concept has been preserved even without such links, in the symbolic and diplomatic vision of the successor states.

Let's take China as an example. We know that in 1385, under the rule of the Min dynasty, Mongolian ideas were transferred to the Chinese.<sup>5</sup> To date, it is important for us

that this concept gave birth to an idea in mind of the Chinese president Sun that, in spite of tremendous cultural differences, almost all great nations of Asia are a part of single historical world, and that they are simultaneously recognized by China as independent from it. This is a multipolar vision which is broad enough to include even Russia into the Chinese vision.

It appears from literature and works of Dmitry Sergeyevich Likhachov, that Ancient Rus was also aware of four tsars of the world representing different civilizations: the orthodox Grand Prince of Rus (whether the grand prince of Kiev or the grand prince of Vladimir and Moscow), the pagan and catholic Grand Duke of Lithuania, the orthodox tsar of Greece, the Islamic tsar of the Horde. Even in the Tale of Bygone Years, a fairy tale on the choice of religion by the Grand Prince Vladimir, we see spiritual ambassadors from four tsars offering religions: Islam from the Bulgarian khan, Judaism from the Khazar Khagan, Catholicism from the German emperor and the Pope, the Orthodox faith from basileus. Likhachov wrote: "Russia served as a huge bridge between nations. First of all, as a cultural bridge."<sup>6</sup> It is worth adding that the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (with Belarus being its today's successor) had similar concepts before its constitutional union with Poland in 1569 and even much later.

Finally, we will consider India. The Sasanian concept of the world's four tsars has supposedly come from India<sup>7</sup> or, it is likely to be the Indo-European one. Anyway, the four tsars of the world reflect four gods ruling the worlds, that is four Lokapalas.<sup>8</sup> Since the 12th century, the Northern India has been a powerful Islamic empire with dominating Turk and Afghans from Eastern Iran and Central Asia. Therefore, an absolutely multipolar vision of the world has been formed in India, as this Islamic empire could not ignore any other large Moslem empires, namely the Persian Empire, the Ottoman Empire and the Central Asian Empire from which Indian dynasties originated. It didn't mean, of course, that India lost its links with the civilizations of which it was a matrix: Indo-China, Insulinia and even China itself that was Buddhist in part. India could neither consider them barbarians nor ignore them. The Indian world was also quite ready to perceive the world in its entire complexity. At the beginning of the 20th century, the Indian nationalists viewed the great Afro-Asian states – the Ottoman Empire, Egypt, China and Japan – as equal to India, that is actually the members of the world tsars list.<sup>9</sup>

This is where the history paradox can be found: the globalized diplomatic and cultural system was built just by the states that didn't think in a multipolar way. Western Europeans are unipolar in terms of culture. In practice, these are the nations of the Far Western Eurasia, that is why they have no access to the center of the continent. Actually, the colonizing world is the North Sea nations: Franks and Saxons who are too far from the rest of the world to be threatened by it. The rest of the world is understood by us as other nearest civilizations: the Eurasian steppe, the Greek

<sup>1</sup> Grabar O. The painting of the six kings at Qusayr Amra // *Ars Orientalis*. 1954. № 1. P. 185–187; Grenet F. Religions du monde iranien ancien.

<sup>2</sup> Martinez-Gros G. La division du monde selon Idrisi // *Le partage du monde : Échanges et colonisation dans la Méditerranée médiévale* / eds. : M. Balard, A. Ducellier. P. : Éditions de la Sorbonne, 1988. P. 315–334.

<sup>3</sup> Grousset R. L'Empire des Steppes. Payot, 1965. P. 235.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. P. 341, note 3, 471, 478–479.

<sup>5</sup> Grousset R. L'Empire des Steppes. P. 533.

<sup>6</sup> Лихачев Д. С. Избранные труды по русской и мировой культуре. СПб. : СПбГУП. 2022. С. 19.

<sup>7</sup> Grenet F. Religions du monde iranien ancien.

<sup>8</sup> Vyasa K.-D. Mahabharata / transl. by K. M. Ganguli. Book 2 : Sabha Parva. Lokapala Sabhakhayana Parva. Section VII–XIII. 1884–1894.

<sup>9</sup> Keenleyside T. Nationalist Indian attitudes towards Asia: a troublesome legacy for post-Independence Indian foreign policy // *Pacific Affairs*. Summer 1982. Vol. 55, № 2. P. 210–230.

empire or the empire of the crescent, Moslem Africa. Of course, for example, Spain, Portugal and Sicily used to be Moslem countries and, therefore, represented what Likhachov called “a strip of communication”.<sup>1</sup> The Byzantians, Osmans and Mongols reached Hungary and Croatia. All countries that were on such a frontline had or some time will be able to restore non-colonizing cosmology. Behind the frontline, the countries being in direct contact with such external civilizations should have treated them with respect or even integrate them into their vision of the world: Venice, Napoli, Austrian monarchy, Poland and Grand Duchy of Lithuania (ancestor of Belarus) – they all fall within this category and were often also the “strips of communication”. But the most far located are the North Sea nations from France to Sweden which ignore Eurasia.

It is in this North Sea world which is also the world of Liberalism, Protestantism having emerged based on the empires of Charles the Great and Canute the Great, that colonialism originated and is still alive. It is the North-West that has dominated in the European thinking for the last 250 years and for the last twenty centuries it has wrongly pretended to the role of “Europe” by excluding, usurping or diminishing the far more critical role the Greek and Latin matrixes, that were considered “peripheral” and “degrading”. Yet, this Saxon and Frankish core forms now the basis of the European Union and gave birth to the USA under the French protection. Moreover, the North Sea peoples are in a situation that is very similar to that of the Japanese, who are also unipolar world supporters: historically, the Japanese knew only the Chinese world they were a part of. Inability of the North Sea peoples to imagine the notion of the true world order prevents them from understanding BRICS countries as well, which are still interpreted through merely colonizing and completely obsolete geopolitical concepts of Spykman and Mackinder (*Heartland, Rimland*) due to lack of cultural measurement and sufficient historical retrospective.<sup>2</sup>

*In a word, the issue on unipolarity and multipolarity is first of all the issue of cultural geography.* Nations with the traditional multipolar vision are the nations of Central Eurasia who keep in touch with each other in such a way. These are the nations that know and respect other civilizations. Nations with unipolar vision are the nations located on the outskirts of Eurasia who have no access to several other civilizations, that is why they ignore or negate them, and then, when facing such nations, they try to destroy them, starting from 1763. Thus, multipolarity and unipolarity are not only political issues. This is the issue of cultural attitude to reality of different civilizations.

### BRICS as the Union of Civilizing Forces

The Indian-Brazil initiative to reform the UN Security Council has become the decisive moment in occurrence of multipolarity. India and Brazil have been demanding to have a permanent representative in the UN Security Council since 1993. It is essential here that these two huge states have claimed for the permanent chairs not merely for the sake of own significance like other candidates, but as the representatives of their relevant “continents”, that is Latin America and Asia, and that they confirmed this meas-

urement by requiring that a representative state from Africa and a state from the Arabian and Moslem world join them in the UN Security Council with similar places. It is a radical deviation from the “extended European concert” represented by a group of five permanent members who only meet for the sake of their joint victory over the Axis in 1945 and, therefore, in the name of the net force legitimacy. Brazil and India actually offer nothing else than the world cosmization with creation of the new list of “tsars of the world” who meet because each of them represents one “world”, one civilization, that is something different from what they are and the power of raw materials (economic, demographic, military, diplomatic, etc.). This is a revolution. It is this initiative that is a driving power of BRICS union, with the support of the ancient “Eastern antipole” (RF and PRC).

It is worth noting that BRICS is in no way an anti-European union, for both RF and Brazil are demographic centers of attraction of the Orthodox-Slavonic and Catholic-Latin civilizations. They are the very European peoples who were despised by Napoleon (his citation: “The Spanish have never been Europeans, and Russians will never become Europeans”), and this reveals deep cultural logics of BRICS. Today, BRICS+ comprises Iran, Egypt, Arabia (and UAE) as Moslem world representatives.

Besides, cultural dimension of BRICS and BRICS+ is evident. The majority of members are civilizational matrixes, basic cultural world centers since ancient times. From the viewpoint of historical geopolitics, BRICS+ is almost the union of Mongol Empire (Russia, China, Iran) and Portuguese Empire (the Portugal king’s title: *the master of conquest, navigation and trade of Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia and India*, and Brazil). No one in the human history has ever seen such a great union of civilizations. This is logical: the whole world, except for the North Sea sailors, is anti-colonial. It is necessary to develop anticolonialism as the general cultural movement.

On the one hand, it is essential to reorganize the links between members of the common civilization, on the other hand, one should make bridges between civilizations. Such links are primarily cultural and human, symbolic ones. PRC was not mistaken when, from the very start of the “New Silk Road” project, it remembered that the Pakistan-China Axis is a historical axis of Buddhism. It is a deadly mistake not to respect the symbolic dimension. The extremists’ attempts to rebuild the Caliphate are related to the fact that other groups stay out of this greatest symbol that is important for a billion of people. BRICS+ should occupy this symbolic and human dimension and become a union of the world cultural pillars. Historically, taming and making the power civilized took the form of symbolic pomposity, legally spiritual (“Right” of Sun Yatsen) and cultural theories that not for 50 years but for several centuries provided for consistency of the (regional) worlds with a civilizational matrix and not just a great power being in the center of each of them.

1,400 years later, BRICS+ countries have not gone so far from six tsars of the world depicted on the walls of Quseir Amra. India, Iran and Ethiopia are still here, and Brazil has grown from the kingdom of Roderic through Portugal. Russia is a successor of Byzantium, China is an heir of Turkic Khaganate, Arabia is a successor of the Umayyads. It seems as if BRICS+ group is rediscovering more or less deliberately the very distant history that the North Sea sailors and Japan have never known.

<sup>1</sup> Лихачев Д. С. Два типа границ между культурами.

<sup>2</sup> Meena K. BRICS: an explanation in critical geography. URL: <https://www.scielo.br/j/cint/a/zQFgTjPCLDjbTgR3p5PzQ5R/> (accessed: 18.04.2024).



J. Sapir<sup>1</sup>

## HOW COULD THE BRICS (AND THE BRICS+) ANSWER THE DEMAND OF A CHANGE IN GLOBAL INSTITUTIONS AND WHAT COULD BE THE CONSEQUENCES

The BRIC grouping's first formal summit was held in Yekaterinburg on 16 June 2009 nearly 15 years ago. Attended to this summit Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva for Brazil, Dmitry Medvedev for Russia, Manmohan Singh for India and Hu Jintao for China. Few were those who understood that this event was to be a pivotal one. The summit's focus was on improving the global economic governance<sup>2</sup>, on reforming financial institution – remember we were then in the middle of a global financial crash, the “subprime crisis” and improving co-operation between the 4 countries.

The 16th summit will take place this October in Russia. Will gather then ten members and many more candidates. This is a proof that the BRIC, becoming the BRICS in 2011 and then the BRICS+ on January 1st this year, have become major a player in the global economy. But such a player is a collective one and it is attracting around it a large number of countries united by their dissatisfaction with the way global institutions, dating back from Bretton Woods or the Cold War, are run. Could the BRICS+ answer these demands and could set an improved or even a completely new set of rules? And, even more important how global institutions could and would be reshaped by BRICS+ influence or direct action?

### The rise of the BRICS

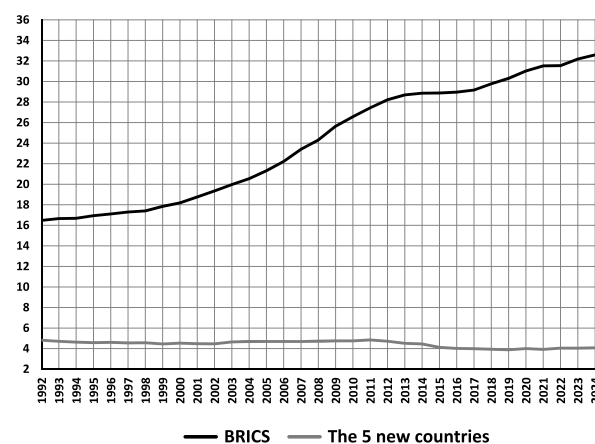
Two decades have passed since the acronym BRIC – Brazil, Russia, India, China – was brought into our popular vernacular by Jim O'Neill, an economist at Goldman Sachs. His influential paper, entitled ‘Building Better Global Economic BRICs’<sup>3</sup>, analyzed the spectacular economic growth this group of countries were set to experience, and the implications of these future trends for international political economy. The 2009 meeting was in fact the conclusion of a process that begun in 2006 alongside the UN General Assembly. During these fateful 3 years, the world had been confronted to major a financial crisis, one that neither the USA nor the IMF could tame and even control.<sup>4</sup> Retrospective-

ly, it is clear that sparked the willingness of the four countries to try to organize a better governance system.<sup>5</sup> In 2011, South Africa joined this country grouping as an economic outperformer in the Global South – an emerging economy and a young democracy – taking the BRICs to BRICS, where the ‘S’ now stood for its newest member.

With this addition, the BRICS countries accounted for 26% of the global landmass and a total of global GDP (in PPP) going from 25.6% in 2009 to 32.2% by end 2023.

Figure 1

Share of BRICS in world GDP (PPP) and of the 5 new countries adhering on January 1st, 2024



Source: IMF

While sceptics and cautious enthusiasts variously described the BRICS as a kind of ‘loose association,’ a ‘Potemkin village’<sup>6</sup>, or a ‘club of coincidence’<sup>7</sup>, this grouping has considerably grown in influence. It undoubtedly comprised of countries with common economic aspirations and similar ideas on the type of multilateralism and shifts in global political economy that would be required to achieve them. It is these underlying economic aspirations that have served to reinvigorate the flow of capital within and across BRICS countries amidst a financing vacuum within a post-financial crisis world. As a matter of fact, BRICS expanded, attracting more and more countries. In 2023, at the 15th summit, the organization decided to admit 6 new countries. Even if only five accepted (for political reasons, Argentina declined the invitation) BRICS transformed into BRICS+ by January 1st, 2024 with a common GDP (in PPP) of 36.2%. The BRICS became the equal of the G-7, and the BRICS+ closed the gap with the “collective West”.

Internationale Politik und Gesellschaft. 2009. № 1. P. 27–44.

<sup>5</sup> Nayyar D. BRICS, developing countries and global governance // Third World Quarterly. 2016. № 37 (4). P. 575–591.

<sup>6</sup> Pomeranz W. Why Russia needs the BRICS // Global Public Square. 2013. URL: <https://globalpublicsquare.blogs.cnn.com/2013/09/03/why-russia-needs-the-brics>.

<sup>7</sup> Saran S. India's contemporary plurilateralism // The Oxford Handbook of Indian Foreign Policy / eds: D. E. Malone, C. R. Mohan, S. Raghavan. Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2015.

<sup>1</sup> Professor of Economics at the Higher School of Social Sciences (Paris, France), Director of the Center for Industrialization Research CEMI-EHESS, Visiting Professor of the Department of General Economic Theory at the Moscow School of Economics Lomonosov Moscow State University, foreign member of the RAS, Dr. Sc. (Economics). Author of a large number of scientific publications, including: “Economic changes in the USSR in 1941–1985”, “Work and workers in the USSR”, “Towards the economic theory of heterogeneous systems – the experience of studying a decentralized economy”, “Russian Transformation – 20 years later” (co-author), “Sovereignty, Democracy, the secular state”, “The effectiveness of integration processes: an innovative assessment method”, “The relationship between monetary policy and economic development in modern Europe: problems and possible solutions”, “Has the creation of the euro area become an oncological disease for the European Union?”, etc. Member of the editorial Board of the journal “Economics of Industry” (Moscow). Scientific advisor to a number of organizations and programs (European Commission, TACIS, PHARE, etc.).

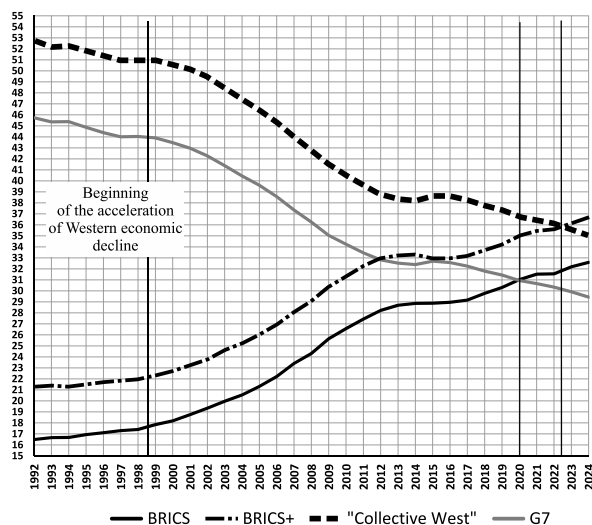
<sup>2</sup> Petropoulos S. The emergence of the BRICS – Implications for global governance // Journal of International and Global Studies. 2013. № 4 (2). P. 37–51.

<sup>3</sup> O'Neill J. Building better global economic BRICs // Global Economics Paper Series. 2001. № 66. URL: <https://www.goldmansachs.com/insights/archive/building-better.html>.

Sapir J. From Financial Crisis to Turning Point. How the US ‘Subprime Crisis’ turned into a worldwide One and Will Change the World Economy //

Figure 2

Share of BRICS, BRICS+ vs ones of the G7 and "collective West" in world GDP (in PPP)



Source: IMF.

In the period that followed, it was clear that “globalization” was in deep crisis.<sup>1</sup> The BRICS became an aspirational bloc with its own internal dynamics: they held yearly summits, had diplomatic ambitions, made commitments to large-scale infrastructure projects within their national boundaries as well as transnational ones in their regions. They flexed their economic muscle by establishing a new lending institution – the New Development Bank that admitted countries not yet BRICS members<sup>2</sup> – and challenging the hegemony of European and North American countries in international finance. It is these underlying economic aspirations that have served to reinvigorate the flow of capital within and across BRICS countries amidst a financing vacuum within a post-financial crisis world. In 2017, nearly a decade after the 2008 financial crisis, the BRICS accounted for 19% of global investment inflows.<sup>3</sup> Much of these financial flows have been channeled into capital-intensive infrastructure projects.

These countries, however, had been undergoing dramatic transformation in their political-economic structure since the 1990s. A common denominator across the heterogeneous economic development experiences of these countries to their position as high-performers has been how the state has actively made policy interventions for resource mobilization, trade policies, public procurement, the fostering of public demand and the provision of financial support.<sup>4</sup> The developmental role of the state has taken different forms in the BRICS countries.

<sup>1</sup> Crisis of Globalization: The new context and challenges for national economies // Contemporary Global Challenges and National Interests: the 15th International Likhachov Scientific Conference, May 14–15, 2015 / ed. A. S. Zapesotsky. SPb.: SPbUHSS, 2015. P. 142–145.

<sup>2</sup> New Development Bank (NDB). NDB admits Egypt as new member: Press Release on 29th December 2021. URL: [https://www.ndb.int/press\\_release/ndb-admits-egypt-as-new-member](https://www.ndb.int/press_release/ndb-admits-egypt-as-new-member).

<sup>3</sup> Garcia A., Bond P. Amplifying the contradictions: The centrifugal BRICS // Social Register. 2019. № 55. P. 223–246.

<sup>4</sup> Santiago F. The role of industrial policies in the BRICS economic integration process // Inclusive and Sustainable Development Working Paper Series. 2020. № 1. UNIDO, Research, Statistics and Industrial Policy Branch. URL: <https://www.unido.org/api/opentext/documents/download/16531301/unido-file-16531301>.

### Are BRICS+ serious a source of contest of the Western domination on global governance?

The emergence of the BRICS as an alternative force to the West has ignited a debate within the discipline of international political economy on the nature of the group’s rise within global governance. There is no doubt that this emergence took place between 2011 and 2021<sup>5</sup>, and had been exacerbated first by the COVID-19 crisis and then by geopolitical events since February 2022. But problems leading to this situation clearly predated these crisis.<sup>6</sup>

The place of the BRICS within global governance has sparked two important group of research. One discusses the role of the BRICS in transforming the world order<sup>7</sup> and argues that, through interaction, the BRICS members have developed layers of collective identity as emerging powers<sup>8</sup>, and examines how this identity affects the role of the BRICS in global governance.<sup>9</sup> One important point is to understand why the creation of the G-20 has not prevented the BRICS development.<sup>10</sup> In this group of research, one can find that the BRICS are operating now on an international level within a rules-based framework – that is, global governance – whereby states seek to achieve collective action through a common understanding of a set of rules, but an understanding which is not necessarily shared by Western countries.<sup>11</sup> Rather than focusing on which states are dominant nations within the international hierarchy or on the international dynamics that drive the growth in power of individual states, this group of research focuses on how the BRICS are progressively changing the rules and norms of the system.<sup>12</sup> Much of the literature focuses on how the rise of the BRICS challenges the dominant western concept of international organizations.

But there is too a second group of scholars that has examined the BRICS’s role in global governance. They usually consider their ascent as a direct challenge to the current international order. This group focuses on the domestic sources of the BRICS nations’ preferences regarding global governance, which allows for the assessment of the heterogeneity of and differences among the BRICS countries. It is clear that the BRICS push their common interests, such as improving bargaining power at the multilateral level or securing access to international markets.<sup>13</sup> However,

<sup>5</sup> Sapir J. La Démondialisation (new publishing, in an updated format). P.: Le Seuil, 2021.

<sup>6</sup> Sapir J. Fin d’un cycle de mondialisation et nouveaux enjeux économiques // La Revue Internationale et Stratégique. 2008. № 72 (Hiver 2008/09). P. 92–107.

<sup>7</sup> Van Noort C. The Construction of Power in the Strategic Narratives of the BRICS // Global Society. 2019. № 33 (4). P. 462–478.

<sup>8</sup> Larionova M., Shelepov A. BRICS, G20 and Global Economic Governance Reform // International Political Science Review. 2021. Vol. 43 (4). URL: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/01925121211048297#bibr24-01925121211048297>; Thakur R. How Representative are BRICS? // Third World Quarterly. 2014. № 35 (10). P. 1791–1808.

<sup>9</sup> Mielniczuk F. BRICS in the Contemporary World: Changing identities, converging interests // Third World Quarterly. 2013. № 34 (6). P. 1075–1090.

<sup>10</sup> Schirm S. A. Global Politics are Domestic Politics: A societal approach to divergence in the G20 // Review of International Studies. 2013. № 39 (3). P. 685–706.

<sup>11</sup> Luckhurst J. The Shifting Global Economic Architecture. Decentralizing Authority in Contemporary Global Governance. N. Y.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.

<sup>12</sup> Kirton J. Explaining the BRICS Summit Solid, Strengthening Success // International Organisations Research Journal. 2015. № 10 (2). P. 1–29.

<sup>13</sup> Hopewell K. The BRICS – Merely a Fable? Emerging power alliances in global trade governance // International Affairs. 2017. № 93 (6). P. 1377–1396.

most importantly, they push for a multipolar world order – and they could do if we consider their economic weight<sup>1</sup> – and then oppose, either implicitly or explicitly the attempt of the US government and of the “collective West” to set the rules and to define what is to be the global governance.<sup>2</sup> If we agree with this second group of scholars, we then have to highlight the autonomy of each BRICS nation in developing coalitional behavior and a coherent strategy.<sup>3</sup> However, the nation’s preferences approach to the BRICS does not fully develop an understanding of the BRICS as a group when limited to the formal frameworks offered by membership. And, quite clearly, the question of measuring the empowerment of international organizations, be they Western or BRICS produced arise.<sup>4</sup> Still, the real capacity of the BRICS to reshape global institutions is a question mark.<sup>5</sup>

Disaffection with the current global institutions is quite clear.<sup>6</sup> Even the World Bank doesn’t escape to critics.<sup>7</sup> The Western bias in Bretton Woods institutions is still obvious and anger countries from the global South.<sup>8</sup> The long story of badly designed interventions, of destructive conditionality since the end of the 1970’s till the 2000 is too much alive in countries of the global South to let them accept without more than a nod the domination of these institutions. Even some regional institutions, like the Inter-American Development bank<sup>9</sup>, because the US influence on them, are suspiciously seen by developing countries.

What is at stake clearly is a replacement of the Washington consensus<sup>10</sup>, and of the post-Washington consensus to allow for the development of emerging countries.

### What would be the BRICS results?

In the end the first group of scholars here quoted focuses too much on the game itself and doesn’t take in consideration the possibility of a radical change coming from the collective BRICS action. In the same time the second group concentrates probably too much on states’ positions within the game and the areas of the game where they have increased their influence. However, there clearly is a missing view of the future situation. As a matter of fact, the concept of ‘changing the game’ has not been examined by either group.

This situation clearly leaves a gap in the analysis. If the BRICS really challenge the dominant rules and norms in international organizations, and we are seeing an evolution toward this direction, this should lead to a foundational change in the rules and norms that underpin the game. Could this change be accepted by the “collective West”? is another story and one quite important to be told. Could the BRICS, and now the BRICS+, be able to attract enough countries on this position to have in hands such a majority of countries that the “collective West” will have no other option than to agree with these changes is still to be seen.

If the BRICS are attempting to change the game itself, the BRICS, as a group in global governance must fight for a cultural hegemony on these matters. They should too be launching clear innovations – either through a restructuring of the rules and norms of current international organizations, or through the creation of new international organizations whose rules and norms reflect the identities of the BRICS. A new approach to structural power is required in order to fill this gap in the research.

But one can ask the question if the BRICS would not be the shielded space where a new dominant country could safely grow.

It is quite clear that securing regional leadership and increasing global standing are critical aspects of the rise of the BRICS. But, in the development of the BRICS one can have too an imperative of reciprocal caution. The BRICS can be seen as a group that prevents any single member of that group from becoming a dominant nation.<sup>11</sup> And this is quite understandable. Countries angered by the single country domination of the USA are to be wary of the replacement of this rule by another single country rule. To some extent we can say that the BRICS are potentially “Gaullist” in their approach as they are as opposed to a single country “hegemony” as was the late General de Gaulle in the 1960’s. But what has been a project of a lone country, France, transitioning from a “great power” to a middle-power status, is now achieved by an alliance of countries.

Will we end with a set of global institutions evolving from a Western domination to a more balanced situation, with countries from the “Global South” being able to make their voices and interests acknowledged, or will we end with the Western set of institution completely replaced by a new one originating from the BRICS or, will we end with two sets of non-global institutions with a radical division in two blocs?<sup>12</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Noelke A., Brink T., Claar S., May C. Domestic Structures, Foreign Economic Policies and Global Economic Order: Implications from the rise of large emerging economies // *European Journal of International Relations*. 2015. № 21 (3). P. 1–30 ; Stephen M. Rising Powers, Global Capitalism and Liberal Global Governance: A historical materialist account of the BRICS challenge // *European Journal of International Relations*. 2014. № 20 (4). P. 912–938.

<sup>2</sup> Lavenex S., Krizic I., Serrano O. EU and US Regulatory Power Under Strain? Emerging countries and the limits of external governance // *European Foreign Affairs Review*. 2017 № 22. P. 1–17 ; Stephen M. Emerging Powers and Emerging Trends in Global Governance // *Global Governance*. 2017. № 23 (3). P. 483–502.

<sup>3</sup> Yang Xiao A. Theorizing the BRICS / ed. Xing Lin // *The International Political Economy of the BRICS*. Abingdon : Routledge, 2019. P. 37–56.

<sup>4</sup> Heldt E., Schmidtke H. Measuring the Empowerment of International Organizations: The evolution of financial and staff capabilities // *Global Policy*. 2017. № 8. P. 51–61.

<sup>5</sup> Hooijmaaijers B. China, the BRICS, and the Limitations of Reshaping Global Economic Governance // *Pacific Review*. 2019. № 34 (1). P. 29–55.

<sup>6</sup> Harrigan J., Wang C., El-Said H. The Economic and Political Determinants of IMF and World Bank Lending in the Middle East and North Africa // *World Development*. 2006. № 34 (2). P. 247–270.

<sup>7</sup> Humphrey C. The Politics of Loan Pricing in Multilateral Development Banks // *Review of International Political Economy*. 2014. № 21 (3). P. 611–639.

<sup>8</sup> Humphrey C. Developmental Revolution or Bretton Woods Revisited? The prospects of the BRICS New Development Bank and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. Overseas Development Institute Working Paper. 2015, Apr. № 448. URL: <https://cdn.odi.org/media/documents/9615.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup> See: Inter-American Development Bank Report on the Ninth General Increase 2010 // Resources of the Inter-American Development Bank. Washington, D.C. : Board of Governors and Inter-American Development Bank. 2020. Capital Stock and Voting Power. URL: <https://www.iadb.org/en/about-us/capital-stock-and-voting-power>.

<sup>10</sup> Sapir J. Le consensus de Washington et la transition en Russie: histoire d’un échec // *Revue Internationale de Sciences Sociales*. 2000. № 166, Déc. P. 541–553.

<sup>11</sup> Beeson M., Zeng J. The BRICS and Global Governance: China’s contradictory role // *Third World Quarterly*. 2018. № 39 (10). P. 1962–1978.

<sup>12</sup> The BRICS, Global Governance, and Challenges for South-South Cooperation in a Post Western World / N. Duggan, B. Hooijmaaijers, M. Rewizorski [et al.] // *International Political Science Review*. 2021. Dec. Vol. 43, iss. 4. URL: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/01925121211052211>.

A. V. Shershukov<sup>1</sup>

## TRADE UNION SOLIDARITY: HISTORY AND MODERN TIMES

One of the issues the trade unions of Russia have to deal with today refers to the issue of international solidarity. If we start from afar, originally, already starting from the 19th century, the trade unions specially emphasized mutual assistance when they originated. Including – and in the first places – international mutual assistance. The “proletariat having no Fatherland” was not always (in contrast to the Bolsheviks) emphasized. Ultimately, both the English and French trade unions had their Fatherland. The Russian trade unions also had it. Just at a certain stage, the inner contradictions between Labour and Capital in Russia were brought into a force format for resolving contradictions. And – if we are fighting for the just remuneration for labour – we are looking for all allies who can help us. If there are no venues for talks, if there are no proper employment and labour laws, if troops are called immediately against protesting people instead of talks, should anyone support the demands being just in their essence? Thus the concept of international solidarity was formed. It based on the statement that if workers’ labour lights were infringed in a country, the workers from other countries would be ready to provide them the required support. The concept of international solidarity phrased like that already in the time of Karl Marx has been functioning till now. With various degrees of efficiency. In the early 20th century, after the October Revolution and the start of the Civil War, we witnessed the coordinated efforts of the Western trade unions in limitations of military supplies to fight Soviet Russia. Surely, that was not just a reaction to the military conflict of countries but a giant social experiment the implementation of which was launched over a giant space. From the point of view of rights and documentarily fixed guarantees for the workers – legal changes, it was a breakthrough to a more just future. It is fairly natural that watching the practical implementation of the demands put forward by the Western trade unions for many years, the said trade unions in fact supported the Soviet state and its trade unions by their actions.

World War II became the next stop on the way of international solidarity. It is no secret that one of the ideological mindsets of the Soviet society before the war began was: “the German proletariat will turn their bayonets away.” That is, the class unity at the time of an armed conflict will be the basis for “turning the imperialist war into a civil war” (to remind you the Bolsheviks’ slogans during World War I) and putting the end to the conflict. This did not happen. The overwhelming majority of German workers really supported Hitler and ignored proverbial international solidarity. The USSR had to manage as the states at war usually managed – putting the economy on a war time footing and military operations.

The post-war time made adjustments in military and economic blocs. As well as the international trade union setup. The Warsaw Treaty Organization originated in paral-

lel with the NATO bloc formation (it sounds very interesting now – the Warsaw Treaty!), similar associations of trade unions of various countries appeared as well. The original association of trade unions that declared supranational solidarity, the General Federation of Trade Unions, split soon after it was created. The American, English and partly French trade unions set up the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. The political interest was put in the first place instead of the “class interest”. There was a division, and according to George Orwell, there were trade unions “more equal” and more expecting that “class support”. However, it was not determined by the degree of the progressive nature of the labour standards, the level of worker’s protection or defenselessness but rightness or wrongness of ideological concepts. This division lasted till the 1990s.

The new format of the trade union association was called to life by the break-up of the social projects’ confrontation related to the USSR disintegration. In fact, the following was said: the economic and social rules had been set forth in the world, and the organizations fighting for the workers’ rights should unite to be more efficient and carry on discussions with the global counter-agents. The emphasis of discussions was transferred to the International Labour Organization, OECD and other conference venues. As they say, “size matters”. The International Trade Union Confederation that originated as the association of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, a number of other world trade union centers, and separate national structures, has become the real united global venue to discuss and resolve trade union issues at the supranational level. First, international trade union secretariats became elements of the international trade union network, followed by international trade union sector associations influencing the supranational sector “decision taking centers” meaning transnational corporations or those lobbying changes in the Conventions and Recommendations of the International Labour Organization (and that finally had an impact on the domestic legal framework).

Thus the period of globalization took place. There were no problems with the manifestation of trade union solidarity on the international scene at that time, at least at the declaration level. However, the launching of the Special Military Operation seriously changed the state of affairs.

The Russian trade unions absolutely unexpectedly found out that the armed conflict in which trade unions from various countries should at least proceed from the same “class interests” listening to the arguments of the sides of the conflict, does not suppose that. There was a very clear division into the countries unconditionally and univocally blaming Russia and trade unions of the countries... that in their time had been the victims of foreign manipulations and consequently were better seeing into such formally democratic cries and calls. One can understand when emotions affect the behaviour of a crowd. But a structure – and a supranational one even more so – should be more responsible in its approach to assessments. This did not happen. Support of one side and ignoring the opinion of the other side became the reason for the suspension

<sup>1</sup> Deputy Chairman of the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia, Editor-in-Chief of the “Solidarnost” Central Trade Union Newspaper. Chairman of the All-Russian Political Party “Union of Labor” (2012–2020). Author of the books: “Russia: Trade Unions and Workers’ Organizations” (1991, 1993), “Congress of Russian Communities and Alexander Lebed” (1996), “Trade Union Ideology” (2012, 8 reissues), “Brief History of Russian Trade Unions” (2020), “Trade Union Ideology 2.0” (2022).

of the Federation's of Independent Trade Unions of Russia membership in the International Trade Union Confederation.

At the same time, the international association of countries in the BRICS format goes on rather vigorously. Several countries are already on the threshold and several dozens of countries are really considering such a format of cooperation. It is fairly probable that the common economic interests of the BRICS states will bring about the uniting of trade unions on this platform. It is still unclear how much and

how thoroughly our Western "partners" will lower the iron curtain in cooperation of trade unions... However, the issue of international solidarity of workers is definitely reviewed now not only from the point of view of just labour standards and guarantees. In a way, the tragedy of the situation is that we are viewing Solidarity becoming a pawn of political decisions and ideological choices. There is no doubt that after some time national trade unions will again unite in an organization at an international level. But the form of this unity is still unclear.

**M. V. Shmakov<sup>1</sup>**

## THE GLOBAL TRADE UNION MOVEMENT IN THE NEW MULTIPOLARITY

Unipolarity is a type of world order in which power is concentrated in one centre – the hegemon. The collapse of the USSR and the socialist camp at the end of the last century meant the collapse of the bipolar system of international relations with its norms and rules.<sup>2</sup> For a while, the US remained the only superpower and was able to solve international problems at its own discretion.

Multipolarity implies the presence of several poles of power in the world, which are the most powerful powers. Multipolarity is an objective reflection of the trends of world development. Its foundation is the growth of economic, military and political potential of non-Western powers and the weakening of the US position as a global leader.

British expert David Blagden describes this changing international reality quite comprehensively. He argues that the system of international relations is returning to multipolarity, i. e. the coexistence of several great powers. The scientist explains the phenomenon of multipolar world formation by the shift of economic potential from the West

to the East, to new industrial centres. From the researcher's point of view, the new multipolarity is likely to include great powers of different levels. In his opinion, the first-order countries should include the United States, China and partly India. They are followed in the following order by Russia, Brazil, Japan, the UK, Germany and France.<sup>3</sup>

American researchers Alexander Cooley and Daniel Nexon argue that the economic growth of the People's Republic of China, the creation by Russia and China of an alternative order of a number of regional institutions, and the loss of the US "monopoly on the patronage" of small states contribute to the fading of US hegemony in world politics and changes in the international order. In this regard, multipolarity is considered as one of the possible scenarios of the future.<sup>4</sup>

A similar view is held by Hugh De Santis, a former high-ranking US State Department official and now a professor of international security policy. He argues that in the emerging multipolar world, the United States will play the role of one of several great powers that determine the structure and rules of international politics, but will no longer be the sole arbiter.<sup>5</sup> A number of researchers from Russia<sup>6</sup>, South Africa<sup>7</sup>, Italy<sup>8</sup>, and Pakistan<sup>9</sup> agree with the fundamental position that the decline of US hegemony and its relationship with the world developing towards multipolarity.<sup>10</sup>

The main reason for the emerging shifts in the realisation of the new reality is primarily related to the consequences of the systemic crisis in the world.

<sup>1</sup> Member of the State Council of the Russian Federation, Chairman of the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of SPbUHSS. Author of publications on social and labor relations, social policy, theory and practice of the labor and trade union movement, including the books "Trade Unions of Russia on the Threshold of the 21st Century", "No Victory Without a Fight!", "For Dignified Labor", "Trade Union News Through the Prism of Humor" (co-authored); "Fight and Win", "Our Struggle", "Anthology of Trade Union Thought" (co-authored); training manuals for trade unionists and activists "Conflicts in Labor Collectives" (co-authored), "Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia in a Changing Society", "Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia in Questions and Answers"; chapter "Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia" in the book "15 Years of the General Confederation of Trade Union: a Look into the Future", and others. Coordinator of the Trade Union Side of the Russian Trilateral Commission on Regulating Social and Labor Relations between All-Russian Trade Union Associations, All-Russian Employer Associations, and the Government of the Russian Federation. Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Professor Emeritus of the Academy of Labor and Social Relations, President of the Academy of Labor and Social Relations Institute of Trade Union Movement. Member of the Board of the Free Economic Society of Russia, Member of the International Union of Economists, National Civil Committee for Interaction with Law Enforcement, Legislative and Judicial Bodies, Member of the Central Headquarters of the public movement "People's Front 'For Russia'", and others. Honorary President of the General Confederation of Trade Unions. Awarded the Orders of Friendship, "Badge of Honor", "For Merit to the Fatherland" II, III, IV class, Medal "In Commemoration of the 850th Anniversary of Moscow", the Golden Badge of Honor "Public Recognition", Certificate of Merit of the Government of the Russian Federation, and others. Professor Emeritus of SPbUHSS.

<sup>2</sup> See: Солуянов В. С. Концепция многополярности: многообразие подходов и интерпретаций // Вестник Российского университета дружбы народов. Сер. «Политология». 2021. Т. 23. № 3. С. 424–445.

<sup>3</sup> Солуянов В. С. Op. cit.

<sup>4</sup> Cooley A., Nexon D. Exit from Hegemony: The Unraveling of the American Global Order. Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2020; Cooley A., Nexon D. Why Populists Want a Multipolar World // Foreign Policy. 2020. URL: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/04/25/populists-multipolar-world-russia-china> (accessed: 20.04.2024).

<sup>5</sup> De Santis H. The Right to Rule: American Exceptionalism and the Coming Multipolar World Order. Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2021.

<sup>6</sup> Супома Н. М., Мохоров Г. А. Полицентризм в контексте глобальной трансформации // Инновационные технологии нового тысячелетия: сб. ст. Междунар. науч.-практ. конф. 2016. Т. 3. С. 170–175.

<sup>7</sup> Rapanyane B. M. The new world [dis] order in the complexity of multipolarity: United States of America's hegemonic decline and the configuration of new power patterns // Journal of Public Affairs. 2020. e2114. DOI: 10.1002/pa.2114.

<sup>8</sup> Valli V. The American Economy from Roosevelt to Trump. L.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.

<sup>9</sup> Muzaffar M., Yaseen Z., Rahim N. Changing Dynamics of Global Politics: Transition from Unipolar to Multipolar World // Liberal Arts and Social Sciences International Journal. 2017. Vol. 1, № 1. P. 49–61. DOI: 10.47264/idea.lassij/1.1.6.

<sup>10</sup> Солуянов В. С. Op. cit.



It is hard to deny that Europe and the world have faced in recent years not only cyclical financial and economic shocks, but something broader and deeper, namely a systemic crisis. It is shaking the foundations of neoliberal concepts, which are characterised by the absolutisation of unrestricted market relations and a clear underestimation of the role of state regulation in the socio-economic sphere.

The population's dissatisfaction with the course of the Western ruling circles aimed at reducing social expenditures, the ineffectiveness of their measures to combat increased unemployment and other problems of modern society has grown.

This phenomenon, as well as in general the latest shifts in public consciousness, is now stated by many sober-minded Western scientists. It has become a widespread opinion, as recognised, for example, by the well-known political scientists David Held and Courtney Jung, "that the financial crisis shows the failure of neoliberal ideology with its belief in the omnipotence of markets and the policy of deregulation."<sup>1</sup>

The world is in transition, and the word "uncertainty" expresses the essence of the current processes: the old system of international relations, which was created 60 years ago, is collapsing. It is clear that it cannot be preserved as it existed before, when the five great powers largely determined the course of world development.<sup>2</sup>

The process of regional, sub-regional and trans-regional interactions in the economic, financial and communication spheres is expanding, which leads to the emergence of new governance structures and mutual penetration and enrichment of cultures and civilisations.

As Russian scientist Vladislav Soluyanov notes in his article "The Concept of Multipolarity: Diversity of Approaches and Interpretations":

– *"the foundation of multipolarity should be the growth of economic, military and political potential of new centres of power – states and/or their alliances;*

– *in this case, the impossibility for the US to continue playing the role of hegemon in the international arena becomes clear;*

– *the emergence of the relative power of the new centres of power and the withering away of US hegemony will promote a more independent foreign policy with a focus on the realisation of its own interests.*"<sup>3</sup>

End quote.

World history is a common civilisational flow, which includes all peoples and countries with their unique culture, worldview and historical experience. This contradictory unity is the integrity of the world – "E pluribus unum"<sup>4</sup> ("unity in diversity"). It determines its viability as a complex dynamic system.

The information and technology revolution and globalisation have made the world extremely interdependent and interconnected. The world community faces an increasing number of common challenges. The world is changing rap-

idly, and the coming years will be even richer in political upheaval.

The conclusion that Western civilisation is experiencing a deep crisis is generally accepted. New states and groups of countries with the potential for global influence, the ability to change the balance of power, and the involvement of millions in the historical creativity are coming to the forefront of world politics. These are China, India, the countries of Southeast Asia, Latin America, and the Islamic world. The East is undergoing modernisation, and it is important that this process is not following the recipes of Westernisation, but its own unique way.<sup>5</sup>

In the last decade of the 20th century, the American political scientist Samuel Huntington came up with the idea of a "clash of civilisations". Pavel Afanasievich Tsygankov, a prominent Russian authority in the field of international relations theory, believes that Huntington became one of the first exponents of a new version of realism, according to which civilisations assume the role of the main factors in world politics.<sup>6</sup> At the same time, the principle provisions of realism remain valid. In an anarchic international environment, relations between civilisations, as well as between states, are of a conflictual nature, explained by the diversity and contradiction of values.<sup>7</sup>

In modern Russian political thought, the studies of the civilisational factor in the transformation of the world order are given special importance. Within this direction, such researchers as, in particular, Martynov<sup>8</sup>, Ableyev, Zolkin, Marchenya<sup>9</sup> and Popov<sup>10</sup>:

– agree with the multi-civilisational basis of multipolarity;

– consider Eurasian (i. e. Russian) civilisation as a pole of the multipolar world order;

– reflect on the substantive side of Russian civilisation.<sup>11</sup>

In this context, it is necessary to return to the question of Russia's role in the formation of the new multipolarity. As the above-mentioned authors stress, in civilisational terms Russia is a successful multi-confessional and multi-ethnic country. We have not had religious wars, Russians have never lived alone on their territory.

Muslims in Russia, unlike in Western Europe, are indigenes. Russia is called upon to play the role of a civilisational bridge in the processes of creating a multipolar world. Mendeleev, in particular, wrote that Russia is able to fulfil the role of a reconciler of Europe and Asia. Nikolai Alexandrovich Berdyaev did not accidentally use the term "East-West" in relation to Russia.

<sup>5</sup> Тимофеев Т. Т. О.р. cit.

<sup>6</sup> Цыганков П. А. Тенденции классических парадигм в западной теории международных отношений // Общественные науки и современность. 2004. № 2. С. 119–130.

<sup>7</sup> Солуянов В. С. О.р. cit. С. 432.

<sup>8</sup> Мартынов Б. Ф. Многополярный или многоцивилизационный мир? // Международные процессы. 2009. Т. 7, № 3 (21). С. 60–68.

<sup>9</sup> Аблеев С. Р., Золкин А. Л., Марченя П. П. Геополитические угрозы и суверенная Россия: столкновение цивилизаций нарастает? // Журнал Белорусского государственного университета. Философия. Психология. 2019. № 1. С. 4–9.

<sup>10</sup> Попов В. В. Роль России как Евразийской цивилизации в формировании нового миропорядка // РСМД. 2018. URL: <https://russiancouncil.ru/analytics-and-comments/analytics/rol-rossii-kakevraziyskoy-tsivilizatsii-v-formirovanii-novogo-miroponyadka/> (accessed: 20.04.2024); *Idem*. Хрупкий, уязвимый и многополярный мир // РСМД. 2020. URL: <https://russiancouncil.ru/analytics-and-comments/analytics/khrupkiy-uyazvimy-i-mnogopolyarnyy-mir/> (accessed: 20.04.2024).

<sup>11</sup> Солуянов В. С. О.р. cit. С. 433.

<sup>1</sup> Тимофеев Т. Т. Эволюция реформизма в кризисных условиях // Перемены в Европе: возможны ли альтернативные модели = Changes in Europe: are alternatives possible / под ред. Ал. А. Громыко, Т. Т. Тимофеева. М.: Ин-т Европы РАН: Рус. сувенир, 2012. С. 16–17.

<sup>2</sup> Тимофеев Т. Т. О.р. cit.

<sup>3</sup> Солуянов В. С. О.р. cit. С. 430.

<sup>4</sup> Цицерон «Об обязанностях». I, 17, 56: «...quod Pythagoras vult in amicitia, ut unus fiat ex pluribus» («...what Pythagoras sees as the essence of friendship is for a single one to arise from many»).

It is obvious that the nature of the crisis is connected not only with purely economic factors, but also with laws of a more general order – cultural and political traditions, peculiarities of labour ethics and their combination with modern forms of production organisation.

There are many indications that new actors capable of historical initiative and their own socio-economic and socio-cultural models are entering world history. Perhaps this is the main challenge to modern humanity, which over the past centuries has been developing mainly under the influence of centripetal tendencies.

On the whole, one of the greatest contemporary theorists of international relations, Professor Amitav Acharya<sup>1</sup>, is quite optimistic about the ongoing transformations. For him, the ideal world order is a product of interaction and mutual learning between different civilisations and states, rather than a clash between Western “liberal civilization” and non-Western civilisational states. The expert does not deny the existence of conflict potential, but stresses the need for a dialogue based not only on differences, but also on values that unite civilizations.<sup>2</sup>

Advanced models of political organisation have been able to offer the highest form of maintaining social stability and regulating social conflicts, without abolishing cultural competition, but giving them the opportunity to realise their fundamental property of forming conglomerates and interacting without losing their identity.

As many researchers have noted, successful nations that have managed to create more comfortable living conditions and a more stable and lasting social peace are gradually becoming points of attraction and poles of consolidation of regional spaces. This process is especially noticeable in the example of the ever-growing regional representativeness of such a multi-regional structure as BRICS – a new space of dialogue of cultures and civilizations.

In the past, human culture saw the main source of its own growth in expansion, which, until a certain time, was usually carried out violently. But sometimes it took place voluntarily through the borrowing of knowledge, material tools, skills and abilities, religious ideas, if they increased the comfort of life. The spillover of cultural achievements ensured the progressive movement of history over the millennia, becoming the most important factor of development.

As practice shows, the initial motivation for integration processes in Asia and Latin America, as well as in Europe, was only partly economic. An equally important motive for integration aspirations is the feeling of historical proximity, civilisational affinity and the trust based on this.

Changes in the world as a result of globalisation, the recognition of the viability of Asian and other models, as well as European integration in the second half of the twentieth century showed that the current model of history is being replaced by another one that recognises the subjectivity of several world centres.<sup>3</sup>

According to Oxford professor Dace Janowska, “...the Western world as a whole has lost the vision of the future as a steady development of humanity in the sense of a controlled movement towards a certain idea of the good life. The twentieth century was dominated by the ideology of

progress, both socialist and capitalist. The future promised a better life, overcoming inequality and poverty. But Western elites have not yet come up with a new ideology other than the free market,”<sup>4</sup> she concluded.

Well, there is another force that can provide an alternative answer to the challenge of creating such an ideology. It is both trans-regional and supranational.

Trade unions, as the most massive and representative associations of workers around the world, are called upon and can actually make a fundamentally new contribution to the concept of dialogue among civilizations within the framework of building a multipolar world.

In fact, in the totality of their diversity, they are a kind of “civilization” with their common goals, aspirations and principles.

Every era has its own “genetic code”. The imperative to build a new multipolar world can be expressed in one word – “Justice”: it is what is most lacking today for billions of people in all regions.

It is this moral concept that can cut the knot of economic, social and environmental problems, and defeat the poverty that is eating away at the fabric of society amid unprecedented technological progress.

Justice is at the heart of decent work. Social justice must become a central feature of the future world of work, whatever form the new technologies and ways of organising production may take.

The postulate of justice must become a constant of the United Nations. Only a comprehensive and integrated approach to the Sustainable Development Goals can lead this organisation to survival and real progress.

The ILO should become the crystallisation point of a new multilateral system encompassing the WTO, IMF, World Bank and other global structures. Let us not forget that it is the factor of labour activity that makes a person a citizen. Therefore, speaking about the labour sphere, we inevitably touch upon the foundations of the social structure of the future – neither more nor less.<sup>5</sup>

The paradox of today is that the enormous growth of the global economy’s capacity in principle makes it possible to end poverty and, as never before, to meet people’s needs.

But the current structure of society is based on the maximum exploitation of the planet’s resources, including the vast majority of its population as the main resource for the insatiable greed of the “absolute minority” on the Forbes list.

We do not live in a society of equal opportunities, and the risks of some are at the expense of the gains of others. Flexible and non-standard forms of employment actually shift to individuals the risks that were previously borne by private business and the state.

Even today, many MNCs claim that they are not responsible for compliance with ILO standards in end-to-end supply chains that are lost at their source in the urban jungle of underdeveloped or authoritarian countries. Tomorrow we will be told that the artificial intelligence that has replaced the human manager “does not have to read ILO conventions”.

<sup>1</sup> Acharya A. The Myth of the Civilization State: Rising Powers and the Cultural Challenge to World Order // *Ethics & International Affairs*. 2020. Vol. 34, № 2. P. 139–156. DOI: 10.1017/s0892679420000192.

<sup>2</sup> Солуянов В. С. *Op. cit.* С. 433.

<sup>3</sup> Тимофеев Т. Т. *Op. cit.*

<sup>4</sup> Почему мы потеряли будущее // *РосБалт*. URL: <https://www.rosbalt.ru/moscow/2020/01/21/1823707.html> (accessed: 20.04.2024).

<sup>5</sup> Шамаков М. В. Именно люди – вот главная ценность, ради которой стоит тратить наш творческий потенциал // *Без формата*. URL: <https://saratov.bezformata.com/listnews/lyudi-vot-glavnaya-tcnennost/75804544/> (accessed: 20.04.2024).

Our world is changing at a rapid pace, and it is therefore essential that the tools we use to protect labour rights change just as rapidly.

The first step towards this goal should be to eliminate outdated and artificial distinctions between labour rights and human rights in general. Labour rights are human rights, and the ability to exercise these rights in the workplace is key to workers' enjoyment of their many other rights – economic, social, cultural, political and others.<sup>1</sup>

Trade unions include sustainable economic growth in the concept of decent work. It should guarantee everyone a decent wage, safe working conditions and a fair level of social protection. But in many countries, the social and economic policies of governments are at odds with social justice.<sup>2</sup>

The Statement of the 2018 World Trade Union Forum in Copenhagen emphasises that *“social justice in the post-war period has never been under greater threat than it is today.”*

To respond to this threat, we need a development model with workers' rights, decent work, fair distribution of

wealth, representative democracy, gender equality and social protection at its core.

Meeting these challenges requires a “21st Century Social Contract”. We have spoken about this many times at meetings of the BRICS Trade Union Forum, an important factor in the development of a new multilateralism in the trade union dimension and in the humanitarian development of humanity as a whole. The expanding BRICS Trade Union Forum is an innovative association of the “global majority” aimed not at creating new instruments of cross-border diktat, but at an equal search for new forms of social harmony and dialogue of a special civilization – the world of people of work.

The 13th BRICS Trade Union Forum, which will be held in Sochi in September this year, is intended to be a new step in this direction.

The new multipolarity can and should be served by a new interaction of independent and sovereign trade unions as points of crystallization of the dialogue of civilizations at the present stage.

Zh. T. Toshchenko<sup>3</sup>

## FUNCTIONAL ILLITERACY AS A PROBLEM OF MODERN EDUCATION

...Approximation took hold hurrying people.  
They teach something, they know something,  
sow in general, shear on average, explain nearly,  
take care moderately.

R. I. Rozhdestvensky

Modern society has achieved amazing successes in exploration of the world: the breakthrough into space, cognition of the microcosm secrets, development of new (van-guard, high) technologies, invention of materials unknown in the nature, the use of artificial intelligence and robotics, and many other achievements indicating opportunities of intellectual capacity.

Along with science, these successes were largely facilitated by education, with its development and improvement,

<sup>1</sup> Трудовые права – это права человека : доклад ООХ // IndustriALL. URL: <https://www.industrialall-union.org/ru/doklad-on-trudovye-prava-eto-prava-cheloveka-0> (accessed: 20.04.2024).

<sup>2</sup> По следам ВХОТ : выступление М. Шмакова // Охрана труда в России. URL: <https://ohranatruda.ru/news/898/583110/> (accessed: 20.04.2024).

<sup>3</sup> Chief Research Fellow at the Institute of Sociology of the Federal Research Sociological Center of the RAS, Scientific Director of the Sociology Department of the Russian State University for the Humanities, Corresponding Member of the RAS, Dr. Sc. (Philosophy), Professor. Author of more than 800 scientific publications, including: “Trauma Society: between Evolution and Revolution (Experience of Theoretical and Empirical Analysis)”, “Precariat: from Proletariat to New Class”, “Sociology Thesaurus”, “Phantoms of Russian Society”, “Life Sociology”, “What is Really Happening in the Sphere of Culture?” (co-authored), “The Life World of Russians: 25 Years Later (late 1980s – mid-2010s)” (co-authored), “The Social Contract and the Participation of the Intelligentsia in its Implementation”, “Who Represents the Russian Society? (on the Issue of Social Management Reserves)”, and others. Chairman of the International Editorial Board of the RAS journal “Sociological Studies”, Professor Emeritus of Lomonosov Moscow State University and Russian State University for the Humanities, Honorary Doctor of the Institute of Sociology of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Recipient of the M. M. Kovalevsky Prize of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Awarded the Medal “For Valiant Labor”, the Silver Medal named after Pitirim Sorokin, N. D. Kondratiev Gold Medal. Awarded a Commendation from the President of the Russian Federation (2024).

and huge number of people to be involved in the sphere of its influence. If we give data on education in modern Russia, they are impressive: 32.4% of the adult population (25–64 years old) has higher education, and among people aged 25–34 years – 39.5%.<sup>4</sup>

However, at present, in this way of massing both higher and, to a certain extent, other levels of education, *the paradox has formed: along with the increase in the number of educated population, a specific problem – functional illiteracy*, i. e. the number of people who do not have literacy in the modern sense of the word, – *has arisen*.

This was once noticed by A. Solzhenitsin in his essay “Obrazovanshchina”, which, in his opinion, means nothing more than the **appearance of education**, the **appearance of culture** without internal content, i. e. without internal culture, as well as false education, false culture, false intelligence.

The vivid, figurative words in the epigraph express both pain, anxiety, and the warning: a poorly realized threat of possible loss of viability of the society and its prospects to withstand the challenges of modernity is coming at us. And this threat is unprofessionalism, ignorance and half-knowledge, knowledge without morality, knowledge without general culture.<sup>5</sup>

Statistical and sociological data, numerous examples, statements by the best minds of the country and the world,

<sup>4</sup> Образование в цифрах: 2023: крат. стат. сб. / Т. А. Варламова, Л. М. Гохберг, О. К. Озерова [и др.]. М. : ИСИЭЗ ВШЭ, 2023.

<sup>5</sup> Тощенко Ж. Т. Социальные парадоксы высшего образования в России // Экономика образования. 2012. № 1. С. 31–34.

and historical experience can be cited to prove this thesis. But, in my opinion, in this case the poetic image looks clearer, more convincing, more evidential. In the poet's words, there is both his warning against indifference, and his passionate persuasion that all the affairs in the world, all our errors and shortcomings depend not on some evil, sometimes mythical forces, but first and foremost on ourselves, our position, our attitude, our skill (no wonder the poet called his poem "About Masters") and on our attitude to do good or evil, or to heed them indifferently and aloof.

However, we cannot turn a blind eye to the increasingly widespread lifestyle, when its goal was to satisfy utilitarian rather than spiritual needs, associated with external, often false brilliance of opportunities to have prestigious goods at our personal disposal, to possess tinsel household utensils and furnishings, to be proud of achieving primitive goals.<sup>1</sup>

One of the reasons for these flaws and trials is not so much in the outwardly impressive changes that occur in education, but in those shifts that have led to changes in people's positions in relation to education, its social functions, and emergence of a new class of contradictions that call into question achievements of modern society as a whole. In fact, *in the era of the ongoing industrial and information revolutions society faced a tremendous paradox: growth in the number of people who received education was simultaneously accompanied by the process of increasing professional illiteracy (but one of a special kind) and occupational incompetence, lack of ability to think and combine scientific knowledge and practical experience.*<sup>2</sup>

It should be recalled that for a long time literacy and education were interpreted as a composition of the arts of writing and reading. Anyone who did not meet this requirement was considered illiterate. This interpretation of illiteracy lasted not only the 19th, but almost the entire 20th century. Even in 1958, UNESCO defined the illiterate as "a person who does not know how to read and write enough to understand simple and concise utterances concerning his/her daily life". But gradually the interpretation of literacy (illiteracy) expanded, clarified and began including the extent of assimilation of speech and audiovisual culture.<sup>3</sup>

Under the influence of new technological and technical transformations in the late 1970s and early 1980s, a new concept has come into use – functional illiteracy as inability to perform actions not only in reading, writing and counting, necessary for appropriate life activities and development of both the person himself and his entire social environment, but also in applying instructions, finding and using the information necessary in the activity. The concept appeared in the 90s of the 20th century. According to T. D. Zhukova, President of the Association of School Libraries of Russia, functional illiteracy is the cause of many technogenic disasters.<sup>4</sup> In other words, the modern concept of illiteracy includes not only inability in reading (perceiving information), writing (conveying one's thoughts, expanding the range of communicative interaction), speaking (ability to communicate and express oneself in speech), but, most importantly, in providing the ability to social ori-

entation and social self-regulation. In this regard, it became necessary to talk not just about literacy/illiteracy, but about functional illiteracy, *which implies semi-knowledge, ersatz knowledge, false knowledge or knowledge-phantom.*<sup>5</sup>

What exactly does it reveal itself in?

Firstly, functional illiteracy often appears in the form of *educational agnosia*, which means violation of the mechanisms of perception associated with displacement of direct, "naive" knowledge about the subject by a certain set of learned concepts. This term was introduced in 1994 by M. Lynch and D. Bogen<sup>6</sup>, and was partly used by H. Sacks<sup>7</sup>. In their opinion, students represent only the environment for its dissemination. The high-risk group is teachers of disciplines, who do not have an explicit scientific specialization. Brought up on poorly translated foreign sources, obtaining information from compiled textbooks, they undertake to read any courses offered, which leads to absolute disorientation in the professional environment.<sup>8</sup> This neglected form of the "disease" is accompanied by creation of a certain general worldview, which is in no way correlated with reality. And the attempt to specify the proposed schemes, structures, models and other "inventions" and make them reality ends as in the funny story about an owl and a mouse, to which the owl advised to protect itself from troubles and threats by turning into a hedgehog, and the question of how to do this was answered, "I deal with strategic issues, not all sorts of little things."<sup>9</sup>

If educational agnosia completely ignores direct, empirical, everyday knowledge, then there is another extreme of it – *inability to link with real life*. My practice of long-term teaching allows asserting that the considerable number of students who have conscientiously studied textbooks, reference books, encyclopedias, and currently information from the Internet, sufficiently and/or relatively fully reproduce the general features of their or somebody else's theories, processes and phenomena, but completely freeze when trying to answer the question: how does it reveal itself in real life, in the surrounding reality, which they live in? In other words, there is a complete or almost complete gap between the information read and the ability to fix it in the mind for possible further use. This situation creates *the effect of short-term memory*, which is more or less convenient for answering during the study process or for passing an exam or a test. In future, this information is not fixed in the human mind, it is forgotten, eroded, leaving no traces and without enriching the person's cultural and cognitive capacity.

In Russia as a whole, the share of students who do not achieve the required minimum of functional literacy is growing. Experts agree that in future, it will be difficult for such teenagers to adapt to life in the modern world. In 2018, almost a third of all students did not reach the minimum threshold for at least one type of literacy in reading, math-

<sup>5</sup> Тоценко Ж. Т. Парадоксальный человек.

<sup>6</sup> Lynch M., Bogen D. Harvey Sacks's primitive natural science // Theory, Culture & Society. 1994. Vol. 11. P. 70–71.

<sup>7</sup> Sacks H. Lectures on conversation. Vol. 1 / ed. by G. Jefferson. Oxford : Blackwell, 1992. P. 83.

<sup>8</sup> For more information, see: Тоценко Ж. Т. Образование и «образованщина» // Парадоксальный человек. М. : ЮНИТИ-Дана, 2008. С. 441–444.

<sup>9</sup> See, for example: Семашко Л. М. Тетрасоциология – социология четырех измерений. К постановке проблемы // Социологические исследования. 2001. № 9. С. 20–28.

<sup>1</sup> Тоценко Ж. Т. Социальные парадоксы...

<sup>2</sup> Тоценко Ж. Т. Парадоксальный человек. 2-е изд., перераб. и доп. М. : ЮНИТИ-ДАНА, 2008. С. 427.

<sup>3</sup> Тоценко Ж. Т. Социальные парадоксы...

<sup>4</sup> Жукова Т. Д. Функциональная неграмотность – чума XXI века // Независимая газета. 2006. 10 марта.

ematics or science. The illiterate in all three subject areas amounted to 12 %.<sup>1</sup>

Functional illiteracy also manifests itself in so-called *clip consciousness* (eng. clip, “fragment of text”, “cutting”). The term originates from the concept “clip culture”, which was introduced by sociologist E. Toffler in his work “The Third Wave” in 1980. Initially, the term “clip thinking” meant a person’s ability to perceive the world through short vivid images and messages of TV news or video clips. In its modern meaning, this is a type of thinking, when a person perceives information piecemeal, in short chunks and vivid images, cannot concentrate and constantly skips from one question to another. It is extremely difficult for these people to read or work on large texts, especially books, watch long videos and movies. Clip thinking is contrasted with systemic thinking: one that helps immerse deep and comprehensively analyze information, performing all operations consistently. It creates inability to logically set out what has been read, heard, and even seen.

Socio-psychological studies show that about 10 % of young people have specific problems with reading comprehension. Many of them have problems with reading for the first time around the age of 7–8, sometimes later, when they are expected to analyze more complex texts. They have impaired reading comprehension if there are any of the following signs: problems with basic reading skills, such as word recognition; difficulties with understanding important ideas contained in the text read; difficulty and/or misunderstanding of the algorithm when performing tasks and even problems with remembering essential details of what was read.

In the century of the huge information flow, complications and difficulties arise in *identifying the meaning, and understanding the content* of what has been read and heard. As a result, there is inability to highlight the main thing in this flow, understand it and then present it in the learning process or apply it in professional activities at your workplace. If earlier it was possible to weaken this misunderstanding through classical bibliographic assistance, then in modern conditions, this type of work can compensate for such a shortcoming just insignificantly.

Functional illiteracy manifests itself in the amazing fact of replacing by people the search for solutions to a problem not by comparing real opportunities for achieving a desired or recommended goal, but by a random set of wishes, even sincere ones, but often unrelated to the current reality. Then there is misuse of words, such as “must”, “need”, “should”, which emerge from the world of directive thinking or illusions and dreams, and not because they are wrong, but because there is no answer to them: how to implement it, who will implement it, at the expense of what it will be achieved. As a result, the effect of small or large Oblomov manifests itself. Operating with categories of obligation often makes a person useless for understanding and applying proposed ways and means of solving specific problems in close relation to available area of freedom, technical, financial, economic and human resources.

It is worth adding such a judgment.

Functional illiteracy is not so much absence of any general education training, as *inability to solve everyday practical tasks* – to write an application, fill out documents related to everyday life, explain to another person the essence of the desired or the recommended. According to sociological studies, in Russia, there are a lot of functionally illiterate people. Among older people, there are 15–33 % of them, depending on their profession, place of residence and some other life circumstances. But a new wave of complete functional illiteracy awaits the country: now, according to expert data, up to 2 million children do not attend school, do not study.<sup>2</sup> Let’s add to this the fact that since the 90s, literacy has been declining in Russia. According to PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literature Study) data for 2021, 22% of 15-year-old Russian schoolchildren *did not achieve* the second-level threshold of reading literacy.

And some experiments *show* that even university students have troubles with understanding the texts read, that, besides to the above, it should be recognized that there are learning-disabled persons, which the group of students unable (or unwilling) to study refers to. Using materials of interviews with teachers, personnel and students of universities, the following groups of “learning disability” were identified. The first group consists of those who are unable to master university programs because of their low-quality school education. Already in the mid-2000s, the contingent of students, who did not care how and where to study, was formed. According to rough estimates, in those years, the share of the students reached 15%. The second group includes those who use their universities as a platform for realization of other goals. Many applicants who are successful, for example, in sports, are immediately enrolled in the university, but not for the purpose of studying. Their task is to win competitions and creative contests, participate in the World Student Games and KVN, improve their university’s reputation and its recognition, popularize the brand, advertise it. Under conditions of fierce competition and university ranking, this function is very important for the university. But what is the value of these students for future work? The question remains open. The third group includes not only intellectually, but also mentally limited and even mentally unstable students who cannot master and accept university-level rules and requirements. Depending on the university, the number of this group varies, but the fact of their increasing presence among students is indicative.<sup>3</sup>

It is these three groups that form the indicator leading to the conclusion obtained by sociologists of the Russian State University for the Humanities (RGGU): having analyzed 118 universities in Russia, it was found that only 65–75% of those who enrolled in studies graduate from the university (depending on its profile).

To this, it is worth adding the following fact. According to a number of studies, about a quarter of Russian residents – from 22 to 25% – have no functional reading skills. The loss of these skills begins in childhood, then accumulates in middle age, when it is almost impossible to solve this problem.

<sup>2</sup> Тощенко Ж. Т. Парадоксальный человек.

<sup>1</sup> Основные результаты российских учащихся в международном исследовании читательской, математической и естественно-научной грамотности PISA-2018 и их интерпретация / К. А. Адамович, А. В. Капуза, А. Б. Захаров, И. Д. Фрумин. М. : НИУ ВШЭ, 2019. С. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Денисова-Шмидт Е. В., Леонтьева Э. О. Категория «необучаемых» студентов как социальный феномен университетов (на примере дальневосточных вузов) // Социологические исследования. 2015. № 9. С. 86–93.



In 2003, the International Reading Institute researched quality of reading and functional literacy, in which Russian students ranked 32nd out of 40 countries. Today in Russia, only one of three 11th grade graduates understands the content of scientific and literary texts. This phenomenon is caused by organization of education and educational programs aimed not at reading comprehension, but at sound or visual reproduction.<sup>1</sup>

And finally, illiteracy is one of indicators of a person's lack of freedom in his interaction with the surrounding world. And here we face one of the most amazing paradoxes: the desire to know means willingness to accept freedom "with open eyes", which results in parting with inner harmony. It is the modern world that questions N. G. Cherny-

shevsky's motto for his novel "What to Do": "we will learn, and knowledge will set us free."

*Functional illiteracy of people who have higher education* is especially disturbing, although, among them, this phenomenon has, of course, its own features, its own special forms of appearance. Illiteracy of this category of people manifests itself in their inability to communicate with the outer world through written (and sometimes oral) speech, they do not know how to express their thoughts and ideas in an article, in a scientific report, in a review, in a review, to make an official document.<sup>2</sup>

*All this allows considering functional illiteracy as a symptom of a social crisis, as a sign of an imminent disaster* comparable to environmental and technogenic shocks, in the epicenter of which a person is.

A. Trigunayat<sup>3</sup>

## BRICS AS THE NEW SPACE FOR DIALOGUE AMONG CIVILIZATIONS

### Introduction

When Jim O'Neil of Goldman Sachs coined the BRIC in the fateful year of 2001, the year of the world shattering 9/11 events, he essentially culled out the four major emerging transcontinental economies from Asia, Europe and Americas i. e. Brazil, Russia, India and China which will define future global growth trajectory especially in the context of foreign investment and growth strategies. Eight years later it became a major geo economic enterprise and in 2010 with the inclusion of South Africa it expanded to Africa which is widely recognized as the future especially in the later half of this century given its human and natural resource potential. At the last Johannesburg Summit in 2023, five more countries Ethiopia, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Egypt and Iran were also included. It all started at the Summit level in Yekaterinburg in 2009 and in 2024 again Russia is the host and the Kazan summit might see further expansion by inclusion or association as thirty or more countries are waiting to join this enigmatic group, which despite its internal differences, has been able to make a geo economic mark on the geo political and geo strategic landscape as a viable and more comprehensive alternative which hopefully will be underscored by 3 Ms – the mutual respect; mutual interests and; mutual sensitivities.

BRICS remit has expanded into many other domains as it not only encompasses the top ten economies of the world but also several ancient civilizations for whom dialogue has been a major rider. The interactive mechanism and objectives have become multi layered and multi-dimensional. It addresses core issues and global challenges from under-de-

velopment to finance to climate change to counter terrorism to culture and people to people exchanges. And S&T collaboration is further underscored by trade and investment and connectivity both at P2P level as well as physical and digital as all member countries use their synergies to maximize the mutual benefit.

Civilizational states, as a thumb rule, prefer a multilateral world order, diversity of discourse and its accommodation of multiple cultures and strategic autonomy as the tool for international discourse. BRICS even though can boast of a very different bouquet of political governance and socio-economic models but proudly it reflects the confluence of various civilizations' quest for global welfare through dialogue and diplomacy. Building a partnership for inter-civilization dialogue is desirable. 'The successful cooperation of the BRICS countries proves that different social systems can accommodate each other, that different development models can work with each other and that different values can draw on the strength of each other. We should stay open and inclusive so as to learn from each other and make progress together through seeking common ground while putting aside differences as was mentioned by the Chinese President Xi Jinping. But his troika of GSI (Global Security Initiative) GDI (Global Developmental Initiative) and GCI (Global Civilizational Initiative) combined with BRI (Belt and Road Initiative) often smack of hegemonistic approaches and strategy to control than cooperate. Perceptions must be corrected by concrete example and behavioural patterns rather than wolf warrior diplomacy.

BRICS may be a new space for dialogue among civilizations but it can boast of being blessed with the presence of the ancient and powerful civilizations among its family. Indian, Chinese, Russian, Persian, Egyptian and Mesopotamian, Arabic and Ethiopian Civilizations are indeed the fulcrum of global value systems and could all teach a lot to the world, which only is worried about one upmanship and indulging in rivalry and supremacy through power projection and cancel culture. Apart from the decimation of global governance through the continuing geo political, geo economic and geo religious and now geo technological contestations we are heading towards a bottomless pit where mu-

<sup>1</sup> Ясюкова Л. Неграмотность – почему? // Наука и жизнь. 2015. № 6. С. 79–80.

<sup>2</sup> Тоценко Ж. Т. Социальные парадоксы...

<sup>3</sup> Ambassador of India to Jordan and Libya, High Commissioner to Malta (2012–2016), Honorary Fellow of the Analytical Center of the Vivekananda International Foundation. Distinguished Fellow of the Vivekananda International Foundation think tank. Member of the All India Management Association, Oxford and Cambridge Societies of India, Association of Indian Diplomats (former Ambassadors). Honorary member of the International Trade Council in Brussels. Author of a number of publications on international relations, including: "Afghanistan Regained by Taliban", "Israel, Palestine and Hamas At War Again", "The Libyan Haze", "US–Iran: The Spat and the Standoff", "Sudan: A Blaze of Democracy on the Nile" and others.

tually destructive syndrome will only lead to disruption and divisiveness and eventual destruction. This crisis of confidence has to be addressed through a value system which looks for consensus and functional as well as inclusive approaches. Fortunately, the BRICS members have a legacy which could make it into a platform to practice co-existence and mutual growth and development within both material and moral compass.

While looking at the Indian and other approaches it is imperative that certain critical ingredients and pillars have to be placed around which an edifice of trust and confidence in its centrality and objectivity could be built. Nearly all countries and powers would articulate the end goals that sound good but self-adherence to the same is evident in their violation of the norms that they have set themselves. The reason that multilateral institutions have failed to achieve their stated and proclaimed objectives is precisely due to the errant behaviour of the initiators and proposers themselves. They prefer unilateralism to multilateralism. Self aggrandizement at the cost of the global good. Consequently wars and conflicts are more common than peace. Free for all and might is right have become the primary vector and mover of the super and the middle powers. Hence, it is imperative that there should be an echo of sane voices where larger good of the larger masses becomes a priority over myopic power games. Is it far too idealistic to expect, remains to be seen. In any case it won't be easy but if BRICS plus can bring about a paradigm shift in international discourse so much the better. However, in the race to create alternate and viable frameworks and platforms BRICS+++ will have to apply credible standards and accountable outcomes by those professing to provide a matrix of 'DIY' Do it yourself which can be trusted by others to replicate and to look forward too. A tall order indeed but that's where the civilizational values positively neutral yet humanistic would bail out the fractured world. theoretically this was already emphasized the 2nd BRICS Summit declaration in 2010. This coexistence was reiterated by the declaration made at the second BRICS meeting early on, where the five countries declared their support for a fair and equitable world underpinned by "law, equality, mutual respect, cooperation, coordinated action and collective decision-making of all states." Hence, the way is known but methodology for its smooth passage will have to be worked out by all member countries to make BRICS a space for dialogue and consensus.

### **The essential markers for the dialogue among civilizations and countries alike**

– Inclusive Vs Exclusive. It is an imperative that the approaches have to be inclusive to make them acceptable and implementable. Exclusivity, unless in excellence and inclusive exceptionalism, leads to greater polarization and divisiveness.

– Permanence vs Transient; The proposed value systems will have to be practiced by the propagators and applied in their discourse in an impartial way keeping a larger and more noble goal in mind with a long term perspective.

– Cooperation Vs Conflict.

– Universality Vs Localistic or for that matter Local for Global.

– Idealistic Vs ideological narratives.

– Open to listen to others and accommodate and change rather than "I am the chosen one" hence others should follow me approach." Then only acceptability and credibility will lead to enhanced trust and mutual benefit. An example is the plethora of interfaith dialogues where religious and politico-religious leaders and thinkers and even atheists for that matter say the right thing but without any constructive outcomes since the religious divide continues to persist. This should not become an integral part of the civilizational heritage and dialogue.

– All civilizational values and exhortations and practices might not be equally applicable to modern day landscape. Hence conscious and productive interpretation with a positive attitude is a must.

– Trust Vs Skepticism among the custodians of respective civilizations. Hence, BRICS will have to contend with intra-group divergences and inter-group contestations to be able to play a constructive role. Who will be the arbiter is a key question and what will be the methodology to reduce the countering parameters among competing nations is a challenge which BRICS will have to handle ab-initio.

– Hegemonism and domination or even intent therefore needs to be assiduously avoided for a fruitful dialogue to occur. Perceptions can be more dangerous than reality.

Dialogue, Disruption and Dissonance and Dominance especially, which is generated due to existing geo political fault lines, would need to be amicably addressed through 3Ms approach.

We must discard the Huntington's "Clash of Civilizations" and Fukuyama's "End of History" theory and thesis because the reservoir of culture, civilization, ethos and righteousness was not taken into account of the civilizations like ours.

### **An Indian Perspective**

While chairing the BRICS presidency in 2021, Prime Minister Modi said: "The theme that India has selected for its tenure of Chairmanship demonstrates exactly this priority – 'BRICS@15: Intra BRICS Cooperation for Continuity, Consolidation and Consensus'. These four Cs are in a way the fundamental principles of our BRICS partnership."

In one of my recent writings,<sup>1</sup> I had observed that Asianism, given its intrinsic strength, has gone through its own evolution over the centuries as the major Asian civilisations and cultures have interacted often seamlessly and occasionally competed with one another. Assimilation has often been the result. Ancient is intrinsic to the Asian thought, philosophy, and existence. Harmony with nature and share and care attitude have been the hallmark for the quest for eternal peace and coexistence. Yet political Asianism has occasionally witnessed conflicts and wars in the name of supremacy and superiority which was hardly the real essence of the Asiatic value systems. The battle between the West and East accentuated that through the 19th and 20th centuries and the World Wars I and II. Western system moved forward as Japan was defeated but eventually became a part of the western alliance system. India became independent and avoided the Cold War era and geo political competition while remaining an integral part of global governance architecture by the dint of her ancient mystical herit-

<sup>1</sup> Asianism – the Indian sub text // Strategic Analysis – Asianism Retold by Taylor & Francis for IDSA. 2022. Vol. 46. July-Aug. P. 416.

age and fountain of knowledge, new found democratic credentials, moral and principled stance reflected through her non-aligned approaches and pragmatic emphasis on peace and development for the 1/6th of humanity thereby leading the newly freed developing countries from the clutches of colonialism across Asia to Africa. This has provided India an authoritative international voice of reason. And this is what will combine her software to soft power appeal. Through the centuries, India's benevolent and benign influence and approaches have been accepted in Asia and elsewhere and have remained ingrained across geographies and remains even relevant today for the international discourse. In this paper effort has been made to connect the Indian sub text in the reemphasis of Asianism and role the timeless values and heritage could play provided India remains true to her lofty ideals. Time is ripe as the global pivot has shifted once again towards Asia. Indian diplomacy and the outreach is ready to bite the bait!

It has also been a fact of history for millennia that when India interacts with others in the international discourse or for a cause celebre it does from the strategic position of peaceful co-existence and non-violence which remain integral and have been the essence of teachings of Lord Buddha and Mahatma Gandhi. Even though she claims to be the founder of Algebra and trigonometry or for that matter Kautilya's diplomacy and 'Zero' by itself it does not believe in the 'zero sum' game in international discourse. But wishes to work with everyone believing in the global goods and commons that has most recently been witnessed in her Vaccine Diplomacy driven by guiding principle of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' – World is one family. It is in this spirit that Indian ethos and value systems and knowledge travelled to vast tracts of Asia and the world and remain vibrant in a transformed yet closely intertwined form with the local belief systems. Having suffered the quest for riches nearly by all the kind of invaders and colonial powers, India (Bharat Varsha) has learnt the art of maintaining unity in diversity and thereby enriched further through osmosis and assimilation of ideas, ideals, cultural nuances that have been reflected through myriads of achievements and expressions. All these cumulatively have impacted India's world view.

It is important to identify some of the Indian ancient value systems and moralistic approaches that are even relevant in today's fractured international discourse and the transitional world order. However, for that to continue to remain relevant and have the legitimacy the modern-day India, which aims to become a 'Vishwa Guru' once again, has to remain a beacon of high moral standards and inclusivity in her domestic discourse for she will be harshly judged by the eternal value systems and standards she has created for herself and propagates to the world. Meanwhile, being a Vishwa Mitra (friend of the world) is the preferred course of diplomacy and global interactions while professing sane foreign policy with dialogue, diplomacy and respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity as enshrined in the UN Charter with multilateralism as the most viable matrix of cooperation.

Unfortunately religion especially the politics of it has become a divisive factor for centuries both in domestic and international discourse. India has not only been the originator of four major religions Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism but a preserve of many other religious groups and cultural entities who made India their home. Persecut-

ed Parsis and Jews not only found refuge in India but also enriched its culture and enterprise. Not many would know that Christianity and Islam came to India way before they went to Europe or the Middle East and have become major religions in India as well. In fact from Fa Hien (during the reign of Chandra Gupta II) to Huen Tsang (during King Harshavardhana) when India was known in China as Yintu or Indu to Al Berouni (Tahqiq-e Hind from 1030 AD) or Ibn Battuta (1333 AD during Tughlaq's time) and scores of others became the messengers and carriers of Indian knowledge to their world and beyond.

On the other hand some major religions, which were born post beginning of AD and are monotheistic, tend to denigrate other non-Abrahamic religions propagating exclusivity. It is also a fact that the way the plethora of Gods and practices have existed in India's spiritual and religious philosophical domain they have provided the active tolerance as a desirable virtue and eventually the independent India followed a politically secular constitution where freedom to practice religion were dissociated from the State and became an individual's responsibility and constitutionally guaranteed. This also became equally important in practice of democracy where inclusivity predicates the societal interactions.

No wonder Stephen Knapp, the noted scholar opined that "What we find in Vedic culture are areas of study, progress and expression that are as relevant today for human advancement as they were hundreds or thousands of years ago. India and its Vedic culture has contributed much to the world, such as its music, beautiful forms of art and architecture, martial arts, astronomy, holistic medicine in Ayurveda, and the mathematical system based on the number ten, along with its yoga and philosophy."<sup>1</sup>

India has been a firm believer in global welfare through unfettered access to global commons and global goods. Unfortunately, certain powers have preferred to constrain the access through myopic policies and power play. One could have understood it during the era of colonialism when colonisers dictated the rules of the one-sided game but it appears that the neo colonialism is as much to be blamed for it in the modern era during the past seven decades in the post World War II. Apartheid of various kinds is still very much in play. Most recent examples have been the Vaccine apartheid and Green apartheid where developing world faced utter discrimination and therefore denied access to means to fight the pandemic and the climate change which still remains a major challenge.

It is in this context that India, which despite being the most populous country in the world with over 1/6th of the global population, not only provided medical assistance and vaccines to her own people but shared these with over 150 countries including the developed world as per their request. Former Brazilian President termed the Indian vaccine supply as the lifesaving legendary "Sanjeevani" drug of the epic Ramayana days. Fact that India despite her own challenges rose to the occasion when the western world was indulging in the 'Vaccine Apartheid' as claimed by the South Africa President Ramaphosa at the Franco-African summit, says it all. India believes and acts in unison with the universality of human kind. It is in the DNA of Indian culture and Indians in general. Think beyond your

<sup>1</sup> Stephen Knapp : [website]. URL: <https://www.stephen-knapp.com/> (accessed: 08.05.2024).

shores to help others in need dictates the standard discourse. Share and Care guide the actions of the Indian state and society which is amply evident in the capacity building assistance India provides to 161 countries mostly from the Global South across continents from Africa to Asia to Americas to Europe and Eurasia. No wonder her benign and global welfare-oriented leadership has enabled her to become the 'Voice of the Global South'.

In their daily prayers, Hindus invoke their Gods by saying the following in the civilizational language of Sanskrit; By the way most philosophers and practitioners agree that Hinduism is a way of life.

ॐ सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः

सर्वे सन्तु नरिमयाः।

सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु

मा कश्चिदुखभाग्भवेत् ।

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः॥

Om Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah

Sarve Santu Niraamayaah |

Sarve Bhadraanni Pashyantu

Maa Kashcid-Duhkha-Bhaag-Bhavet |

Om Shaantih Shaantih Shaantih ||

Meaning:

1: Om, May All be Happy,

2: May All be Free from Illness.

3: May All See what is Auspicious,

4: May no one Suffer.

5: Om Peace, Peace, Peace.

India's approach to conflict resolution and peace is driven through dialogue and diplomacy and adherence to the principles of peaceful coexistence. Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam, the world is one family – does not necessarily think only of humans but the whole planet including nature, plants and animals which form the virtuous cycle of human existence. On Climate Change, India's inherent approach is so nature centric that they respect all life and its sustenance for ages hence fight against climate change comes so naturally. Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the G20 Summit and other international fora has often spoken of LiFE – Life style for Environment as the guiding principle while taking all precautionary measures and policies to contain further deterioration. Emergence and launch of initiatives like International Solar Alliance (ISA) and Global Bio Fuels Alliance, CDRI-Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure are all manifestations of her civilizational values and heritage in the modern era. Mahatma Gandhi often reiterated that there is enough in the nature for the need of the humankind but not for their greed. But in the so called developed world precisely the opposite happened and continues to happen. This is an existential problem and every one needs to be onboard. Could we not learn from our own ancestors and texts and practices!

India's G20 presidency in 2023 is a case in point which began with India defining the most apt theme of "One world, One family and One future" and where it was able to bridge the super power differences while making the G20, as People's G20, hosting over 200 events across India. Issuance of the Delhi Declaration was an eventual achievement where consensus prevailed for the larger good. Inclusivity was demonstrated by India holding two Voice of Global South Summits when the views of the developing

world were not only ascertained but mainstreamed. More importantly it was able to create a consensus to include African Union-representing 55 countries as a permanent member which would provide them a voice and capacity to flag their issues directly from within. What can be more telling on inclusivity!

In my view, India's foreign policy is world centric and based on principles of equity and justice and sanity in international discourse as it grows strongly on a robust economic path being the largest democracy, most populous country, third largest economy by Purchasing power Parity (PPP) and a first responder in any crisis. This policy is followed through the 3 Ms principles of Mutual Respect, Mutual Interests and Mutual Sensitivities and friendliness with all. The key drivers are 5 Vs – Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam (World is One family) and Vaccine Maitri (Vaccine friendship) is part of it; Being the Voice of the Global south; Value based foreign policy with strategic autonomy as a prime mover ; and to become a Vishwa Mitra (friend of the world). And to that end and for reformed multilateralism India aims to propagate Samman (Respect); Samvad (Dialogue); Sahyog (cooperation); Shanti (Peace) and Samridhi (Prosperity) for all. Isn't that the most plausible way out of the morass of defeatism and destruction!

That is why, in totality if one were to summarise and I would like to quote Dr S Jaishankar, Indian Foreign Minister for this, who in his celebrated book "Why Bharat Matters" writes that "India can matter by just being there, as a market place, as a contested ground, a resource or a platform as it did during colonial times or it can matter through the power of the ideas and actions as an engine of, a hub of innovation or a democracy that delivers," he further expostulates "the case of India is more than just of demography. For it is among the few civilizational states that has survived the ravages of history... India takes a long view especially in regard to global issues. Many of their goal and objectives are built on traditions that are not readily shared by contemporary peers. Simply put there is not only a scale and history but an exceptionalism about India that makes it matter."<sup>1</sup>

### In Conclusion...

An expanding BRICS has all the ingredients to evolve into a credible space for dialogue among civilizations by frank and honest admission in the first place and discussion over the divergences and finding a path through consensus for the global good. However, it is imperative that intra-organisational dissonance must be seriously studied through a realistic assessment and three dimensional prism. There is no denying the fact the Sino-Indian, Iran and Saudi Arabia and Egypt and Ethiopia among the current members do have deep mistrust and perhaps genuine reasons and grievances due to the hegemonistic approaches of some powers in the respective regions. How should that be bridged as BRICS works on consensus and does not deal with bilateral issues, continue to remain a challenge. Indians have often been described as "argumentative" and legacy of "Shastrarth" intellectual discourse and Dialogue have entrenched the unity in diversity in the past, present and indeed will do so in future as well.

BRICS has done amazingly well and future holds great promise. As Russia carries on its ambitious Presidency

<sup>1</sup> Jaishankar S. Why Bharat Matters // Rupa Publications. 2024. P. 199–200.

in 2024, President Putin's words ring prophetic "In general, Russia will continue to promote all aspects of the BRICS partnership in three key areas: politics and security, economy and finance, and cultural and humanitarian contacts." He further added "We cooperate on the principles of equality, partnership support, respect for each other's interests, and this is the essence of the future-oriented strategic course of our association, a course that meets the aspirations of the main part of the world community, the so-called global

majority."<sup>1</sup> Let us hope the BRICS will surpass the expectations in consensus building, culture, commerce and connectivity including that in digital, physical and spiritual domain through dialogue and diplomacy and mutual respect which will engender harmony and hope. There is a crying need for a new thought and platform in this disruptive world which can only come from the ancient civilizations. Time for right ideas has come. But let us not forget Charity begins at home.

**S. A. Tsypliyev<sup>2</sup>**

### **EXPLOSIVE COCKTAIL OF CIVILISATIONS<sup>3</sup>**

The emergence of closed enclaves of foreign languages and cultures, terrorist attacks in European cities with religious justification – such a palette of events instils anxiety in the hearts and minds of Europe's inhabitants. "What is going on? Why are ethnic and religious conflicts escalating sharply everywhere?" This question is being asked with increasing frequency. The answer is: the great intermingling of civilisations.

#### **The great intermingling of civilisations**

If centuries ago you had to sail across seas, cross deserts and mountain ranges to get acquainted with other customs and cultures, a hundred years ago you had to cross a state border, today it is enough to go out into the courtyard. You used to be able to return from a journey to your familiar, stable, culturally homogeneous world; today its borders are shrinking to the size of your home. It is Europe that has been at the forefront of globalisation since the great geographical discoveries, shrinking distances and overcoming isolating partitions.

The bloody events in Europe, in the Middle East, the resolution of questions of faith and morality through armed violence have brought us back to the problem of the clash of civilisations. Samuel Huntington described the clash of civilisations, using mainly countries as a unit

of consideration, primarily referring to conflicts on the borders of "civilisational plates" – on tectonic faults.

The world is rapidly taking on a new quality before our eyes. The powerful forces and tools of globalisation – the Internet, television, ships and planes – have made the planet small. There is a continuous movement of people, mixing representatives of different races, nationalities, cultures and religions. The difference of potentials – life opportunities – is pulling people from their traditional places and taking them to the centres of development, so far mostly to Western civilisation. No state tricks can stop this process, nor can it be reversed. The mixing is extremely fast by historical standards, mutual adaptation, deep assimilation, which requires several generations, does not have time to take place.

It is like mixing water and oil. Initially, there is a clear boundary between the two liquids, the surface of the boundary is a tectonic fault. Shake the vessel – and many small drops of oil are suspended in the water. There is no homogeneous solution, while the surface area of the boundary, a potential zone of friction and conflict, increases many times over.

If you are born surrounded by a complete international community, you take it for granted. But if a Chinese, an Arab and an African with their families settle in your village, where everyone has been almost relatives for a long time, it is already a shaking of the foundations and the beginning of the battle of nations. They do everything differently from what we are used to, they speak an incomprehensible language, pray to other gods – this is a danger! Russian practice shows that a few natives of the Caucasus are enough.

Of course, much is decided by the cultural level – the degree of mutual sensitivity, curiosity and interest in new and unusual things, mutual readiness to understand and accept. Unfortunately, instincts dictate otherwise, reasons for irritation, offence and conflicts are quickly found and the system of recognising "stranger-stranger" is activated. Minorities, in order to protect themselves, unite into a cohesive ethnic or religious group, which becomes a threat and a problem for the unorganised majority.

The endless series of conflicts and terrorist acts related to issues of faith clearly demonstrates the fundamental change in the role of religion in the modern world. Religion used to play a unifying, stabilising role in the area of its spread, creating a common cultural foundation for coun-

<sup>1</sup> Обращение Владимира Путина в связи с началом председательства России в БРИКС. 2024, 1 янв. URL: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/73202> (accessed: 13.05.2024). Putin said that BRICS works for the "world majority".

<sup>2</sup> Editor-in-Chief of the national scientific-political Vlast magazine, Candidate of Physical and Mathematical Sciences, Full State Adviser of the Russian Federation 3rd class, member of the Council on Foreign and Defense Policy. USSR People's Deputy, Member of the USSR Supreme Soviet, Secretary of the USSR Supreme Soviet Committee on Defense and State Security (1989–1992). Plenipotentiary Representative of the RF President in St. Petersburg (1992–2000), Plenipotentiary Representative of the RF President to the Interparliamentary Assembly of CIS Member Nations (1994–2000), Dean of the Department of Law in the North-West Institute of Management of the Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration (2015–2020). Member of the Council on Foreign and Defense Policy (1999 – present). Author of a number of socio-political publications, including: "Elections as a Basis for the Democratization of the Country", "West or East – Where to Turn Russia", "Difference between Constitution-Based and Life-Based Federalism", "Russia – Ukraine. Broken Axis of Civilizations", "Respect your Constitution", and others. Awarded the Order "Badge of Honor", received a Commendation from the President of the Russian Federation.

<sup>3</sup> The report is based on the article: Цыпляев С. Коктейль цивилизаций // Независимая газета. 2015. 25 февр. URL: [https://www.ng.ru/scenar-io/2015-02-25/13\\_cocktail.html?ysclid=lv58y79tlq934197214](https://www.ng.ru/scenar-io/2015-02-25/13_cocktail.html?ysclid=lv58y79tlq934197214).



tries and peoples. The history of the formation of European civilisation is inextricably linked to Christianity. Clashes of religions were relatively rare and were mainly of a border character. In a mixed world, religion becomes a divisive, conflicting institution. Europe had its first significant experience of intermingling with the emergence of Protestants, followed by religious wars, endless and merciless. It is possible to compromise in ideological and material matters, but in matters of faith compromise is almost impossible. Europe found an answer to this challenge – secularization of the state, religion becoming an element of private life. But then representatives of other countries, other continents came to Europe.

It becomes clear that the atom of civilization is the human being, the molecule carrying all the features of culture is the family and community. A network cultural community can be preserved and develop for a long time even outside the state framework and without reliance on the state. We have to live in this complex mixed world of “cocktail of civilizations”. This cocktail is thoroughly flavored with weapons of mass destruction – a Molotov cocktail ready for use.

### What to do and what not to do

As usual, first of all, simple and wrong solutions are offered. Their common denominator is “return to the bright past”. For example, to return to mono-states pure in genetic or ideological (including religious) sense.

Realistically, the borders of states rarely corresponded to these features, so within the country there were proper, state-forming “their own” and “strangers” – foreigners, aliens, dissidents. Then began the displacement of peoples and the displacement of borders. Bloody wars, genocide, exiled peoples – centuries of history are full of all this. Today, the mixing of representatives of different ethnicities and religions in the world is so intense that a return to purity of principles is simply impossible without turning the country into a totalitarian society with a fascist-type state.

From the same series of proposals for accelerated forced assimilation of immigrants.

Most people are extremely reluctant to change their identity, even on pain of death. Administrative pressure instead of a conscious personal decision, made even under the pressure of life circumstances, breeds resistance. This is familiar to us from the history of the peoples of the Russian Empire, and from the history of Russian communities that remained outside Russia after the collapse of the USSR.

The arsenal of possibilities to regulate such powerful long-term historical processes that run throughout human history is very small. It lacks “ideological purity” and includes both liberal and illiberal solutions.

*First.* In order for society to have time to adapt to new realities, it is necessary to slow down the speed of migration flows. Visa restrictions, complication of obtaining residence permits, and even more so citizenship – all these filters slow down the inflow of carriers of a different way of life and give people the opportunity to adapt to life in new external conditions.

*Second.* Society will be required to make serious efforts and financial expenditures on education and socialisation of new fellow citizens. We can recall the Soviet difficult experience of mass resettlement of provincial residents to major

cities in the era of industrialisation, which was accompanied by the almost universal planting of young people and children of migrants at the desk, using a wide range of forms of education. Language courses, especially for immigrant children, are a good place to start. Schools and teachers are more effective and cheaper than prisons and police officers in the matter of integration.

*Third.* The enlightened part of society faces the difficult task of developing a common model of life, a picture of the world, oriented towards the search for common values in culture, morality, parallels in everyday life and traditions of different peoples, as opposed to the cultivation of irreconcilable differences. It is not easy to recognise that your understanding of “what is good and what is bad” is not timeless, universal, universal, there are competing value systems and this will have to be reckoned with.

*Fourth.* What follows from the above is the need for an uncompromising and consistent defence of the secular character of the state. In a multi-confessional state, the emphasis on a person’s religious affiliation, cultivated from early childhood, will inevitably lead the country to insoluble internal contradictions fraught with bloody conflicts up to the collapse of the country. It is strategically shortsighted to introduce religious education in schools and public worship by public figures. Religion is the territory of private life. Therefore, excessive state interference in the regulation of religious life is equally unacceptable. Public discussion of the essence of religious teachings is undesirable, but this does not apply to religious norms offered to all members of civil society.

*Fifth.* Perhaps the most important and the most difficult. The host culture will retain its essence if it becomes a “strong solvent” for foreign impurities. It must be attractive, modern, have an efficient economy, present to “the city and the world” an attractive project of the future, and arouse respect among the visitors. An advanced economy gathers energetic, intelligent, creative people who will stand firmly on their own feet. In the event of a crisis, unskilled foreign labour is the first to find itself outside the gates of enterprises, where it is met by ethnic criminals and extremist organisations. Russia is drawn to a “society of memorial culture” that debates endlessly about the past, looks to the past for answers to the challenges of the future, regrets the “lost paradise” and resists any change, seeing evolution as a process of continuous degradation. This is how you can build a reservation, but not a country – a world leader.

*Sixth.* A society that wants to survive in the new conditions must establish and maintain a firm democratic order. Democratic order is established by citizens independently observing the laws they have approved and forcing the authorities to work to maintain this order. The law is seen as a shared value; the people fight for it as for their walls. The democratic order is incomparably stronger and tougher than the authoritarian one; here you cannot buy a work permit, a certificate of language knowledge and further down the list up to the court decision.

*Seventh.* The developed world is faced with the most difficult humanitarian and moral dilemma. Either to isolate itself as much as possible from everything that happens in the third world, to strengthen the walls and stare blankly at external events that are far from our understanding of the standards of humanism, or to try to influence the situation in order to make life “outside the walls” more accept-

able, literally save human lives and thus weaken the generation of the flow of refugees. Each of the strategic lines is fraught with challenges and threats. It is clear that it will not be possible to sit back in Fortress Europe. But it is equally clear that it will not be possible to quickly implant the “right social institutions” into traditional cultures. It will

take the highest political art combined with patience and a sincere commitment to the ideals of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.”

**T. Türker<sup>1</sup>**

## **THE AGE OF RHYME<sup>2</sup>**

In the early 1990s, after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, certain political and academic circles declared the arrival of a new world order in which the United States would become the unrivalled superpower. According to the thesis “*The End of History*”, which was identified with Fukuyama, this new order ended all ideological conflicts.<sup>3</sup> Hobsbawm<sup>4</sup> and Bauman<sup>5</sup>, who positioned themselves against Fukuyama’s thesis and considered this process as the crisis of modernity and a period of instability, interpreted the collapse of the Soviet Union as “uncertainty, instability, chaos and civil war” and that this collapse affected the “system that stabilises international relations”. They claimed that destroying the system revealed the “instability of the internal political systems that are essentially based on this stability”. They criticised the new order for presenting a world without a “collective utopia” that does not constitute a conscious alternative to itself. Beck also described the end of the Cold War as a way of legitimising what politics is. He claimed it had become invalid and that “politics moves onto the slippery slope of self-disempowerment.”<sup>6</sup> The 1990s were not a period when American hegemony was established only politically. The crisis experienced in the 1970s, and the “monetarist counter-revolution” implemented in the 1980s ensured a short-term economic and social *belle époque* in the American hegemony in the 1990s.<sup>7</sup>

Although this short-term *belle époque* experienced under American hegemony was not a guarantee of any systemic collapse, it also contained the danger of major crises or depression periods reoccurring. Both the 1997 Asian Crisis and the crises experienced in the 2000s demonstrated this once again. While the 2000–2001 Crisis had a devastating impact on the peripheral countries, the 2008 Crisis, an extension of this process, broke out in the central

countries. This situation has revealed that everyone can be affected worse by global risks and the necessity of finding global solutions. As mentioned by Beck, this era should be seen as an environment of social, political and global order/disorder where risks prevail.<sup>8</sup> Risks have a multi-dimensional impact on a global level regarding international security and finance. Giddens claims that, unlike the past, controlling the future is at the centre of modernity, and therefore, the concept of risk also becomes central. However, it should be considered that the magnitude of the risks has changed compared to the past.<sup>9</sup> The current period should be considered a “period of instability”, including many new developments. The international system is currently going through a process in which the “polycrises”<sup>10</sup> and social, political and financial crises are intertwined. Its origin dates back to the 19th century. In a world order that has existed since the 19th century, where everything is interconnected and where it is no longer possible to handle it within a national framework, the issues of how to manage global risks, how to share the responsibility for risks, how to establish the *status quo*, and the answer to who will have authority at the international level have gained importance. The vulnerability of individual and collective assets to global risks and the ambiguities regarding the future of institutions/structures in the event of uncertainty and instability are signs that the current period is a “re-establishment” period.

Mark Twain famously said, “History does not repeat itself, but it often rhymes.” By focusing on the evolution of the concept of stability, it can be scrutinised through historical comparisons and the construction of international security and world order. Although the rhymes mentioned are suitable for explaining the stages of establishing sovereignty and hegemony on the balance of power between states, the unique differences in the process experienced today should be considered as well.

Given these rhyme periods, the period we are going through today is reminiscent of three recent periods. In this regard, the first rhyme is *belle époque*, the second is the interwar period, and the third is *the Long Nineteenth Century*, which should be evaluated as a highly structural process after the French Revolution.

The most characteristic feature of the *belle époque* that is reminded today is that humanity considered the *belle*

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<sup>2</sup> From the conclusion of author’s book with the same name in Turkish: *Kafiyeye Çağı*. İstanbul : Kronik, 2023.

<sup>3</sup> Fukuyama F. End of History? The National Interest. 1989. № 16. P. 18.

<sup>4</sup> Hobsbawm E. J. Kısa Yirminci Yüzyıl 1914–1991 Aşırıklar Çağı / çev. Yavuz Alogan. İstanbul : Sarmal Yayınevi, 1996. P. 23.

<sup>5</sup> Bauman Z. Intimations of postmodernity. L. : Routledge, 1999. C. 25.

<sup>6</sup> Beck U. Siyasallığın İcadı / çev. Nihat Ülner. İstanbul : İletişim Yayınları, 2013. P. 206–207.

<sup>7</sup> Arrighi G., Silver B. J., Ahmad I. Chaos and Governance in the Modern World System. Minneapolis : Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1999.

<sup>8</sup> Beck U. Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity / transl. by Mark Ritter, L. : Sage Publications, 1992.

<sup>9</sup> Giddens A. Runaway World: How Globalization is Reshaping Our Lives. N. Y. : Routledge, 2002. P. 52.

<sup>10</sup> Tooze A. Welcome to the world of the polycrisis // Financial Times. 2022. 28 Oct.

*époque* as a period of great hope. History was like a ghost in the *belle époque*. It can be said that rather than looking back on it, everyone looked at the future with hope. Even though humanity eventually became the victim of the day.

During this period, people believed that the end of history had come and thought they could express themselves better through culture and art. The *belle époque*, in a sense, was a period of stability and peace; the source of this stability and a hundred years of peace was finance, which was seen as an element of moderation.<sup>1</sup> Polanyi claims that the international balance of power was maintained thanks to the political function of the international monetary system from 1871 to 1914 and states that the organisation in economic life paved the way for an environment of peace and stability.<sup>2</sup> In particular, the year 1830 created a break between the two revolutions, and the *belle époque*<sup>3</sup> experienced under British hegemony enabled the spread of markets on a global scale and initiated a period that would last until 1914. In this process, the British-centred global market maintained its hegemony against newly emerging global powers such as Germany.<sup>4</sup> In particular, between 1870 and 1913, "The global system had once been stabilised by the hegemony, or at least the centrality of the British economy and its currency, the pound sterling."<sup>5</sup> In line with London, it became the true economic centre of the world, with the pound sterling at its core.<sup>6</sup> The international system, centred in England and based on classical liberalism and the gold standard, brought about a period of increasing prosperity. Although Germany tried to internationalise the Reichsmark, it could not overcome British hegemony in the political and military fields, especially finance. Kautsky's conceptualisation of ultra-imperialism is about a peaceful environment in which rising new powers will not necessarily lead to conflict during the peace period experienced under British hegemony. Still, capitalist powers will rule the world through a kind of cartel.<sup>7</sup> However, Kautsky's prediction of peace did not come true, and humanity experienced the First World War in 1914. Thus, the *belle époque* remained as a beautiful illusion and nostalgia in people's memories.

Another rhyme that should be mentioned is the interwar period. Human history has highlighted the single currency system in international trade regarding Western systematics for almost the last eight hundred years. The only exception to this continuity is between 1918 and 1939, a troubled process in which multiple currencies prevailed in international trade. The abandonment of the gold standard, on which the balance of power system was based and ensured

the system's functioning, also brought the end of the traditional world economy.<sup>8</sup>

This period should be evaluated as a period of instability within the framework of the 1929 Depression, the rise of fascism, the New Deal Policy adopted under the leadership of Roosevelt in the USA, and the rise of the Soviet system as an important rival. As a result of this instability, a recession has occurred globally. The destruction caused by the war, the stagnation in the economy, the increase in unemployment rates, and the uncertainty in politics have been put forward as the reasons for this stagnation. Even the USA, which is known as a self-sufficient economy and was least affected by the damage caused by the war (even though the USA emerged from the war as a creditor country), could not stay out of this recession process.<sup>9</sup> Polanyi conceptualised this process in which classical liberalism went bankrupt as the Great Transformation, and E. H. Carr defined the interwar period as the "twenty-year crisis" associated with the bankruptcy of classical liberalism based on the harmony of interests.<sup>10</sup> During the interwar period, protective policies began to gain importance, and new pursuits, such as introducing Keynesian policies, were resorted to combat mass unemployment and lack of demand. In this process, the rapid industrialisation and development of the Soviet Union through the "plan" made adopting new economic approaches appealing.

"From 1929 to 1940, Soviet industrial production tripled, at the very least. It rose from 5 per cent of the world's manufactured products in 1929 to 18 per cent in 1938, while during the same period, the joint share of the USA, Britain and France fell from 59 per cent to 52 per cent of the world's total."<sup>11</sup> To put it specifically, these rates demonstrated the rise of the Soviet Union during the recession. In this process, the profound changes in the world economies that have undergone, the USA did not function to provide some alternative or re-stabilization to the system that provided stability by creating a kind of *belle époque* in the British hegemony, whose payments system was based on the pound sterling.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, the deep crisis in the functioning of the global economy and the absence of a hegemonic power in the international order have made a return to the *belle époque* impossible. The search for an alternative market economy, especially the welfare state approach pioneered by Keynes, and the "nuclear" policies carried out during the Cold War ensured balance and stability in the economic and international power system. In particular, with Bretton-Woods, an attempt was made to end financial instability by creating mechanisms to control post-war capital flows, and the US dollar became the single currency. The Cold War began a situation of stability in this respect. After the Second World War, where "war made the state and the state made war," war, seen as the *normal* and powerful tool of the international system, was replaced by change and the maintenance of the *status quo* by non-war means.<sup>13</sup> The Cold War was such a period, and it created

<sup>1</sup> Polanyi K. Büyük Dönüşüm / çev. Ayşe Buğra. İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2010. P. 37–50.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. P. 57.

<sup>3</sup> Arrighi G., Silver B. J. Polanyi's «Double Movement»: The Belle Époques of British and U. S. Hegemony Compared // Politics & Society. 2003. № 31 (2). P. 325–355.

<sup>4</sup> Carr E. H. The Twenty Years' Crisis 1919–1939: An Introduction To The Study of International Relations, Edinburg: R. & R. Clark, 1946. P. 55–56. Carr states that England adopted a free trade policy during this period, while the USA and Germany rose as rivals against the British hegemony by implementing protectionist policies.

<sup>5</sup> Hobsbawm E. J. The Age of Extremes. L.: Abacus, 1994. P. 271; Idem. Sanayi ve İmparatorluk / çev. Abdullah Ersoy. Ankara: Dost Kitabevi, 2003. P. 139. In particular, 1913 was a record year for British trade (cm.: Carr E. H. Op. cit. P. 108).

<sup>6</sup> Hobsbawm E. J. Sanayi ve İmparatorluk / çev. Abdullah Ersoy. Ankara: Dost Kitabevi, 2003. P. 139.

<sup>7</sup> Kautsky K. Ultraimperialism // Die Neue Zeit. 1914. 11 Sept.

<sup>8</sup> Polanyi K. Op. cit. P. 36.

<sup>9</sup> Hobsbawm E. J. Kısa Yirminci Yüzyıl 1914–1991 Aşırıliklar Çağı. P. 118–119.

<sup>10</sup> Carr E. H. Op. cit.

<sup>11</sup> Hobsbawm E. J. Kısa Yirminci Yüzyıl 1914–1991 Aşırıliklar Çağı. P. 117.

<sup>12</sup> Arrighi G., Silver B. J. Polanyi's «Double Movement».

<sup>13</sup> Tilly C. War Making and State Making as Organized Crime // From Bringing the State Back In / ed. P. Evans, D. Rueschemeyer, T. Skocpol. Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985. P. 169–191.

a period of stability. Although this stability is economic, it arises from the nuclear threat that enables the international system to stabilise, albeit through coercion.

The last of the three rhymes is *the Long Nineteen Century*.<sup>1</sup> The long nineteenth century should be estimated as a long-term crisis, considering the impact of nation-state construction and the industrialisation and modernisation process in the following centuries. Contrary to what is believed, it is an age of instability rather than stability that brings radical transformations to the extent that it is necessary to consider this period as a transformation rather than a change which was shaped economically, politically and ideologically, especially by the double revolution of 1789 and its complement in 1848.<sup>2</sup> It's worth nothing here that Hobsbawm claims many changes still need to be completed and that, despite the unique experience in the economic, technical and social fields, equilibrium has not been reached.<sup>3</sup> The answer to the question of when the 19th century ended is not definitive, considering that some of the founding values in social, economic and international politics, both intellectually and systematically, belong to this period. As a matter of fact, while some scholars claim that this century ended in 1900 and some scholars in 1945, others claim that this century continues as well. As mentioned above, the establishment dates back to the 19th century rather than within a *short-term timescale*. It is a social, political, and economic installation described in the 19th century. Moreover, it should be considered that these problems result from *longest-duration trends*.

Bauman and Bordonni defined the problems experienced at the social level in the 1970s, explicitly implying that Americanism depends on increasing consumption. They referred to the "decline of the West" through the "collapse of civilisation" and "the rapid shrinking of Europe's worldwide material domination and spiritual hegemony."<sup>4</sup> To the extent that "*consumerist syndrome*", Bauman and Bordonni addressed that the modern consumer society consumes not only goods but also human services and, therefore, human relationships. Firstly, the main reason for this problem on the social level is economic transformation, which can be considered a post-industrial society issue. Rising financial systems since the 1970s have increased the importance of financial capital. After the Second World War, the withdrawal of the public sector from decision-making processes against market-based finance, especially the invalid of Keynesian policies, the adoption of the Washington Consensus, and the coming under the control of nation-states by financial capital mechanisms caused the erosion of the decision-making capacities of nation-states in the economic field. Harvey argued that transformation or flexible accumulation crisis in production, working conditions and consumption resulted from the search for financial solutions. Concerning the financial level, it is possible to determine that there is a different restructuring in the world and that monetary inflation is bringing about a crisis, as Kondratieff mentioned. Harvey described that if we are looking for a distinguishing feature, we should turn our gaze to the fi-

nancial dimension and the credit system, and claims that although these two mechanisms provide short-term stability, to the extent that postpones a crisis process similar to what Kondratieff cited.<sup>5</sup>

Secondly, the change in social life is another problem besides the economy and finance. Hobsbawm interprets the paradox of the 21st century as the situation of being in a vacuum despite instant access to a mass of information.<sup>6</sup> This paradox results in the narrowing of information's semantic content and the disappearance of its value, creating a kind of "cognition erosion".<sup>7</sup> Bauman describes this process as *liquid modernity*. While liquid modernity makes it easier to create communities through new information technologies, blurring the distinctions between public and private, losing confidentiality and weakening ties between people, it also leads to the emergence of precarious relationships instead of old-style communities.<sup>8</sup> In a process where "things fall apart, the centre does not hold"<sup>9</sup>, given to Bauman and Bordonni, "societies that know perfectly what do not want but have no idea what do want, that are atomised, have lost their political characteristics and are unorganised, can create serious public order problems."<sup>10</sup> The collapse in social relations also leads to the fall of the "public sphere, which is the area of negotiation" where private interests are bracketed, and rational discussion occurs.<sup>11</sup> To the extent that the fall of the public sphere is a vital problem, the environment required for its reconstruction still needs to be on the horizon. During the pandemic, the death of "*koinonia*" and the dominance of "*idion*" were also mentioned in dystopian. Therefore, these discourses should be considered in the context of the fall of the public sphere.

Thirdly, politics is another issue that needs to be emphasised. As is often emphasised in the literature, finding politically stable political subjects in times of instability becomes challenging. It is seen that extreme political movements take place and receive responses in societies in a dispersed and unorganised manner. As Polanyi points out, such depressed and unstable periods lead to the rise of social reactions and different social tendencies.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, the resulting landscape once again reminds us of the 19th century. Although it is thought that these problems are problems experienced by the Western world itself, it is clear that there is a possibility and even a necessity to spread to the non-Western world. The global hegemony of the West has exported these problems to regions outside itself, both in terms of *modus vivendi* and political organisations. Therefore, although nations and social institutions have their starting points, at historical turning points, these nations and social institutions are connected in the struggle for existence. Although nations and social institutions have their starting points, at historical turning points, these na-

<sup>5</sup> Harvey D. *Postmodernliğin Durumu*. Metis Yayıncılık, 2003.

<sup>6</sup> Hobsbawm E. J. *Yeni Yüzyılın Eşiğinde* / çev. İbrahim Yıldız. İstanbul : Yordam Kitap, 2007. P. 186.

<sup>7</sup> Bauman Z. *Modernite, Kapitalizm, Sosyalizm* / çev. F. Doruk Ergun. İstanbul : Say Yayınları, 2014, P. 118-119 ; *Hari J. Çalınan Dikkat: Neden Odaklanamıyoruz?* / çev. Barış Engin Aksoy. İstanbul : Metis Yayınları, 2022. P. 49.

<sup>8</sup> Bauman Z. *Op. cit.* P. 108-120.

<sup>9</sup> Berman M. *Katı Olan Her Şey Buharlaşıyor* / çev. Ümit Altuğ, Bülent Peker. İstanbul : İletişim Yayınları, 2013. P. 127.

<sup>10</sup> Bauman Z., Bordonni C. *Op. cit.*

<sup>11</sup> Habermas J. *Kamusal Yaşamın Yapısal Dönüşümü* / çev. Tanıl Bora, Mithat Sancar. İstanbul : İletişim Yayınları, 2021.

<sup>12</sup> Polanyi K. *Op. cit.*

<sup>1</sup> *İlber Ortaylı. İmparatorluğun En Uzun Yüzyılı*. İstanbul : Kronik Yayınları, 2018.

<sup>2</sup> Hobsbawm E. J. *Devrim Çağı 1789-1848* / çev. Bahadır Sina Şener. Ankara : Dost Kitabevi, 2003.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. P. 327.

<sup>4</sup> Bauman Z., Bordonni C. *State of Crisis*. Cambridge Polity Press, 2016. P. 149.

tions and social institutions are organisations in the struggle for existence.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to the recent rhymes, it is possible to express that the current period is unstable and is a re-establishment process under three main topics:

- 1) the transformation of the Western system in social, political and economic fields;
- 2) change in world actors (various regional powers and nation-states giving more priority to their interests in the global division of power);
- 3) China's global challenge and rise.

The existing international system, centred by the USA, can be evaluated to put it in a Gramscian sense of hegemony.<sup>2</sup> Moral-intellectual leadership constitutes an important pillar of the establishment of hegemony. As seen above, hegemony is not perpetually reproduced through the historical process due to the crisis of hegemony. The point that should be considered is that the crisis of hegemony does not require the disappearance of the dominant political and social system or the establishment of an alternative hegemonic order. Even though the Western system has occasionally entered hegemony crisis, it has managed to reproduce its hegemony with its economic, political and cultural dimensions within historical continuity. Although the Soviet Union tried to become a counter-hegemonic power against Western hegemony during the Cold War, it could never offer an alternative to the "dollar system" and continued its existence within it. They have existed within the same system due to mutual agreement or coercion, especially due to the power provided by nuclear treat. The state of balance and the stability it brings have been overcome due to hegemonic crises. During this period we experience nowadays, nation-states diverged and differentiated from traditional ideologies, and some nation-states' desire to be more effective than before within the global system emerged. Therefore, tendencies towards finding new political balances have emerged. These tendencies, which emerged as a result of a process of challenge against the Western system in which certain nation-states, as subjects, tried to expand their jurisdictions again and tried to re-establish sharing, are seen in positions such as de Gaullism, in Indonesia, Brazil, the Middle East, the South in Africa etc. can be seen.

In addition to Gramsci's approach, this change can be analysed through "*Aux bords du politique*" – *On the Shores of Politics*, an important work and conceptualisation of Rancière. Rancière claims that politics can emerge at any time with this conceptualisation. Given Rancière, politics occur within the order of the polis, which determines the "establishment", whereas real politics occur in the "demos", which is the political subject with the appearance of the existing political order.<sup>3</sup> *Polis* the maintenance of order and "establishment". Politics is within the *polis*, but it becomes visible with the question, "What will be the part of those that have no part?" Politics emerge with the processes of political subjectivity of those who have no part. It continues to be valid both for the Western domestic political system, with the desire and uncertainty of radical transformation of the centrism and social structure, and is related to the fact

that new actors on the shores of the West in international politics have begun to produce politics among themselves.

In this regard, an evaluation can be made based on Simmel's "The Stranger". To the extent that the concept of "the stranger"<sup>4</sup>, created based on social types, is adapted to the international level, it is seen that those who remain on the shores of the West are subjectivity that "exist today and have the capacity to exist tomorrow" rather than being a kind of "*flâneur*"<sup>5</sup>. An important point that should be noted is that the state of being far away and on the shore both makes the existence of the other possible and allows objective observation. Considering what we have learned from Machiavelli, he says in the introduction to *The Prince*: "*People who draw landscapes proceed to a low point on a plain in order to study the nature of mountains and higher elevations; they proceed to mountain-tops in order to study the nature of the lowlands. Just so, to understand the nature of the people fully, one must be a prince; to understand the nature of princes fully, one must be of the people.*"<sup>6</sup> In line with the logic of "necessity", the "stranger" also can make objective observations. It can be implied that subjectivity is positioned as a "stranger" in the Western systematic change, and the stranger's existence remains constant. In this context, the "stranger" might be functional for the West to rebuild itself politically, socially and economically since the existence of the West depends on "the stranger". In this regard, it is clear that the Western system vitally needs to be re-established by expansion. The point that should not be underestimated is that this situation should not be confused with extreme discourses such as "the collapse of the West".

The most challenging aspect of this period should be considered as the rise of China. Although China has not yet taken definitive steps to establish a Yuan-centered international trade, the title of a recent meeting organised by the IMF at the Atlantic Council was Bretton-Woods 2-0. An issue that is on the agenda of the IMF or the Atlantic Council is voiced loudly by China. It has been announced in recent months that energy import/export balance agreements have been made between China and many countries, such as Ghana and Saudi Arabia, in their currencies. Energy trade between Russia and India has reached remarkable levels. Therefore, it should be established that the main challenge today comes from China. Relations between China and America have recently been often discussed as a "New Cold War" or "two different paths of capitalism".<sup>7</sup> China's rising power poses a threat to US hegemony and its economic relations with Africa and Latin America, as well as China's cultural expansion (such as the One Belt and One Road Project), combined with global inter-organizational competition, especially the formation of organisations such as the Asian Investment Bank, and its influence on intellectual property rights, make it essential for the United States to take precautions against this threat.

<sup>4</sup> Simmel G. Bireysellik ve Kültür / çev. Tuncay Birkan. İstanbul : Metis Yayıncılık.

<sup>5</sup> Baudelaire Ch. Modern Hayatın Ressamı / çev. Ali Berkay, İstanbul : İletişim Yayınları, 2009 ; Benjamin W. Pasajlar / çev. Ahmet Cemal. İstanbul : Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2012.

<sup>6</sup> Machiavelli N. The Prince / transl. by J. B. Atkinson. Indianapolis ; Cambridge : Hackett Publishing Company, 2008, P. 97.

<sup>7</sup> Milanovic B. With the US and China, Two Types of Capitalism Are Competing with Each Other. Promarket, 2019. 25 Sept. ; Rana P. B., Ji X. From Centralising to Decentralising Global Economic Architecture: The Asian Perspective. Palgrave Macmillan, 2022.

<sup>1</sup> Polanyi K. Op. cit. P. 67.

<sup>2</sup> Gramsci A. Hapishane Defterleri, Seçmeler / çev. Adnan Cemgil. İstanbul : Belge Yayınları, 1986. P. 28–32; 282–288; 319–324.

<sup>3</sup> Rancière J. Siyasalın Kıyısında / çev. Aziz Ufuk Kılıç. İstanbul : İletişim Yayınları, 2016. P. 71–78.



The three structural topics mentioned above (The Western system's economic, financial, social and political transformation; certain regional powers and nation-states prioritising their interests in the global system; China's global challenge) rhyming with three periods (belle époque; the interwar period; the *Long Nineteenth Century*) can be a beacon to analyse the current situation of the globe. It is possible to evaluate such a period of crisis, when all structures stuck between technologist-technocracy and bureaucratic-Bonapartism are open to

discussion and challenge, when the problem of identity is sought, when all old and new subjects show capacity problems, when passions come to light and become concrete, with Gramsci's statement that "the old is dying, the new cannot be born."<sup>1</sup> Therefore, it is necessary to accept that this statement is the truth of this age as well. M. Albright once said she was "an optimist who worries a lot."<sup>2</sup> In line with this, it would probably not be wrong to adopt the position of "a pessimist who hopes rarely" approach these days.

C. Varga<sup>3</sup>

## PERSPECTIVES OF RULE OF LAW AS VALUE AND LEGAL FUNDAMENTAL OF THE NEW WORLD DEVELOPMENT

Both the intellectual products and many of the technical solutions of our civilisational development so far raise the question of their human universality or their particularity in time and place. Western civilisation, our Europeaness, has always been in favour of universality from the very beginning, since both our dominant Christian tradition and the Enlightenment, which served as the cradle of many modern ideas we live with, linked them to the human being as such as basic needs. On the one hand, as anthropology asserts, "Man, biologically, is one." But on the other, the same anthropology is still more rigorous than this. In one of its most classic documents, it is stated that "Standards and values are relative to the culture from which they derive," and that, consequently, there is no human being *in abstracto* – that is, in general, in a purely biological sense – but only one who lives in his given community and thus in his culture. In a real sense, or in a cultural anthropological sense that goes beyond biological anthropology, none of them are universalisable. Accordingly, as its conclusion reads, "Only when a statement of the right of men to live in terms of their own traditions is incorporated <...>, then, can the next step of defining the rights and duties of human groups as regards each other be set."<sup>4</sup>

This is obviously not the statement of a weightless and uninteresting truth in view of the emergence of a new multipolar world order, and certainly not in the context of intellectual products and technical solutions of civilisational development which, while standing for values defining the ultimate ethos of law and the law's working, have been meant to serve the maintenance and expansion of unipo-

larity as much as possible and precisely within the framework of a globalism controlled by, and in the interest of, the United States.<sup>5</sup>

### Rule of law

The idea of the rule of law or *Rechtsstaatlichkeit* has become one of the watchwords of international politics in recent decades, while its conceptual content has been debated especially in Hungary since the beginning of the region's so-called transition to rule of law. By this time, mainstream academic and political circles in the Western hemisphere have already universalised it as a closed and abstract concept that happens to be the minimum that should be achieved anywhere in the world, as it serves as a criterion for state institutions, human rights, and all the values Western Europe and the Anglo-American world happen just to hold. The situation is far from a local feature, a new or strictly Hungarian characteristic. Its genesis coincided with the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the imposition of American type globalisation on the newly unipolar world. Virtually from the end of the Cold War and from the unipolarisation of the world, the United Nations, together with its overpowering economic and financial organisations, as well as the United States foreign policy and the political, administrative and judicial centres of the European Union have used it as a means of globalist, respectively federalising, expansion with their own values, state structures, and conception of human rights.

As to the conceptuality of the rule of law or *Rechtsstaatlichkeit*, it is a broad ideal with many values, which can only be approached by a pragmatic case-to-case weighing and balancing, ready to compromise at all times, in order to achieve an optimal solution for each individual situation and case. For, considering its complexity with conflicting values involved, internal collisions would be caused in any case of equal support. Moreover, this concept cannot be proclaimed as a universal model. It can only be a solution to issues within a given particular community, that is, state or international entity, which happens to be a response to queries that have arisen in their own place and time, in own

<sup>1</sup> Gramsci A. Les Cahier de Prison. Cah. 3. P. : Gallimard, 1983.

<sup>2</sup> Albright M. I am an optimist who worries a lot. Der Spiegel International. 2018. 11 July. URL: <https://www.spiegel.de/international/world/interview-with-madeleine-albright-a-1217661.html> (accessed: 14.05.2024).

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<sup>4</sup> Statement on Human Rights / The Executive Board, American Anthropological Association // American Anthropologist. 1947. Vol. 49, № 4. P. 539–543.

<sup>5</sup> See only from the past a few decades ago as an example of the immediate and unscrupulous exploitation of a situation of power supremacy at any time: Varga C. Failed Crusade: American Self-confidence, Russian Catastrophe // Central European Political Science Review. 2007. Vol. 8, № 28. P. 71–87.

context. Or, the idea itself is *per definitionem* particularistic, which cannot be universalised as abstracted from the concreteness of any of its *hic et nunc* occurrence. By looking at the variety of legal arrangements in the world today in a comparative historical perspective, one has to realise that it must be particular if only because it presupposes a rule-based legal order, which in fact is unique to the laws rooted in Roman law and thus far from universal.

So, if we summarise what we knew about this concept in its appearance a century or two ago, and what the new unipolar power is now trying to impose on the rest of the world, we are faced with a new phenomenon, because it has become transubstantiated in the meantime.

What it was, was taking the law seriously. It stood for the need, in the continental European version, for the law to bind the power that makes the law and all its addressees, while in the Anglo-Saxon version, it stood for a court to be authorised to say and enforce what the law ultimately is in any dispute. In the final analysis, it was nothing more than the expression of our civilisational self-aggrandisement in the field of law, an ideal to which we all aspire: each of us in our own practice, under conditions that have just been given to us in the constantly changing situations of the challenges and responses that are to define our existence. Its manifestations (forms, emphases and modes) are like this here and like that there: they show a great variety, moreover, a great adaptability, too, in their internal development. Of course, they also change over time. Hence, in its origin and development, the idea of both the Rule of Law and *Rechtsstaatlichkeit* comprehends all the experience accumulated in the civilisational self-ennoblement available in the operation of the state, an experience that has always been nourished by different responses to the changing challenges of particular places and times. It has therefore never been anything other than inherently context-dependent and thus inevitably particular, depending on its cultural (etc.) environment. Although present (and, in principle, mutual) learning processes between nations and ages may attempt to project it as universal, but a sheer articulation of this does not necessarily imply more than the natural need for self-justification of those who are involved in exporting values that are vitally necessary for the West.

At a time when the West used the slogan of the rule of law as a symbol of its superiority in the Cold War confrontation, it was only used to denote, describe, and characterise. Now, with the rise of globalisation, when according to its own claim, the world economy demands a unified regulatory environment and the European Union has embarked on centralised empire-building, the official mantra has become an increasingly insistent demand for the rule of law, but this time already enforced as a normative criterion.

What is the content? It is used as if it were a legal instrument, an instrument to enforce a long-known ideal worldwide. But deceptively, because it has now been placed in the political milieu of world power decision-makers and thus transferred from the legal to the political arena. With it came the chance, and the subsequent practice, of constantly expanding its content as its masters see fit, while attempting to force their innovations of today and tomorrow into the very scheme that was recognised yesterday. As if the deliberate commitment of a state to the *status quo ante* automatically extended to the contingency of any *sta-*

*tus quo post*. But that which is freely extended and changed in this way is also a sign of the actual lack of substance of this claim. It is no coincidence, then, that the concept itself seems to be internally empty also to its proponents.

And indeed, even though its metamorphoses changed it from a *descriptum* to a *prescriptum* and thus to a criterion for judging actually working legal systems from the outside and from above, they could not change the basic nature of the very rule of law. That is, the fact that, by its very nature, it is not a class concept with boundaries that can be drawn with precise sharpness based on definition, but a so-called concept of order that can only be described by characterisation and exemplification, illustrated by a series of manifestations of various occurrences and characteristic properties.<sup>1</sup> In other words, to use another terminology from the literature of the philosophy and logic of science, the foundational nature of the rule of law is precisely its immutability of essential contestability.<sup>2</sup> This is what, on the one hand, is freely and constantly expanded by ever-competing institutional and authorial formulations. At the same time and on the other hand, this is the basic trait which, of course, is a prerequisite for its unchanging service as the ideal of a humanity that believes in the rule of law or *Rechtsstaat*, despite changing circumstances.

Its content, even in the narrowest legal conception of the genuinely basic constitutive elements, is a confusing ensemble of values, goals and procedural paths which, since they naturally point in different directions and are also in tension with each other if equally or unilaterally emphasised, require weighing and balancing in each specific individual situation – if only because maximising any of them without such a compromise, or even attempting or supporting their full satisfaction, would result in their mutual extinction. Consequently, the rule of law is not a category the fulfilment of which can be answered by simple ‘yes’ or ‘no’, but an ideal, a direction towards which we must strive in any actualisation of law. How? As it concludes, contradictorily and with compromises. For only the individual solution of a situation then and there, the responsible and responsive consideration of its *hic et nunc* can create any kind of some then and there optimal balance.

Inherent in the very nature of our subject is the fact that neither the rule of law nor *Rechtsstaat* has ever been – and in its current, bordering on abusive, usage has ever become – an operative concept in law. It is therefore not an operative term, because neither it as a whole nor its individual components contain definitions of facts which, by constituting a legal case in law, would make it possible to determine its prevalence or non-prevalence in law, and thus to establish and prove its facts in court. In fact, no such definition has yet been given by the domestic or international order of any state or international entity either, which bodies, by invoking this very concept, are today making political and economic demands or even using blackmail as a means of extortion.

<sup>1</sup> See: Hempel C. G., Oppenheim P. Der Typusbegriff im Licht der neuen Logik (Leyden: Sijthoff 1936) vii + 130 pp.; Oppenheim P. Von Klassenbegriffen zu Ordnungsbegriffen // Travaux du IXe Congrès International de Philosophie: Congrès Descartes / ed. R. Bayer. P.: Hermann, 1937. Vol. 9. P. 69–76 [Actualités scientifiques et industrielles 530]; Radbruch G. Klassenbegriffe und Ordnungsbegriffe im Rechtsdenken // Revue internationale de la Théorie du Droit XII. 1938. 1. P. 46–54.

<sup>2</sup> See: Gallie W. B. Essentially Contested Concepts // Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society (1955–1956). Vol. 56. P. 167–198.

This obviously also applies to the political-ideological extension of the notion of the rule of law when democracy, human rights, and liberalism with further values, are added to the list of demands under the aegis of the rule of law as *sine qua non* components. For neither can this mean that anyone may claim a commitment to the rule of law in the past as a justification for the subsequent assumption of any arbitrary extension (completion and/or amendment) at later times.<sup>1</sup>

#### **The case of human rights and the blending of non-governmental organisations serving political penetration with the civil society's genuine formations**

The problematics of human rights would simply be a separate issue if it were not associated with the contemporary mainstream stereotypes of the rule of law allegedly presupposing them as foundational parts. However, a closer examination reveals that there are, so to speak, parallel features that emerge here as well. Such as the transubstantiation of the notion in the meantime, because the liberal elites of the Western mainstream no longer regard human rights simply as fundamental rights indispensable to existence and life as human beings, nor as an umbrella protecting the individual from the overpowering power of the state, but as an absolutising extension of their permissiveness-cum-libertinism with exclusive emphasis on the unrestricted autonomy of the individual in any circumstances and at any time. Such is the fact that the content of human rights is treated by whatever minorities or interest groups as freely expandable in and for their struggles. And such is the underlying nature of human rights consisting of nothing more than highly projected artificial virtualities. For, basically, as theoretically reconstructed, human rights are simply a kind of mediated projection of wishful ideation, which is actually matched by the actions of those who are motivated to act as it implies. It also raises the question of universality or particularity with the mainstream seeking to demonstrate their universalism as the ideological backing of their wish for their worldwide dominant position.<sup>2</sup>

At the same time, the international mainstream conception of democracy is increasingly based on a kind of reciprocity that is not content with the operation of the state apparatus, set up by the proportion of votes of respective elections, but would place the exercise of national sovereignty directly under the joint control of non-governmental organisations, which are emphatically proclaimed to be representatives of civil society. However, what is at stake here is nothing other than non-governmental organisations, which are, as it were, hidden in the common concept of genuinely civil formations and use the latter's potential, neutral and at the same time beneficial and promoting the common good for all, for their own alien purposes, serving foreign political interests. Although they do not have any democratic representation or mandate, these as agent organisations built up, financed and run by foreign governments or other centres of political or financial capital are attempting to dominate the field of actual decision-making and to deter-

mine the course of a host country, by infiltrating domestic politics. And as rich documentation shows, American professional analysis has already admitted that what was once a secret service mission in the Cold War era can now be openly undertaken and carried out by such non-government organisations in the target countries.<sup>3</sup> Or, as Soros-funded self-praise<sup>4</sup> says, since the fall of communism, Central and Eastern European history can be thoroughly read from the chronology of actions taken by the "Open Society".<sup>5</sup>

#### **Formal legalism**

Formal legalism is precisely the criterion that reflects the very nature of law. And it is the same that gives law its specificity as well. For it is law itself that will, starting from itself and addressed to itself, finally define and also enforce its own system of fulfilment.<sup>6</sup> Accordingly, the very basic requirement of the rule of law is that, in order to eliminate the chance of any arbitrariness, every legal act shall be legally patterned.

However, this most basic root requirement of the rule of law is not without its consequences, at least in today's world, which is in a frenetic pursuit of perfection. For instance, in order to achieve or even approach this, it encourages ever-increasing and ever more complete juridification, and, as a precondition for this, ever-increasing norm production. As a specific mass field of state intervention, this concerns first and foremost the exercise of executive power, bound to result in a worldwide proliferation of the body of the law with the inevitable inflation of norms.

To take a striking example, French public law literature has come to regard this as one of the dangers, or even the greatest threat, to their own constitutionality. This has already produced the false connection between the rule of law and the completeness of legal order as such,<sup>7</sup> according to which the desirable guarantee of the primacy of law presupposes, as it were, the most comprehensive possible regulation of all life circumstances. And the future that it will not be able to avoid shall certainly be instability, with

<sup>3</sup> For James Corbett (Corbett J. How the US Uses NGOs to Destabilize Foreign Governments. URL: [http://theinternationalforecaster.com/topic/international\\_forecaster\\_weekly/How\\_the\\_US\\_Uses\\_NGOs\\_to\\_Destabilize\\_Foreign\\_Governments](http://theinternationalforecaster.com/topic/international_forecaster_weekly/How_the_US_Uses_NGOs_to_Destabilize_Foreign_Governments)) "These organizations are Trojan horses: designed to appear as gifts, but containing secret trap doors through which hidden forces can enter the country and covertly undermine the governments in question. <...> [S]uch organizations are prime candidates for smuggling covert operatives into foreign countries." Or, according to William Blum (Blum W. Rogue State. A Guide to the World's Only Superpower. Monroe, ME.: Common Courage Press, 2000. P. 180), "A lot of what we do today was done covertly 25 years ago by the CIA."

<sup>4</sup> The authors of the book *The Paradoxes of Unintended Consequences* (ed. R. Dahrendorf et al.; Budapest; N. Y.: Central European Univ. Press, 2000. P. 233) and A. Áslung in *Building Capitalism. The Transformation of the Older Soviet Bloc* (Cambridge; N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2002, P. 438), reasserts "[T]he history of postcommunist transformation is therefore, to a great extent, the history of the Soros foundations."

<sup>5</sup> Varga Cs. Civil Society Associations vs. So-called Non-governmental Organizations // *Civic Review*. Budapest, 2020. № 16. Spec. iss. P. 212–225. URL: <https://eng.polgariszemle.hu/current-publication/157-excerpts-from-hungarian-history-and-scientific-life/981-civil-society-associations-vs-so-called-non-governmental-organisations>.

<sup>6</sup> This is 'Verfüllungssystem', a category of George Lukács' posthumous ontology; cf. Varga Cs. *The Place of Law in Lukács' World Concept*. 3rd ed. [reprint 1985]. Budapest: Szent István Társulat, 2012. Ch. 5. URL: <http://mek.oszk.hu/14200/14249>.

<sup>7</sup> See: Varga Cs. *Legal Mentality as a Component of Law: Rationality Driven into Anarchy in America* // *Curentul Juridic*. Târgu Mureș. 2013. XVI. Vol. 52, № 1. P. 63–77. URL: <https://ideas.repec.org/a/pmu/cjurid/v52y2013p63-74.html>.

<sup>1</sup> Cf.: Csaba V. *Rule of Law – Contesting and Contested* // Magyar Elektronikus Könyvtár: [website]. Budapest, 2021. URL: <https://mek.oszk.hu/22800/22867/22867.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Cf.: Варга Ч. *Природа прав человека // Загадка права и правового мышления: избранные произведения / сост. и науч. ред. М. В. Антонов. СПб.: Алет-Пресс, 2015. С. 224–230.*

the growing weakening of legal certainty. Moreover, any self-accumulating mass of rules is also crying out for ever-increasing changes to the law, with heavily burdening side-effects as well. However, the actual path possibly leading to this remains – and has to remain – inevitably uncritical, because it will have been pre-justified from the outset, as all of it can be and will actually be done precisely in the spirit and service of the very “rule of law”.<sup>1</sup> As a result of all this, the French *Conseil d’État* already pronounced that “the law itself will become a threat rather than a defence.”<sup>2</sup>

As others have raised, formalistic rule positivism remains mostly a direct servant of the state interest embodied in regulation, instead of promoting the possible fulfilment of individual freedom. As a consequence, the genuine and direct service to the people as the ultimate vocation of law remains without criteria. It is so because the representation

of law as a mere abstraction deduced from rules inevitably isolates the whole formation from real social processes.

Lastly and especially, if the course taken becomes a cult for itself, it can contribute to a decline in individual initiative by imposing a single scheme of thinking that may amount to a kind of voluntary intellectual self-*Gleichschaltung*, which is to lead, as already warned,<sup>3</sup> to “closing down the faculty of independent moral thought”.<sup>4</sup>

### Conclusion

The ideal that we are all striving to realise more and more fully in our civilisational self-aggrandisement is reasserted again, for it is just the same ideal that follows from our legal traditions, from the whole arc and logic of our legal development as well.

M. V. Zakharova<sup>5</sup>

## APPROACHES TO THE DIALOGUE OF CULTURES AND CIVILIZATIONS

As part of our annual meetings, we invariably address the image of the future world order. The debates have the character of serious scientific discussions, in the course of which not just another epitaph to the unipolar world order of the past is voiced, but also specific initiatives for the formation and strengthening of multipolarity are proposed. It is gratifying that the ideas generated on this and similar platforms are not “dissolved in the ether”, but after appropriate expert study are incorporated into the most important doctrinal documents adopted in our country.

Our current conversation about the dialogue among cultures and civilizations in the new emerging reality is largely philosophical in nature. At the same time, the topic is also of great practical importance, since inter-civilizational communication is a reality of the modern world. In addition to states, it involves scientific, religious, entrepreneurial, youth, public and basically cultural associations, etc.

Russian approaches to the problems of inter-civilizational and intercultural dialogue are based on the desire to form “such a system of international relations that would guarantee reliable security, preservation of its cultural and

civilizational identity, and equal opportunities for the development for all states, regardless of their geographical location, size of territory, demographic, resource and military capacity, or political, economic and social structure.”<sup>6</sup> (a quotation from the Foreign Policy Concept, 2023).

In citing these provisions of the Concept, I cannot refrain from mentioning, in contrast, another document, the authors of which do not hesitate to call their country “a global power with global interests” and declare that it is called upon to ‘lead’ (it must be assumed – the world) “with strength and purposefulness.” I think it’s clear without any explanation who we’re talking about. This is a quotation from the U. S. National Security Strategy adopted in October 2022.

*For reference only: In the preamble to the Strategy, this passage reads as follows, “...there is no nation better positioned to lead with strength and purpose than the United States of America.”*

Thus, already here, in these basic characteristics I have quoted, we can see the profound differences in approaches to the dialogue of civilizations, to the future world order of Russia (and like-minded people supporting it) and the “collective West”. In scientific terms, we are talking about the confrontation of civilizational approach, on the one hand, and linear-universalist approach, on the other hand. The first one, which is also defended by our country, is based on the awareness of the non-universality of Western culture and civilization, which is no more unique than others (the projection of these views in international relations is precisely the principle of multipolarity). The key characteristic of the second one is the claim for universality of the processes taking place in the world for all countries and peoples, which invariably leads to creation of their hierarchy in terms of ‘performance’ (and, as a consequence, unipolarity in international affairs).

Culture, unique to each individual civilization, plays an increasingly important role in international relations. Pol-

<sup>1</sup> Luisin B. Le mythe de l’État de droit // *Civitas Europa*. 2016. Vol. 37, iss. 2. P. 155–182. URL: <https://www.cairn.info/revue-civitas-europa-2016-2-page-155.htm?contenu=article#re35no35>.

<sup>2</sup> Conseil d’État, ‘De la sécurité juridique’ : Rapport public annuel 1991 // *Études et documents* (La Documentation française). 1992. № 43. P. 20 [“le droit n’apparaît plus comme une protection mais comme une menace”].

<sup>3</sup> Waldron J. The Rule of Law // *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. 2016. § 7. URL: <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/rule-of-law/#OppoRuleLaw>.

<sup>4</sup> Cf.: Varga Cs. Rechtsstaat, Rule of Law – Expectations, Criticisms, and the Nature of Claims // *Rule of Law* / ed. Grz. Pastuszek. Warszawa : Wydawnictwo Instytutu Wymiaru Sprawiedliwości, 2023. P. 13–58. URL: [https://wydawnictwo.iws.gov.pl/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/RuleOfLaw\\_DRUK.pdf](https://wydawnictwo.iws.gov.pl/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/RuleOfLaw_DRUK.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> Director of the Information and Press Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation, Ph. D. in History. Author of a number of publications in the press, including: “The World Leader of Black Transplantation”, “In Memory of All Victims of the Holocaust”, “Toys and Holidays” (co-authored), “Chunjie – the Holiday of New Year”, “Temple Fairs in Modern China”, and others. Awarded the Orders of Honor, Friendship, and a Certificate of Honor from the President of the Russian Federation. Recipient of the “Voice of the World”, PROBA, “Charmous” prizes, and others.

<sup>6</sup> Концепция внешней политики Российской Федерации. 31 марта 2023 г. URL: <https://www.mid.ru/ru/detail-material-page/1860586/?lang=ru> (accessed: 26.04.2024).

itics, as if refuting the classics of Marxism-Leninism, in some cases has ceased to be a concentrated expression of economics alone. Meanings, values often become a more significant factor than stock-exchange quotations.

Globalization, launched according to the Western scenario, has received, as a serious counterbalance, the aspiration of the peoples of the world to revive their cultural self-consciousness and self-determination. Many Western intellectuals who foresaw the course of development of global processes wrote about it in detail in their time.

*For reference only:* S. Huntington in his work *The Clash of Civilizations and the Transformation of the World Order* (1996) assigned a special role to new processes in the world cultural life, “The distribution of cultures in the world reflects the distribution of power. <...> European colonialism is over; American hegemony is receding. The erosion of Western culture follows, as indigenous, historically rooted mores, languages, beliefs, and institutions reassert themselves. The growing power of non-Western societies produced by modernization is generating the revival of non-Western cultures throughout the world.”

Indeed, today non-Western intellectuals actively advocate the revival of ethnic cultures that oppose Western cultural models that claim to be universal.

At the same time, it is important to understand that we see nothing new in the values promoted today by the “collective West” – once again, we see an unexorcized age-old desire to destroy other civilizations and impose their own, at the current historical stage – neo-liberal cultural and moral values. One example is the agenda of the Summits for Democracy organized by the USA. Thus, during the last one, the third in succession (held in Seoul on March 18–20 this year), the traditional set of neo-liberal values – defending democracy and creating the conditions, under which democracies will flourish, minority rights, and the climate agenda – was discussed again.

Genuine dialogue with other civilizations and cultures is deliberately avoided by the West. Decades of soullessness of the postmodern era, as some researchers call it, have led to a decline in the spiritual, moral, and cultural sense in the countries of Europe and North America – hence the ideas of transhumanism have blossomed so rapidly in Western countries. Perhaps, that is why today the leaders of the “collective West” are trying to ‘close the ranks’ as if on a field of battle, on the issue of values, as directed by Washington.

Against the background of the objective decline of its geopolitical influence, the USA descend to instrumentalizing culture, turning its manifestations into a certain commodity, service, and lever to exert influence. Therefore, the typical Western notion of ‘soft power’ has grown, and various concepts emerged describing culture as a kind of supplement, an addition to the traditional, classical hard power – a military-political complex of measures in state hands. This utilitarian approach reflects the very origins, the basis of their thinking and goal-setting.

Russia’s position, on the contrary, is that culture has a completely different dimension and meaning, a different scale: it is a high reflection of the spiritual, historical, civilizational, value-based identity of the people, its non-material and material image, which has become an integral part of all mankind. To reduce it to ‘soft power’, to try to ‘cancel’ it or use it opportunistically is absurd.

It is important to note that the Russian civilizational world view is based on the common values of the traditional confessions represented in the territory of our country – and, above all, Christianity and the Orthodox tradition. In particular, such as mercy and love to fellow beings, justice and respect for the human person. At the same time, a distinctive feature of the Russian culture and art is spirituality, which originates in the depth of the Slavic-Russian heritage. It would not be an exaggeration to say that it is now one of the effective tools for countering the neo-liberal agenda aggressively promoted by the West.

Accordingly, international cultural and humanitarian cooperation, which is certainly one of the important priorities of Russia’s foreign policy, is, first of all, a mutually enriching communication, exchange of experience, and strengthening of relations between people. The key is not to impose and project power, influence, but to share, to complement each other.

Pay attention to the wording in such programme documents as the Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, which I have already mentioned, or the Concept of Humanitarian Policy of the Russian Federation Abroad 2022. They give priority attention to “constructive dialogue, partnership and mutual enrichment of different cultures, religions and civilizations”, “promotion of constructive international cooperation to preserve historical and cultural heritage”, “promotion of interreligious, intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding”, mutual enrichment of “cultures of the peoples of the Russian Federation and foreign states”, development of “international humanitarian cooperation on a fair, mutual, open, and non-discriminatory basis”, etc.

If we apply a different approach, we return to the sad examples when some societies tried to turn the cultural heritage, the art of great creators of the past into a kind of instrument of mental correction: they sanitized what did not fit into the procrustean bed of the dominant ideology. This is how the whole chapters of the German philosophers under Hitler’s fascists disappeared, how the names of directors and artists who were suspected of favoring communism and leftist ideas under McCarthyism in the USA were blanked out, etc.

Russia assumes that the dialogue of cultures implies, among other things, the search for common origins that create opportunities for sustainable contact between ethnic groups and states. It requires a common language that will be understood by all, despite the ethnic, religious, and ethical diversity of the world. This is necessary, among other things, to get out of the current dangerous turbulence in international relations, potentially threatening global cataclysms, in which we find ourselves through the fault of the West.

Geographically, if we speak specifically about official relations, our cultural priorities are now directed towards friendly states. The countries of the “collective West” are continuing their unsuccessful attempts to ‘culturally isolate’ Russia by cancelling tours, exhibitions and concerts and severing long-standing partnerships with cultural institutions. But at the same time, there is a growing demand for the Russian culture and art in the states of Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East.

In this sense, I would like to note that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs takes an active part in the implementation of various cultural projects, in effective and well-coordinated

ed cooperation with the relevant departments – the Ministry of Culture of Russia, the Ministry of Education of Russia, the Ministry of Education and Science of Russia, the Ministry of Sports of Russia, the Russian Academy of Sciences, and others. Our country traditionally hosts a number of significant international cultural events, in which we help to attract foreign representatives. In this connection, the International Cultural Forum is worthy of special mention, which was held here in St. Petersburg last November for the first time in a new format – as the Forum of United Cultures. The central event of the Forum was the Plenary Session with the participation of the President of the Russian Federation V. V. Putin. The interest of foreign partners was enormous.

This is demonstrated by the international events held in our country last year and this year – in particular, the Russia-Africa Summit (July 27–28, 2023), the Global Forum of Multipolarity (February 27 this year), the Second Congress of the International Russophile Movement (February 28 this year), the World Youth Festival (Sochi, March 1–7 this year), the “Games of the Future” (February 21 – March 3 this year). The representatives of the World Majority countries who visited our country demonstrated that they do not accept the unhealthily liberal, unnatural, and anti-traditional values of the Western world. They realize that a multipolar world implies not only military-political and economic sovereignization, but also cultural independence. Permanent multilateral and bilateral dialogue is necessary for its sustainable existence, above all, for the prevention of military conflicts. A task of extraordinary complexity, requiring the highest political and diplomatic culture, professionalism, and the ability to analyze a huge amount of information.

I would like to make specific mention of the role played by the BRICS in deepening the dialogue of cultures. Speaking of the dialogue, let me remind you that all decisions within the association are taken by consensus. We are ready to hear each other. At the same time, the BRICS has long been an agent of cultural and civilizational diversity in the world. Given the trends in the global economy, this role will only increase.

At the same time, it is characteristic that our countries are in harmony on many issues in cultural and civilizational terms. We note the understanding of our approaches in Beijing, New Delhi, and other world capitals.

The topic of cultural cooperation has a special place in the event programme of Russia’s BRICS Chairmanship this year. A total of 200 events will be held in the fields of politics, economics, and culture. These include film and theatre festivals and cultural forums to be held in dozens of the Russian cities.

The BRICS provides a model different from the liberal world order. We look at each other and other countries as equals. And this is so difficult for the representatives of the Western colonial political culture to understand.

As for the West, now it seems to be entering a phase of worsening political and social crisis, which should reformat Western society, and hence its cultural and civilizational approaches. It is likely enough that in a few electoral cycles, a political alternative may emerge in Western countries that can offer new ideas. We’ll see.

Being a vast Eurasian and Euro-Pacific power, as noted in the Foreign Policy Concept, Russia is ready for mutually beneficial and non-confrontational cooperation with the West with mutual respect for cultural and civilizational diversity.

**M. A. Zamshev<sup>1</sup>**

## **WE ARE ON THE WAY**

It has become almost common place that after the beginning of the special military operation (SMO), Russia entered a new reality. But not everyone realizes what it will be in the end, since it is obvious to everyone that Russia is now like a heavy ice floe that has shifted and is floating somewhere. Of course not. I am far from comparing the country to an airplane without controls, as the great writer Yuri

Bondarev did during perestroika. But the fact that we are observing some processes that are far from completion is obvious. Moreover, their completion is quite difficult to predict if you are in the sense of the system analysis, not of the propagandic frenzy.

The main thesis of the present time can be called the thesis of existence of the multipolar world and its values. This thesis is not new, but now it is presented as fateful. It is seen as a salvation from the former hegemon of the West. They say, recognize our values and everything will be fine. But we will not recognize yours, because you impose them on us. Everything is crystal clear. Fighting for the freedom to live the way you want to live. I would venture to suggest that this is just the tip of the iceberg. The SMO and the tragedies associated with it are somewhat blinding us.

The Russian President always emphasizes that there are no unfriendly countries, there are bad elites. And these words are worth pondering. There’s nothing worse than establishing an enemy image. The West is now on these rails. And this is the only weakness of the West before us; we should not adopt this weakness, it will destroy us, turn us into savages, nail us to the cruel and alien East, which is disastrous for our culture. We must realize that there is

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nothing wrong with the values of the West in their classical form, and the West became our enemy when it began to abandon these values, replacing them with other values. Totalitarian and inhumane. False and leading to entropy.

In order to understand what I am talking about, it is necessary to understand, get away from agility and make out how the West won the aesthetic confrontation with the USSR. The West had a better understanding of the psychology of human of that time. The elderly leaders of the USSR believed that depriving oneself of everything for the sake of an idea was a good thing. The people, however, shared this mantra of the Soviet power less and less every year. Why? Because it was based on one truth: tighten our belts for the future. It is effective when the present is horrific, as it was after 1917 and after 1945. Everyone understood what it was for.

The breakdown occurred already in the 60s and 70s. When belts were left tightened after gigantic overall people's efforts, and the country wallowed in deficits and a shadow economy. The West showed that it was possible to live without suffering for the sake of the future and did it skillfully. When Soviet people were put up with strangers in hotels where there was always no room, from the movie screens French "Man and Woman" loved each other as they wanted and where they wanted, sitting in any cafes. It became fashionable in the USSR to resemble Western dandies, although the West was considered the main rival.

Were the values of the USSR good? They were good. But when they are not confirmed by the improvement of people's everyday life, they are no longer believed in, especially when those who broadcast them, in life profess something else. Top party officials and Komsomol bohemia of the late USSR, their way of life clearly confirms the above. Were there any exceptions? But they didn't define anything. This experience of value defeat is extremely useful right now. What did that defeat lead to? We have abandoned ourselves to the conqueror's mercy, bringing down the entire block of our allies, succumbed to his lures, become part of the American-centered world. Gradually we have come to understanding that the hegemon is not perfect, that it creates a myth, leads like a hustler, that its seductive values are clearly frayed or perhaps non-existent.

But when the weak realizes the wrongness of the strong, he is quickly made a scapegoat and blamed for everything. That's what happened to Russia. Until we realized that and

decided to change the rules of the game. Is it a big risk? Yes, it is. Slaves are far from always seeking freedom and independence. But once we are on this path and the process is underway, it is important to pay attention to some basic things in order to avoid mistakes and strategic defeat in the future.

Firstly. The colonial psychology must be overcome. The internal structure of any colony is based on the fact that the leaders are those who are closest and most connected to the metropolis. There is no law for them. The phrase "friends get everything, others get the law" is a typical example of colonial thinking and economic underdevelopment. There are few prizes of life, so it is necessary to divide them into an extremely narrow circle. All the benefits are from the metropolis. It benefits from supporting not the best on the social ladder, but the most effective of its client states. Compare the salary of a secretary at Gazprom and a lecturer at SPBSU? There's still a lot of work to do. Isn't there?

Secondly. It is necessary to avoid a huge mistake of fighting the enemies and not to take the path of prohibition and repression. It is Russia's enemies and rivals who always push us down this path, as it weakens us most of all. We should take the best of what the collective West influences minds with. It is impossible to influence minds by denial and prohibitions, to make the appearance of one's values attractive. Tolerance for other values must become a core traditional value if we recognize the world as multipolar and build our rebirth on that.

And thirdly. It is important to bear in mind that effective investment of capital is not only where the money has been repaid and increased. Such cheap monetarism is the enemy of values. The state should invest where the best are, in culture and in science. And don't expect a return. Effective managers are a harmful and empty myth. Reduction of costs is not efficiency; efficiency is increasing them if we want to win. It is impossible to describe how much the US invests in promoting its culture and literature in the world through different foundations. I can't describe it! And no one here is thinking about the repayment, the repayment is about something else entirely. The repayment is that the whole world is waiting for Franzen's new book even six months before its issue.

And fourthly. Don't lie to yourself if you think that lie is white. Then we'll be free and independent. Not until then!

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A. M. Kramarenko<sup>3</sup>

## BRICS AS A PROTOTYPE OF THE FUTURE: CULTURAL AND CIVILIZATIONAL DIVERSITY IN ACTION

Culture represents the main meaning and the main value of existence of individual peoples and small ethnic groups, as well as states<sup>4</sup>.

*Academician D. S. Likhachov*

### Introduction

None of serious experts, including Western ones, anymore disputes the thesis that the world is experiencing radical transformation, the starting point of which can be considered the end of the Cold War and the subsequent collapse of the Soviet Union.

The bygone bipolarity with its ideological confrontation was temporarily replaced in international relations by the so-called unipolar moment that reached its apogee during the presidency of George W. Bush (2001–2009) and then declined, leading to the current geopolitical crisis, primarily a sharp aggravation of relations between the West and Russia.

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<sup>2</sup> Rector of the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation, Doctor of Law, Professor. Since 1976, he has held various diplomatic positions at the Central Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia and abroad. Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia (2005–2011), Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Russia to Great Britain (2011–2019). Author of several books on International Space Law, as well as over 200 publications on international relations and foreign policy, science, education, and culture, including: "Geopolitical Turning Point and Russia. What Does the New Foreign Policy Concept Mean?", "2023: Are the New Global Financial Architecture on the Horizon?", "The World Has Entered the Phase of Searching for New Development Balance", "Realities of the New World Order", "25 Trends in Modern International Relations and World Development", "Current Issues of Progressive Development of International Space Law", "Modern Space Projects. International Legal Problems", and others. Member of the Scientific Council under the Security Council of the Russian Federation, the Board of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia, Full Member of the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences, the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Tatarstan, member of the RAS Council on Space, Full Member of the International Institute of Space Law (IISL, Paris), International Academy of Astronautics (IAA, Paris). Honorary Professor of the University of Edinburgh (the United Kingdom). Awarded the Order of Aleksandr Nevsky, Order of Honor, Order of Friendship, Order of Honor of the Republic of South Ossetia, Medals of the Order "For Merit to the Motherland" I and II class, Diplomas of the President of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Russian Federation.

The retrospective analysis shows that the current crisis development resulted mainly from two factors. The first one is the arrogant and short-sighted approach of Western elites, primarily American ones, who proclaimed their "victory in the Cold War".

The more rational approach could be "the world without winners", an idea of American origin, which, however, was not realized after the end of World War I, when Germany and Soviet Russia were excluded from the post-war settlement in Europe, with disastrous consequences for the cause of peace on the continent. This idea would have been extremely appropriate at the turn of the 1980s – 1990s, but a truly collective treaty settlement did not happen again, which could not but have negative consequences this time, as well.

Further developments showed that, in their approach to settling the world in new conditions, if not in words, then in fact, the United States and the West as a whole proceeded from their own version of "the end of history", which was understood as continuation of Western dominance in the world affairs and the world development.

In practice, this turned into a banal global empire of the West – Pax Americana, perhaps the last empire in the history of mankind. The empire that eventually stopped taking own existence for granted and switched to active defense when it felt threatened by the rest of the world risen in the wave of globalization, including promising new centres of economic and military power, primarily China and Russia. So, in 2015, China overtook the United States in terms of GDP calculated at purchasing power parity, and in 2024, the World Bank, on the same basis, was forced to recognize the Russian economy as the fifth one in the world

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<sup>4</sup> Лихачев Д. С. Декларация прав культуры : [проект] (= Declaration of rights of culture) / Ин-т русской литературы (Пушкинский Дом) РАН ; Санкт-Петербургский гуманитарный университет профсоюзов. СПб. : СПбГУИ, 1995. С. 2.

and the largest one in Europe. Since the mid-2000s, the policy of containment has been pursued in relation to these two countries, responding to the instincts of Western elites, which by that time had ideologically unified in the context of “unipolarity” and rallied around “American leadership”. All signs pointed to the fact that the West applied to the new centres of power its historical measure – ascending to military power through creating the dominant economic and technological potential, a kind of geopolitical Darwinism.

This protective trend in Western politics points to the second factor of the current situation, namely unwillingness or inability, including psychological, of Western countries’ elites to co-opt into the global monetary, financial and other architecture controlled by them new centres of what increasingly declared itself as the emerging multipolarity of the coming world order. This concerned the Bretton Woods Institutions, the WTO and the OECD. Moreover, since the mid-2010s, it has been about an attempt on the very foundations of the post-war world order with the central role of the United Nations, by undermining International Law as such, based on universal norms common to all, developed collectively by the world community. In Western capitals, they started talking about a kind of “rules-based order” that clearly bypassed the UN Charter and International Law in general, that is, the guardians of those situational “rules” (why not publish the list of them?) were the Western capitals themselves.

Given the general context of global politics, including holding in December 2021 the 1st Summit of democracies, – at that time an online one, – “for renewing democracy at home and confronting autocracies abroad” (the 2nd Summit followed in March 2023), and the thesis of the new ideological confrontation in the world (now along the line “liberal democracies – authoritarian regimes”), it was about two radically opposite approaches applied in world affairs: one was to those who considered themselves to be in the camp of “liberal democracies” under “American leadership” and, of course, recognized it; the other was to everyone else, that is, the non-Western world. In other words, the world was already divided by these approaches into two camps, doomed to ideological and other confrontation on the pattern of the former bipolar confrontation, even if the alleged opponents of the West, say, neither Russia nor China, were going to participate in it at all. Cooptation of Beijing and Moscow into the Western coordinate system on equal terms could have made it inclusive, and then truly open, considering national interests of all states.

The catalyst for further crystallization of global politics in line with what can be called the new, transitional bipolarity was sharp aggravation of relations between Russia and the West on the basis of the Ukrainian crisis and Russia’s special military operation (SVO) being held for the purpose of demilitarizing and denazifying Ukraine. The hybrid war started by the West, together with total economic war in the form of “sanctions from hell”, de facto triggered the political split in the world community: on the one hand, the West and those who associate themselves with it; on the other hand, the global majority represented by non-Western countries, which make up three quarters of the UN members, including all developing states, as well as the BRICS countries.

In this context, the imperial nature of Western dominance in global politics, economy and finance, which dates

back about five centuries (in case of counting from the era of Great Geographical Discoveries), has clearly manifested itself. Its distinctive feature was suppression of other cultures and civilizations, whether it was colonialism, slave trade or imperial construction, which almost all Western countries were involved in – from the Netherlands, Spain, Portugal and Great Britain to Belgium, Germany (after its unification under the rule of Prussia) and the United States. Intra-Western contradictions, among other things, resulted in starting two world wars, which colonial countries and peoples were involved in. During World War II, the most aggressive countries of the historical West – Germany, Italy and Japan – embarked on the path of creating regional empires, acting with bestial cruelty, generally inherent in the worldview of Western elites, because of which the concept “crimes against humanity” appeared in International Law.<sup>1</sup>

After World War II, which was won by the allies in the Anti-Hitler coalition with the USSR’s decisive role, intra-Western bipolarity, which served as a source of European, colonial and world wars for centuries, was eliminated: the Axis countries formed US-controlled military-political alliances, including bilateral ones, and political configurations such as “the Seven”. The Cold War, in which the historical West took its final shape, despite aggravation of contradictions between the two camps, reflected the Western civilization’s ideological dominance in the world, since various ideological products of Western political thought, such as capitalism and socialism/communism, professed by two groups of countries, each in its own way assumed “the end of history”.

At the same time, in the post-war period, the process of decolonization took place, with the USSR’s active participation (despite the fact that the Russian Revolution resulted in the Awakening of Asia). However, as history has shown, the new independent states fell into neocolonial dependence on the West, which practically continued disposing their natural resources and influenced their socioeconomic policy and in general for social development in various ways, including through transnational corporations (TNCs), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB). Western countries’ desire to solve their problems at the expense of others, in fact, to get geopolitical rents as “suppliers of international public goods”, has led to the impasse regarding not only global politics, but also global development. The West, with its selfish interests, turned out to be true to itself.

Meanwhile, outside the West, awareness of cultural and civilizational diversity as the most important feature of the future world order was gradually developing. At first, the counterproductive (and self-destructive) policy of the West, based on the position of strength, which refuted the thesis “empire means peace”, had an effect. This understanding was also growing among some Western elites, primarily because of results of the so-called war on ter-

<sup>1</sup> The subject of the report is not the issues of the specific Western worldview and the options for the West’s, in particular the United States’, alternative, moderate politics in the period after the end of the Cold War. This topic is discussed in other publications, including: Америка против всех. Геополитика, государственность и глобальная роль США: история и современность : колл. моногр. / ред. С. А. Феоктистова. М. : Содружество культур, 2023 ; Яковенко А. В. Геополитический перелом и Россия. О чем говорит новая Внешнеполитическая концепция России : моногр. М. : Дипломатическая академия МИД России, 2023.

ror in the Middle East, North Africa and the Sahel region. The idea of inevitability and irreconcilability of “the conflict of civilizations” appeared.<sup>1</sup> Within the United Nations, the Alliance of Civilizations was created for establishing “the dialogue of civilizations”, which gave the first, albeit very limited results in terms of mitigating the contradictions between the West and the Arab-Islamic world.

But the current crisis, clearly perceived by the parties to it as existential, affecting the foundations of their identity and history, has raised the issue much wider and deeper. It is now obvious that the whole problem of the existing world order and its impending radical transformation rests on the need for ensuring harmony and cooperation between existing cultures and civilizations, for the purpose of resolving global challenges facing humanity *inter alia*. The current Western coordinate system has become a brake on the world development due to the fact that the Western civilization, in its inertial policy of controlling and dictating from the position of strength, repeatedly proves its incompatibility with other cultures and civilizations. It remains in the fading mode predicted by O. Spengler in his “Decline of the Western World”, and shows no signs of the ability to converge or adapt to a qualitatively new state of the world.

A significant event in this context was Russia’s self-determination as “an original state-civilization” given in the new edition of the Foreign Policy Concept dated March 31, 2023.<sup>2</sup> After staying in the 300-year-old paradigm of Eurocentrism, which was entrenched in the public consciousness by all Soviet experience, the Russian leadership declared (about which Spengler, met with hostility by the Soviet government, wrote 100 years ago) the fundamental cultural and civilizational difference between Russia and the entire Russian world from the West. Western elites have always proceeded from this alienation between us. With their policy of rejecting Russia after the end of the Cold War, they only helped us make the long overdue decision. Its direct consequence is the country’s positioning itself on the side of the non-Western world – the World Majority or the Global South (which was also predicted 100 years ago, only by the Eurasians).

At the end of 2000s, the BRICS transcontinental association emerged (the Republic of South Africa joined in 2011) as a forum for pragmatic cooperation of the leading emerging economies of the world.

As in the case of the SCO, which was originally established to resolve border issues between China and the former republics of the Soviet Union, the BRICS further development and its discovery of own true meaning were dictated by evolving the global/geopolitical context. While China directly associated itself with the non-Western world, Russia, for a long time after the end of the Cold War, was guided by the inertia of Euro-/West-centrism inherited from three centuries of history, including the Soviet period, believing that it was the time for inevitable convergence of what was seen as a large European civilization, with Russia’s perception itself its eastern branch. The collapse of this paradigm, which had not only political, but also quite obvious cognitive grounds, qualitatively changed the BRICS positioning, which did not slow down to globally declare it-

self in the manner of a different form and content of the refusal of states of the non-Western world to take part in the sanctions war of the West against Russia, as well as within the framework of the work of the Group of Twenty, where, how this was clearly manifested during the Indian presidency in 2023, part of the association became the pole of the non-Western world opposing the Western “Seven”. In this wave (following the SCO expansion, analogies continue), the BRICS expanded due to membership of a number of G20 member states and leading regional powers. They do not hide their desire to become the architects of the new world order, which should replace the old one, since that has worn out, has become a source of threats to international security and a brake on global development.

For the states of the World Majority, development issues, as well as issues of national identity, significance of which was either denied by Western countries or belittled by their own elites, who, politically and mentally, were in the Western coordinate system, came to the fore.

As for Russian elites, they cherished the three-hundred-year-old hope of “embedding” in Europe / the West, which both the governments of the Russian Empire and the Soviet government paid tribute to. No longer the relative, but the absolute decline of the West, which is experiencing a systemic crisis, opens the way for the world community to qualitatively new approaches to solving its own development problems and countering common challenges and threats to humanity.

Cultural and historical issues as the basis for peoples’ identity and coexistence have gained a key role. From the periphery, they rightfully – and in full accordance with D. S. Likhachov’s ideas and his proposal to consolidate at the international level the right to culture on an equal basis with other human rights, including the right to life,<sup>3</sup> – moved to the centre of state governance, foreign policy and international relations. Nothing has been so timely and mature in our history as Russia’s cultural and civilizational self-determination triggered by hostile Western policies, which have turned into a consequence and at the same time a source of spiritual revival of our country. The SVO in Ukraine has accelerated obtaining historically conditioned sense of existence.

Radically transformation in our consciousness has also resulted from the West’s “abolition” of Russian culture, up to the Russian language, being a response in the spirit of Anna Akhmatova’s call to “save the Great Russian Word” during the ordeal of the Great Patriotic War. If then we were faced with the direct aggressive “drive towards the East” by Western civilization, which gave the main role to Nazi Germany obsessed with the problem of “living space”, now we deal with a hybrid war, in which the key role is given to reformatted into anti-Russia Ukraine that creates a threat to us at the level of identity and history *inter alia*.

### **“Conflict of civilizations” as premonition of the conflict**

It is necessary to pay tribute to S. Huntington, who foresaw a lot soon after the end of the Cold War (his work was published in 1996). It was no coincidence that he was appreciat-

<sup>1</sup> *Huntington S. P. The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order. N. Y. : Simon & Schuster, 1996.*

<sup>2</sup> Указ Президента Российской Федерации от 31 марта 2023 года № 229 «Об утверждении Концепции внешней политики Российской Федерации» // Президент России : [сайт]. URL: <http://kremlin.ru/acts/bank/49090> (accessed: 01.04.2024).

<sup>3</sup> См.: *Лихачев Д. С. Декларация прав культуры : [проект] (= Declaration of rights of culture) / Ин-т русской литературы (Пушкинский Дом) РАН ; Санкт-Петербургский Гуманитарный университет профсоюзов. СПб. : СПбГУП, 1995.*

ed by those who looked at things soberly and understood that the beginning of the end of Western hegemony had come (in February of 2024, J. Borrel stated that “the era of Western domination has come to its end,” although the participants in the Likhachovsky Conference have known this for a long time) and that, without adapting to the qualitatively new geopolitical situation, this end is inevitable, that continuation of “American leadership” must be “earned”, and this is possible only on conditions of transformation into something collective, the assembly of cultures and civilizations, which includes Russia and is different from the Western one. Huntington knew that all previous conflicts, including “the conflict of ideologies” during the Cold War, took place within Western civilization. We can agree with him regarding his classification of civilizations, as well.

In non-Western civilizations, they return to their roots, which he noted in Russia. Huntington’s interpretation of “the Russian issue” is of particular interest. In his understanding, Russia remains the most significant “split country”: while the Soviet government removed “the historical dispute between Westerners and Slavophiles” from the agenda, it is no longer clear what will happen to Russia “wishing to join the West”. Now it is obvious that the first test of the West’s adaptation to changes in the world was failed by the example of Russia, when it was decided to expand NATO towards the East. This was followed by a number of other failures, including interaction with China, India, Brazil and the Arab-Islamic world. Huntington was also right that modernization is not equivalent to westernization.

In most non-Western cultures, Western ideas, such as individualism, liberalism, equality, freedom, free market, separation of church and state, etc., do not resonate. This leads, in fact, to the new bipolarity: “The West against the rest of the world.” Another thing is that it is quite likely to be transitional – till establishment of multipolarity, since civilizations, like states, must be equal, and therefore they have to learn to coexist with each other on this basis.

The failure of the American wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the consequences of intervention in Libya and Syria in terms of the Arab Spring, which looked like America’s self-destruction of its international positioning, prompted the most astute American politicians, mainly those of democratic orientation (fortunately, they were out of business under the Republican Administration), to deal with inter-civilizational issues. Thus, in the autumn of 2005, in his introductory article “The Dilemma of the Last Sovereign” published in the journal “American Interest”, having noted that “for most states, sovereignty borders on legal fiction,” Zbigniew Brzezinski wrote that the United States were not able to ignore what he described as “massive political awakening” everywhere in the world.

Having recognized that terror was the consequence of Western revolutions, primarily the French one with its slogan “Freedom, Equality, Fraternity!”, Brzezinski pointed out the need for America, which alone is not able to solve any significant international problem, to reconsider its foreign policy approaches and show readiness to “form some common understanding of our historical epoch” with other countries and partners. He raised the question of “new global solidarity” that would absorb American sovereignty, as well. That is, it was necessary to “put American sovereignty at the service to the common good,” the only way the United States could strengthen its “international legitimacy”.

Herewith, he warned that otherwise the predictions made by O. Spengler, A. Toynbee (about “suicidal state governance”) and S. Huntington would be “ominously relevant” to the current global challenges for America, and here, perhaps for the first time in American political science discourse, the word “self-defeat” was used.

Following Huntington, he draws attention to the fact that globalization does not create a common civilization, but instead provokes inter-civilizational clashes, and quotes, “What follows is the Western culture’s erosion, while local mores, languages, beliefs and institutions rooted in history re-assert themselves.” And more, “democracy is by its nature a provincializing process, not a cosmopolitanizing one, which results in popular mobilization against elites that have received Western education and are oriented towards the West.” Howbeit, the call that “America must devote its sovereignty to a cause greater than its own security” has not been heeded.

Former Secretary of State M. Albright joined the discussion with the same result. In her book “The Mighty and the Almighty”<sup>1</sup> (2007), she also argued that it was necessary to radically rethink the USA’s approach to its global leadership, and recalled that J. Kennedy considered “not communism, but imperialism as the main test that American foreign policy must pass” (the statement made in 1957).

She noted that the leaders of Al-Qaeda were “concerned with transcendent issues of history, identity and faith,” and recommended, “For us to be heard, the rest of us must be equally deeply concerned about everything.” Further, she talks about the common values of the main world religions, which it is necessary to appeal to, about the need for combatting global poverty, as provided for in the UN Millennium Development Goals, that Americans will not be hurt by humility to be called for by their own history (which is difficult to disagree with). But the entire problem is that the US Administrations, one after another, proceeded from “automatism” of the spread of American hegemony to the rest of the world after the end of the Cold War: this was belatedly recognized by Henry Kissinger in 2014.<sup>2</sup>

M. Albright welcomed the idea of an Alliance of Civilizations suggested by Madrid and Ankara within the UN framework. However, what did it all come down to?

In July 2005, Kofi Annan, then General Secretary of the United Nations, supported the initiative to establish, with the co-sponsorship of the Prime Ministers of Spain and Turkey, Jose Luis Zapatero and Recep Erdogan, the global Alliance of Civilizations. The goals of this initiative were to mobilize collective political will, for bridging the gap and growing distrust between civilizations, cultures and societies, primarily between the West and the Islamic world, as well as for establishing mutual understanding between them.

The author of the idea of creating the Alliance of Civilizations is Spain, which in the Middle Ages demonstrated brilliant examples of interaction between Arab and European cultures. There were tragic moments in the history of the so-called Muslim Spain, but there was also cultural cooperation, positive as nowhere else. Turkey’s reasons are quite obvious. Then it was about showing that a Muslim country is quite compatible with the Western civiliza-

<sup>1</sup> Albright M. *The Mighty and the Almighty. Reflections on America, God, and World Affairs*. N.Y. : Harper Perennial, 2007.

<sup>2</sup> Киссинджер Г. *Мировой порядок*. М. : АСТ, 2023.

tion. The High-Level Panel (HLP) consisting of 18 people headed by representatives of Spain and Turkey was formed for governance of the Alliance of Civilizations. Russia was represented in the HLP by the prominent orientalist, Academician V. V. Naumkin.

The report submitted to the UN General Secretary in November 2006 assessed the situation, given the emergence and growth of religious extremism, and contained a large number of constructive proposals that, if implemented, could significantly ease tensions and contribute to establishing the inter-civilizational dialogue.<sup>1</sup> However, both the initiative to create a global Alliance of Civilizations and the HLP Report triggered the predictable critical response in a number of states, and in the United States too, which forgot that they slept in the bed they had made, including promotion of “jihad” in Afghanistan (Parenthetically, let’s note that then the Saudi authorities set a course for the export of Wahhabi passionarity, for muffling it within their own country).

And here the Western elites were let down by their arrogance. As the American sociologist I. Wallerstein noted at the Likhachovsky Conference in 2009, “fruitful dialogue can only be based on equality of its parties.” At that time the West acted pragmatically, if not cynically, striving for involving the world community in solving its own problem, without establishing inter-civilizational relations, but with just stopping the rise of radical, political Islam. The situation was only aggravated by both the growth of Islamophobia in the West and the turn of the Western elites towards ultra-liberalism, which increased the gap between the values of the two civilizations.

### Is the West against the rest?

Anyway, the West has not been able to make its hegemony inclusive, open to all other civilizations, because it required recognizing their equality. It should be noted that Washington “stumbled” over Russia and China, switching to a policy of “containing” them by analogy with the strategy of the Cold War. Accordingly, this left room neither for inclusivity, nor even for the line of “constructive engagement”, which generally gave the West good results in the era of bipolarity.

At the expert level, the USA made attempts to offer fundamental alternatives to the understanding of national security, which had developed resulting from the geopolitical and ideological imperatives of the Cold War.

A set of ideas for a new international positioning of the United States was developed in the spirit of demands of the time, which, however, was later compromised in the elites’ eyes by Trump’s “isolationism” (the label “trumpism” appeared) and his unproven “relations with Moscow”. Thus, this opportunity window was quickly closed due to the Ukrainian crisis provoked by the United States and the internal confrontation related to Trump’s victory in the 2016 elections.

Everything pointed to the fact that the West, at least its elites, could not get out of the circle of their inherent political and psychological constraints, whether instincts or prejudices, in their vision of the world and the place of the West in it.

What happened was easy to predict, called by the president B. Clinton called “self-fulfilling prophecy” at the alliance summit in January of 1994.<sup>2</sup> Indirectly, this could be found at Huntington’s works.

At the time, in respect to the next anniversary of F. Nietzsche, Francis Fukuyama wrote that Western philosophy has not overcome “its denial of equality of human dignity”<sup>3</sup>; this statement is directly related to the cultural and civilizational incompatibility of Western elites with non-Western ones. Later, in the trend of aggravating relations between Russia and the West, on the pages of “Foreign Affairs” (May-June 2022), he wrote about a kind of “national liberalism”, and about the need for liberalism to be rooted in every country. But what about the current crisis of liberalism in where it originated from – in the Western society itself? And isn’t this the source for the very interventionism and the very unification of the West in relation to the rest of the world, for its arising naturally, without being imposed from the outside? Isn’t this “liberalism” not only a kind of “coercion to democracy”, but also an analogue of Nazism?

Even now, in connection with the Ukrainian crisis, Western capitals have remembered the sovereignty of “democratic Ukraine”, principally denying this right for all countries that are not qualified as democratic by them.

### The Ukrainian crisis: the catalyst for Russia’s awakening

Unwilling to do so and allowing the principle of “undesirable consequences” to work, the United States triggered the crisis with the radical reformatting of Ukraine that was teetering on the brink of a failed state, and thereby helped this country finally find the clear sense of its independent existence in line with the negative component of its historical heritage.

Ukraine could not boast of democracy and lack of corruption, which might have tempted the Russian electorate and thus contributed to the similar Westernization of Russia. Therefore, the choice was made in favor of creating a threat to Russia at the level of identity and history, a challenge that would undermine the narrative of Victory over Nazi Germany as the moral and spiritual foundation of modern Russia.

It was natural that in the era of the awakening of civilizational consciousness everywhere in the world, the historical West set out to solve the problem of historical Russia in the field of culture and history. Meanwhile, as development of the situation showed, conditions were created for retroactive rehabilitation of Nazism as a specific product of the Western civilization. The blow was dealt to the idea of the Russian World, which in the West, as Huntington defined, meant Slavicism and Orthodoxy. It was easy to assume that Russia could not help but respond to this existential challenge, burdened by the prospect of Ukraine to join NATO and creation of a quite obvious military and political threat on the Russian border, as well as Kiev’s refusal, supported by the West, to implement the Minsk Agreements, which were in line with generally recognized norms for settling internal civil conflicts, accepted by Europe, as

<sup>1</sup> Группа высокого уровня по вопросу о слаженности в системе ООН // ООН : [офис. сайт]. URL: <https://www.un.org/ru/events/pastevents/panel.shtml> (accessed: 04.01.2024).

<sup>2</sup> Киссинджер Г. Дипломатия. М. : АСТ, 2018.

<sup>3</sup> Fukuyama F. Nietzsche: A Philosophy in Context // The New York Times. 2010. May 7. URL: <https://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/09/books/review/Fukuyama-t.html?ysclid=m0m7k2ri6a671905665> (accessed: 04/01/2024).



well. Notwithstanding the Western concept of “human security”, which gave priority to human rights and minority rights over the rights of states, including their sovereignty and territorial integrity, Kiev, after the February 2014 coup d’etat, took a course towards a unitary and ethnocentric state, appealing to aggressive nationalism to have been compromised by collaboration with Nazi Germany.

Along with pressure on the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church as part of the Russian Orthodox Church, the policy of forced Ukrainization was pursued in the country where most of its population either was represented by ethnic Russians who found themselves in Ukraine, constructed within the current borders by the Soviet government and its ideological imperatives, or spoke Russian and was bilingual. Thus, the issue of language became fundamental for the future of Ukraine that could not continue existing within the Soviet borders without systematic and legalized violence against the background of destruction of the foundations of the Soviet cohabitation with its tolerance and inclusiveness.

Ukrainization and suppression of the Russian language were accompanied by rewriting the historical narrative (with creation of primitive national mythology by the official propaganda, based on rural culture, and with a clear racist bias by analogy with Nazism) and rejecting the entire body of the richest Russian culture in favor of the Ukrainian one, not comparable to it in development, as well as spiritual values created during that historical period, first of all, in literature, including the genius of Nikolai Gogol. Accompanied by aggressive anti-Russian propaganda, which referred to the sad experience of Europe during the interwar period, and merged with the West’s campaign for “abolishing” the Russian culture, there was depletion and simplification of the Ukrainian culture in the broadest sense, quite in the spirit of what happened under the Nazi regime in Germany.

#### **The world majority and the reform of the world order system**

The prospect of forming a new international order that would not be based on the West’s dominance depends not only on the outcome of the current aggravation in relations between the West and Russia, but also on the collective position of the states of Asia, Africa and Latin America – the World Majority, or the Global South. The combined potential of these regions has significantly increased. For the first time in history, they have the opportunity for acting as full-fledged centres of global politics, seriously influencing formation of the international agenda, including issues of security.

The ongoing changes in the balance of forces on the world stage in favor of the World Majority (and Russia positions itself as part of it, along with China) confirm the validity of the Russian concept of multipolarity as the movement towards destruction of the West’s economic, power and technological hegemony that has turned into a way of existence for it. In this regard, the World Majority states’ interests in the search for a new, more just international order are generally in tune with Russia’s ones. They also mean the failure of the West’s attempts to achieve Russia’s international isolation, the opportunity for preserving and strengthening ties between the world’s leading develop-

ing economies, as well as creating new partnerships in conditions of acute conflict with the West.

The very idea of promoting principles of a qualitatively new, more just world order reflecting the cultural and civilizational diversity of the modern world has long been present in the politics of the World Majority states. Historically, the Non-Aligned Movement has been the large-scale expression of the desire to reformat the world system. It was originally formed by the countries that now make up the World Majority, for the purpose of creating a broad international platform uniting states on the principle of non-participation in military-political blocs. This made it possible to form a kind of union of non-aligned countries within the UN (the Group of 77 within 134 states), promoting political projects that are alternative to Western worldview postulates. Another example is the idea of a New International Economic Order (NIEO), actively supported by countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Under the powerful collective pressure of the former colonial and dependent countries that make up the majority in the UN, the UN General Assembly has adopted the Declaration for the Establishment of a New International Economic Order. Elimination of inequality in the global economy and bridging the gap between developed and developing countries were proclaimed as the main strategic task.

Actually torpedoed by the West the plans to restructure international relations in accordance with interests of countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America indicated the limited resource for countering Western domination. Finally, these projects lost their initial political inertia and did not produce the expected results. The state of Russia after the collapse of the USSR, our illusions about “embedding” in the West, together with the state’s general weakening, did not allow providing duly assistance to countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

The process of neoliberal globalization, started by the West at the turn of the 1980s and 1990s and determined for three decades the main vector of world development, contributed to changing the balance of forces in the world in favor of the collective Global South. For some countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, globalization has become a powerful factor of both internal structural transformations (although often contradictory ones) and the restart of the system of foreign economic relations that developed in the postcolonial period. The states of East and Southeast Asia, headed by China, which successfully adapted the pattern of Western globalization to requirements of its own socio-political and economic development reflecting peculiarities of its cultural and civilizational identity rooted in its history, developed most dynamically. The gravity centre of the world economy and trade has moved to Asia within a relatively short time.

China’s accelerated and long-term economic growth, which has no historical analogues, forces us to rethink key neoliberal and macroeconomic dogmas of the West, especially against the background of sluggish dynamics in the United States, the European Union and Japan. Hence the new surge that the sentiment in favor of reformatting the system of international relations on an alternative basis receive in the World Majority countries. Relying on its enormous potential, the World Majority could become the driver of the process of forming the more stable, secure and just world. The historical mission, which the col-

lective West ultimately has failed to cope with, passes to the World Majority.

Herewith, at the current stage, the World Majority countries have no collective sufficiently holistic and original political platform, for forming their joint vision of the new international system and ways of transition to it. The task of transition to the new type of world order based on multipolarity is explicitly formulated or actually recognized only by a limited number of leading countries of the World Majority.

The concept of multipolarity is present in the conceptual developments of most countries, even without direct relation to the topic of the future world order. It is almost universally recognized that the topic of global governance, i. e. the choice of international platforms, which international cooperation should be built on, is of key importance. It is stated that the current global governance system needs to be reformed or adjusted. The main focus is on the need for reforming the UN, with the emphasis on ensuring the representative nature of the Security Council, the Bretton Woods Institutions (IMF and WB), as well as WHO and WTO. Their inefficiency and insufficient representation of developing countries in them are criticized, which does not allow ensuring equal interests of all members of the international community.

Views on international security issues are reduced to confirming commitment to relevant basic principles of the UN Charter, support for international legal norms designed to prevent military conflicts and crises. These norms contain respect for national sovereignty, inviolability of borders, non-interference in internal affairs, inadmissibility of aggression or threats to peace, peaceful settlement of disputes and conflicts, and related peacemaking. Maintaining the arms control system is welcome. As a rule, the need for international cooperation, for the purpose of preventing conflicts and crises, terrorism and extremism, is stated, as well.

The vision of the prospects for the structure of the world economy, international trade and the financial system mainly reproduces echoes of previous ideas discussed at the UN in the context of the NIEO, although adjusted for the current level of technology development. There is no doubt that the prospect of further economic globalization is fundamentally important. However, it is recognized that it should be based on different principles, contributing, first of all, to creating the open world economy, the fair, honest, non-discriminatory economic environment, and should also stimulate bilateral, regional and multilateral cooperation.

Almost everywhere, the question of the need for industrialized countries to increase funding for the Global South through international development assistance programs is raised, while the call for full national control over natural resources is of great importance. Within the demands for reforming the Bretton Woods institutions, the theme of unreasonableness of the role of the US dollar as the main reserve currency, unprofitability of the existing system of international payments and monetary and financial transfers for developing countries is being promoted.

Regardless of their foreign policy orientation, the World Majority countries declare their fundamental unacceptability of unilateral restrictive measures in world trade. The issue of ensuring technological progress in the World Majority countries is also sharply outlined, with formulation

of the requirement for equal, free and mutually beneficial exchange of technological achievements along the North – South line. The theme of proper implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals is at the forefront of international economic and social development, as well. In this regard, the emphasis placed by some states on the task of achieving the goals of the international climate agenda is rather indicative.

The approaches of the elites of a significant part of the World Majority countries to the prospects of the new world order are also characterized by the fact that they are viewed through the prism of directly or indirectly expressed ambitions to increase their own collective or national weight in world affairs. The recently increased peacemaking activity on the part of the World Majority, including initiatives on normalizing relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia, as well as a peace plan for the Ukrainian crisis, are in line with implementing these ambitions. The intention to play a constructive role in protecting peace in global and regional formats, to take an active part in developing rules in the field of global security, to increase international cooperation in the field of security, and to directly participate in peacemaking activities through the UN is also emphasized in every possible way. The World Majority countries' approaches to the vision of the new world order also differ in their covering the problem of effectiveness of international law. Almost all the conceptual materials of the World Majority countries state the need for complying with generally recognized legal norms, primarily those enshrined in the UN Charter.

Traditional values act as one of the main means used by the countries to counteract the value standards imposed by the West, for strengthening national identity in international relations.

India's position is largely indicative, which, in particular, was reflected in the Delhi Declaration following the meeting of the SCO Council of Heads of State (July 2023), which states, "The world is experiencing unprecedented transformational changes and is entering the new era of rapid technological development, which requires increasing effectiveness of global institutions. These fundamental processes are accompanied by strengthening multipolarity."

India sees the increasing role and influence of the Global South countries as an important criterion for developing a new system of international relations, ensuring their involvement in the processes of forming rules of international interaction, as well as access to critical resources, including financial and technological ones. Moreover, India attaches particular importance to the need for strengthening representation of developing countries in key international structures, and insists, *inter alia*, on inclusion of the African Union as an equal participant in the Group of Twenty. The Indian Prime Minister's statements about the criterion of "morality" in conducting the strategic policy and "the growing understanding of the need for abandoning the GDP-focused view of the world in favor of a human-oriented view" are very indicative.

Thus, the conceptual views emerging in the World Majority countries regarding the reform of the existing system of world order and interstate relations have an obvious ideological bias towards denying claims of the United States, the "English sphere", the world and the West as

a whole to maintain their dominance in world politics and economy. This process of conceptually rethinking the picture of the modern world is based on the objective change in the global balance of powers in favor of the World Majority in a number of basic parameters. It is not just consonant, but coincides in its essence with the foreign policy approaches of the Russian Federation and meets its interests.

In this regard, Russia's strategic turn towards developing cooperation with the World Majority countries strengthens the basis for the joint and conceptually meaningful movement towards formation of a more equitable world order based on interstate equality, stability, mutually beneficial cooperation and international law. This simultaneously opens up opportunities for Russia to counter the line of the collective West that seeks for preserving the World Majority within the framework of neocolonial dependence.

### **BRICS is an urgent need**

The first BRIC meeting took place on September 20, 2006, on the sidelines of the 61st session of the UN General Assembly in New York. It was participated by the foreign ministers of Russia, Brazil, China and the Minister of Defense of India, who agreed to develop multifaceted cooperation of the four countries. On May 16, 2008, the first full-scale meeting of the BRIC countries' foreign ministers took place in Yekaterinburg. Following its results, the joint communique reflecting the countries' common positions on topical issues of global development was adopted. The fundamentally important step in developing the association was taken on July 9, 2008, when, on Russia's initiative, the separate meeting of the leaders of Brazil, Russia, India and China was held on the sidelines of the "Group of Eight" summit in Toyako (Japan).

The first BRIC summit was held on June 16, 2009 in Yekaterinburg. The final Joint Statement declared the desire to develop the "consistent, active, pragmatic, open and transparent dialogue and cooperation" not only for achieve "the common interests of developing countries and the states with emerging markets, but also for building the harmonious world, which lasting peace and common prosperity would be ensured in."

After accession of the Republic of South Africa (the first summit with South Africa's participation was held on April 14, 2011, in Sanya, China), the abbreviation "BRICS" was established as the name of the association.

Over time, BRICS has evolved into a multidisciplinary strategic partnership based on three key pillars: politics and security, economics and finance, culture and humanitarian ties. Relations between partners are built on the basis of equality and mutual respect, as well as on the principles of openness, pragmatism, solidarity, and non-targeting against anyone. Today, BRICS accounts for 45% of the global population and more than a third of global GDP. The BRICS states are influential members of the UN, as well as of regional associations (CIS, CSTO, EAEU, SCO, APEC, LAS, GCC, OIC, Southern Common Market, African Union, SADC, etc.). The expanded BRICS is significantly represented in such instruments as "Group of Twenty", WTO, Non-Aligned Movement, "Group 77". The countries take turns chairing BRICS, fulfilling these duties during the calendar year; then rotation takes place. All decisions are made by consensus. About 200 meetings are held annual-

ly, of which 20 are at the ministerial level. Cooperation develops between parliaments, city administrations, businesses, academic and scientific societies, civil society, including women's and youth organizations. For the purpose of coordinating the association's current work, the institution of national sherpas/sous-sherpas operates. Since January 1, 2024, Egypt, Iran, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Ethiopia have become BRICS members.

One of priorities in the BRICS activities is promoting formation of the democratic multipolar world, strengthening global security and stability. Now the "Ten" has consistently advocated compliance with the principles of International Law with the UN's central role, rejecting unilateral coercive measures. The important result of the BRICS countries' interaction was launching the New Development Bank (NDB) with its headquarters in Shanghai, and the BRICS Pool of Conditional Foreign Exchange Reserves with total funds in the amount of 200 billion US dollars. By the end of 2023, the NDB had approved over 90 projects totaling 32.3 billion US dollars. Responding to the BRICS countries' needs in a timely manner during the crisis, the Bank launched in March 2020 the assistance program on combating the COVID-19 pandemic and overcoming its socioeconomic consequences in its total amount of 10 billion US dollars. In 2018, the NBR African Regional Centre was opened in South Africa, then similar structures were established in Brazil, Russia and India.

In 2023, functions of the BRICS chairman were carried out by South Africa acting under the motto "BRICS and Africa: Partnership for joint accelerated growth, sustainable development and inclusive multilateralism."

The 15th Summit held in Johannesburg, in August of 2023, was an important milestone in development of BRICS. The meeting laid foundations for future discussions on financial and economic issues, including increasing settlements in national currencies. The final declaration contains the instruction for the BRICS countries' Ministries of Finance and their Central Banks to study this subject and submit the report by the next summit. It was decided to expand the association's membership to 10 members. Developing modalities for the new category "partner states" has begun (over 30 countries have expressed their intention to interact with BRICS in one form or another).

Extended meetings in the "outreach" / "BRICS plus" format, held both within the framework of the association's summit (with participation of over 60 invited countries) and within meetings of High Representatives in charge of security issues and foreign ministers, were of great importance in terms of formation of stable BRICS relations with the Global South states.

Among the key achievements of cooperation on the South African agenda are the approval of the master agreement on cooperation of the BRICS countries in the field of micro, small- and medium-sized enterprises, establishment of the association's Youth Council, the Working Group on Sports, expansion of the Network University, starting the joint work in the field of nuclear medicine through organizing a specialized working group.

On January 01, 2024, functions of the BRICS chairman were transferred to Russia (the Summit will be held in October in Kazan). Its motto is "Strengthening multilateralism for equitable global development and security."

Priorities of the Russian chairmanship involve increasing foreign policy coordination in the BRICS format, including that at key international platforms. Due attention is being paid to developing the potential for counter-terrorism cooperation based on the BRICS 2020 Anti-Terrorism Strategy. Russia aims at developing practical cooperation in the combat against drug trafficking and corruption, in accordance with the BRICS initiative on eliminating “safe havens”, institutionalizing the emerging BRICS Council on Countering Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing, and searching for common responses to challenges and threats in the information space. The priority issue is further implementation of the Cooperation Agreement in the field of satellite constellation for the BRICS countries’ remote sensing of the Earth.

Within the framework of the economic and financial bloc, a lot of work is being done on comprehensive implementation of the BRICS Economic Partnership Strategy until 2025. Initiatives on topical issues, such as security of global logistics chains, e-commerce, artificial intelligence, startup organization, climate in terms of sustainable development, and further development of the dialogue of the BRICS countries’ tax, customs, and antimonopoly authorities.

An important work area is enhancing the BRICS countries’ significance in the international monetary and financial system, developing interbank cooperation, and promoting transformation of the international settlement system. Priorities of the Russian chairmanship include increasing settlements in national currencies, strengthening correspondent banking networks, for ensuring international transactions. The instrument of the BRICS Pool of Conditional Foreign Exchange Reserves continues to develop.

Special emphasis is placed on deepening the dialogue on issues of equitable development, ensuring food and energy security, and developing the Energy Research Platform.

Main areas of cooperating in the humanitarian field are increasing interaction in science and innovation, in particular, implementation of the Action Plan for Innovative Cooperation for 2021–2024, using the potential of the BRICS Network of Centres for Technology Transfer, as well as increasing cooperation of science parks and business incubators. Within the initiative “The iBRICS Innovation Network”, priority attention is paid to expanding contacts between academic and scientific centres, research and higher education institutions of the ten countries, strengthening the potential of the BRICS Network University, issues of mutual recognition of academic qualifications, and improving the work of the international university rating systems. The Forum of Young Scientists and the Competition of Young Innovators from the BRICS countries are planned.

In the field of healthcare, Russian initiatives on launching the Comprehensive system of early warning the risks of mass infectious diseases, the Medical Association and the medical journal continue to be promoted. Special attention is paid to the functioning of the Working Group on Nuclear Medicine.

Practical actions on further intensifying the dialogue in the field of culture, youth exchanges, and sports are being taken. The official calendar of the Russian Federation’s BRICS chairmanship includes traditional events, including the BRICS cultural and film festivals, Academic and Civic Forums. The Youth Forum and the Youth Camp, as well

as the Forum of Young Diplomats are scheduled. Within the framework of sports cooperation, in June, the BRICS Games were organized, with their program to include 29 sports, both traditional competitions and new physical disciplines.

Special attention is paid to development of interparliamentary cooperation within the framework of the BRICS Parliamentary Forum, as well as meetings of the chairpersons of the committees on international affairs of the parliaments of the association’s countries.

An important component of humanitarian interaction is cooperation of cities and municipalities. The well-established International Municipal Forum of the BRICS+ countries, as well as the traditional Forum of Twin Cities and Municipalities, are provided in this area.

More and more the World Majority countries are determined to join BRICS as an effective instrument for developing equal and fair multipolarity and promoting the Global South’s interests in joint fruitful development and the search for collective solutions to the most pressing problems of our time. In response to this request, in accordance with the decision of the Johannesburg Summit, another key area for the Russian chairmanship’s efforts to be applied to is finalizing modalities of the category “partner states” and forming the list of candidates for it, which are going to be approved at the leaders’ meeting this year.

### **The World Order according to BRICS**

Upon development of BRICS and growth of the World Majority countries’ self-awareness, it becomes clear that multipolarity will be associated with expressing the cultural and civilizational diversity of the world. Actually, all the problems of world politics and world development to be led to the impasse by Western domination can be reduced to the Western civilization’s incompatibility with other cultures and civilizations. The whole history – not just our time! – shows that the West can do business with others only through suppression and dictate, violence and control, on its own terms and from the position of strength, which fundamentally contradicts basic principles of the UN Charter, International Law in general, which, by the way, has developed not without participation of Western countries themselves, given their own tragic experience, including the religious wars in Europe and the two world wars.

Today, the West is in a qualitatively different phase of its evolution. Therefore, it is not surprising that Western capitals claim to be guardians of some mythical “rule-based order”, which in fact nullifies the entire historically established international legal order with the central role of the United Nations and replaces it with the West’s arbitrariness.

De facto, today, the new transitional bipolarity “The West / the World Majority” has been emerging. In his book “Leadership”<sup>1</sup>, which can be considered as his political testament, Henry Kissinger bitterly pointed out: Washington’s foreign policy crisis originates from the circumstances that its innovation with multipolarity in the time of R. Nixon, when it was first played out by him the “triangular” format of the USA – USSR – PRC (with recognition of China and taking over by the latter its rightful place in the UN Secu-

<sup>1</sup> Kissinger H. Leadership. Six Studies in World Strategy. UK : Penguin Books, 2022.

riety Council), did not become a “reliable school of diplomacy” for the United States, which would require changes not only in the scale of the strategy, but also at the level of mentality. Thus, the very idea of multipolarity was not an artificial invention of Russian diplomacy, aimed at defending its foreign policy independence, but reflected the essence of what was happening in the world, which was seen in Moscow and did not want to see in the West, where they preferred to live in the old way.

There comes the stage of regionalization of global politics within the framework and in accordance with geopolitical imperatives of this bipolarity. The latter finds its expression in the confrontation between the Western “Seven” and the expanding BRICS format. It is not difficult to foresee how the experiment with anarcho-capitalism in Argentina and the West’s attempt to win Buenos Aires over to its side will end. It is still unknown what will happen to the United States and the West as a whole. Will they care about hegemony? After all, they will be forced to act in conditions of reduced opportunities for solving their own problems at someone else’s expense, which they have been accustomed to for centuries.

The West’s self-isolation from the rest of the world has been exacerbated by Israel’s operation in the Gaza Strip, which has now become a real disaster of the US foreign policy. The new bipolarity has undergone further crystallization. The split of the international community will serve as a decisive factor in the UN’s further evolution bringing the Organization in line with the spirit of the times. Over recent decades, the West has abused its influence at the UN, continued seeking the necessary decisions for itself, not hesitating to exert pressure, and when it failed in the Security Council, they did this at the General Assembly, in other bodies of the Organization. The West also abused Russia’s goodwill: suffice it to recall the Security Council’s Resolutions on Libya and on Freedom of Navigation in the Red Sea.

The agenda includes the reform of the Security Council, with expansion of its membership for the purpose of making it truly representative not only geographically, but above all culturally and civilizational. Now the West is overrepresented in the category of permanent members: three out of five seats, while Russia and China have the other two. If we take the “Seven”, then we get three seats for seven its participants. Russia and China are not about only BRICS, but also about the Global Majority, that is, three quarters of the UN members.

Many believe that it is advisable to reduce the Western countries’ representation in the Council, especially because of their recognition the United States’ leadership. The United States may well represent the entire Western civilization and those who associate themselves with it. Representing their civilizations, India and Brazil have the right to permanent membership in the Council. There is a question of representing Africa and the Arab-Islamic world, which must decide for themselves who will perform it. In these conditions, the candidacies of Germany and Japan will be absolutely impassable: besides the fact that they are Western countries, these states are also not completely sovereign, being under the United States’ occupation. If the European Union persists after the current geopolitical crisis, the EU may take France’s seat. In any case, it is unacceptable that five Anglo-Saxon countries have two permanent seats in

the Security Council, being represented by the United States and Great Britain, which are also linked by “special relations”.

It is still difficult to predict how the UN will transform itself. First, it is necessary to overcome the geopolitical crisis, and then, following its results, it will be possible to judge the new balance of powers in the world. It is no coincidence that many politicians and researchers believe (and the Western elites themselves are of the same opinion) that the Ukrainian conflict, which the West provides strategic depth to, including supplying modern weapons and ammunition, will be equivalent in its consequences to a world war.

The West itself devalues the UN, firstly, by refusing to negotiate with Russia; secondly, by introducing the thesis of “a rules-based order” that denies the world order with the UN’s central role. The fact that the Minsk 2015 Agreements were approved by the UN Security Council, but later the Western capitals declared that they had not intended to implement them at all and demand that from Kiev, is also relevant to this issue. Their real goal was to gain time for rearmament of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, that is, their preparation for the “final solution” of the Donbass issue. It is appropriate to recall that Germany’s remilitarization (this was called “pacification”) also began with its Nazification in the context of preparing aggression against the USSR. Such criteria as belonging to the Anti-Hitler Coalition and the status of a nuclear power under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as factors for permanent membership in the Security Council are likely to be no longer of the same importance. Most probably, economic, cultural and civilizational factors, as well as the authority based on the ability to play a positive role in the common affairs of mankind, will be paramount.

It may happen that it will be difficult to come to an agreement with the West if it continues claiming dominance. In this case, new formats, primarily BRICS, will become even more important. The global problems require collective efforts to solve them. The option of recreating the UN on a new basis – without the West and with its headquarters in one of the World Majority countries – is not improbable, as well. If the new world organization is inclusive, it will not be difficult for Western countries to join it on a common basis. In this case, the current UN could exist in parallel in a fading mode, which anyway it is forced by the West’s aggressive policy. And its specialized agencies would eventually come under the umbrella of the new UN, as was the case with the International Labour Organization and the International Telecommunication Union, inherited by the UN from the League of Nations.

BRICS gains features of the leading format of self-organization of the World Majority. Its key functions include, inter alia, combatting against neocolonial dependence, i. e. unequal terms of trade, the West’s control over the global monetary, financial and other global architecture. This requires alternative platforms and capacities. The West does not hide that its policy of containment is primarily aimed at inhibiting its competitors’ development. Backwardness of the World Majority is a key condition for maintaining the Western hegemony. Therefore, the West relies on advanced technological development. Although it is already a lot to simply develop trade and economic relations and other practical cooperation among non-Western countries,

based on mutual consideration of interests (this was already the case in the Soviet Union's policy in relation of new independent states during their formation).

Equally important is the fact that the SVO in Ukraine demonstrates the West's limited military resources, its sharply reduced ability to carry out the policy of forceful pressure worldwide. In the World Majority countries, this has deterred many in terms of opposing the West's running the show, including that through TNCs, in the territory of these states, and the disposal of their natural resources.

The question of Russia's historical mission arises again. The mission of affirming human freedom in its true, Christian understanding – as the freedom of all countries and peoples. The revolution of 1917, like the Chinese Revolution of 1949, only created the conditions for liberating the world from the Western oppression. This mission itself is being implemented now.

### **The image of the emerging world<sup>1</sup>**

The current comprehensive crisis of the world order is caused by differences in expectations of “the new world order” of the West and the non-Western world after the end of the Cold War, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact Organization. While the world was expecting a new stage of international relations on the de-ideologized basis of the “Westphalian” principles of the UN Charter, the West headed by Washington chose the policy of domination, assuming the “automatic” extension of its domination to the rest of the world as a natural consequence of its “victory in the Cold War”.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization was not dissolved, and in Europe, a region-wide, inclusive system of collective security was not created in accordance with the meaning of Chapter VIII of the UN Charter, which the continent had not known for a century and a half. There happened no post-war settlement, as it was previously after any “big war” in Europe.

Referring in his “Leadership” to the experience of Nixon's “transformational diplomacy”, Kissinger wrote about “the agreed framework of legality as the most solid basis of peace”, and on this foundation – about “global equilibrium / balance of powers”. Today, through its thesis of a certain “rules-based order” to have been introduced, the United States actually deny and destroy the post-war world order based on collectively agreed, universal, i. e. binding on every one, international legal instruments, primarily the UN Charter.

It is one step from the denial of International Law to the denial of law in general, including the basis of Anglo-Saxon market capitalism – the right to inviolability of private property. And the United States with its allies are taking this step by freezing Russia's sovereign assets and thereby undermining one of the fundamental foundations of their constitutional order, which indicates the systemic crisis in the Western society. This is another dimension of the current global transformation, which refers to the West's previous crisis, which was resolved in the events of 1914–1945.

<sup>1</sup> This section uses the conclusions of the report: Картина нарождающегося мира: базовые черты и тенденции // Дипломатическая академия МИД России : [сайт]. 2024. Янв. URL: <https://www.dipacademy.ru/documents/7763/Doklad-Kartina-narozhdayushegosya-mira.pdf?ysclid=m0tyddcz0686948036> (accessed: 04.01.2024).

The liberal idea is evolving towards totalitarianism, an attempt on the freedom of speech and the freedom of thought. Russia consistently defends international legality, whether it attempts to prevent World War I by convening the Hague Peace Conferences in 1899 and 1907, or efforts to create the Eastern Pact in the second half of the 1930s for the purpose of guaranteeing the borders of Germany's eastern neighbours, which could prevent new aggression and World War II.

Aleksandr Gorchakov wrote in his famous (“Russia is not angry. Russia is concentrating”) circular dispatch dated September 02, 1856, “We have spoken out in all the cases when we considered it necessary to speak out in support of the law”.<sup>2</sup>

Created in the post-war period, with the UN-centric and universal international legal instruments, the international legal order has actually suspended its operation because of the systemic confrontation between the West and Russia. This primarily applies to maintaining peace and security. The main multilateral treaties and agreements aimed at preventing nuclear tests, maintaining nuclear parity, limiting weapons and dangerous military activities have ceased to be in force as the result of the United States' unilateral withdrawal from them or suspension of their operation.

Herewith, from the World Majority countries, primarily developing ones, there is a growing demand for inclusiveness of the existing global governance architecture. It is obvious that these countries strive for implementing their cultural and historical identity in foreign policy. These trends have already been recognized by the officials of the Administration of J. Biden.

As for the ideological basis of international life, restoring the significance of the factors of societies' and states' attractiveness on the balanced and truly competitive basis seems inevitable. The unifying trend of the Western politics and its consequence, interventionism, will be eliminated.

The Valdai Club's conclusions and forecasts,<sup>3</sup> such as development of the erosion of hierarchical structures in the system of international relations, with parallel sovereignization of the states responding to Western unification by emphasizing their identity and uniqueness, deserve attention. The United States, however, continues acting as a classic status quo power, which is the reason for the current confrontations that allow talking about a new version of the Cold War.

Its outcome is possible not in the format of “a big deal”, as defined in American political science, or winners' “peaceful congress”, but “in course of natural process of interaction between states and finding options for an international structure acceptable to all states”, i. e. without winners and losers, the ideal of “the world without winners”, which was implemented in World War I due to the elites' prejudices, mutual demonization of the parties and the bad tradition of imposing responsibility for the massacre on the defeated. The dispersal of force/power factors, including resource and technological ones, across a wider range of leading states will also work for the political and diplomatic settlement.

<sup>2</sup> Лопатников В. А. Горчаков: Время и служение. М. : Молодая гвардия, 2011.

<sup>3</sup> Аттестат зрелости, или Порядок, какого еще не было. Фантазия о будущем без иерархии : ежегод. доклад Валдайского клуба. 2023. Окт. // Валдай. Международный дискуссионный клуб : [сайт]. URL: <https://ru.valdaiclub.com/a/reports/attestat-zrelosti-2023/?ysclid=m0ty7a198z872461180> (accessed: 04.01.2024).



According to authoritative experts in international relations (G. Morgenthau, R. Aron, etc.), the idea of multipolarity is a historical normality. It can be concluded that the very American thesis about “revisionist powers” encroaching on the United States’ global hegemony is anti-historical and makes a rule of what is not normal. Regionalization of global politics and its reconstruction “from below” will reflect the multilevel balance of forces and interests, which will serve as a guarantee against the dictates of the global “concert of powers”.

Democratization of international relations will be facilitated by impossibility of conducting secret diplomacy in modern conditions and the need for real involvement of all states in the search for solutions to new global challenges that are cross-border ones in their nature. It will also be contributed to by principles, such as indivisibility of security and peaceful coexistence, which presuppose equality of various cultures and civilizations, their development models rooted in history.

The British philosopher John Gray believes that the state should be turned into a means of peaceful coexistence within the society and outside it, “The belief that one form of governance is suitable for every one is a kind of tyranny.” And if there is an evolutionary process in history, there is no reason for believing that it gives the advantage to the West. The regimes that adapt better than others to “the arbitrary course of history” will prevail. Not the most productive, but those that make the best use of the opportunities provided by chance: they will be the most viable, according to Gray.<sup>1</sup>

With regard to the theme of history / “the end of history”, including theses on “the new Middle Ages” and “neo-feudalism”, Jean Baudrillard’s judgments published in 1990 in the collection of works “Transparency of Evil”<sup>2</sup> about the phenomenon of rewriting the history of the entire 20th century in the West after the end of the Cold War, about “revising the whole History... perhaps in the secret hope of starting everything from scratch in the new millennium” are of certain interest. It sounds relevant in the light of the Western elites’ struggle with history, considering it, inter alia, as a source of national identity. Baudrillard suggests that History “will eventually move away from its final meaning in the opposite direction.” A. I. Fursov<sup>3</sup> writes about the onset of the apocalyptic “Bosch time”, which in the late Middle Ages and the early Modern Age led to emergence of capitalism, though “the finale mirrors the genesis.”

Post-capitalism may have all the hallmarks of “the concentration camp” predicted by postmodernists. Opposition to such a prospect can serve as one of motivations for self-organization and solidarity of the World Majority, as well as the basis for its “linkage” with a part of the Western electorate rooted in their countries, history and traditional values. And if the world has come up with the idea of post-capitalist design, this cannot but open up space for historical creativity of Russia and other leading non-Western countries cooperating within the framework of BRICS, the UN, the Group of Twenty and other promising formats.

N. A. Zherlitsyna<sup>4</sup>

## A NEW TYPE OF COLONIALISM: EXTERNALIZATION OF BORDERS IN AFRICA AS AN ATTEMPT OF DOMINATION OF WESTERN COUNTRIES

If one does not examine colonialism, its social and intellectual basis, its stable and changing aspects and the long-term tragic complications it generated. It is impossible to explain why, after independence, Africa’s desire for freedom and the expected prosperity did not come true. In Africa, classical colonialism began in the 19th century. Like the colonization of America and the Atlantic slave trade, it was systemic violence – organized, continuous, methodical and deliberate. It was integral part of colonialism, as rac-

ism was. Colonialism is based on epistemological and ontological biases that promote establishing Western hegemony and superiority, while devaluing, marginalizing and undermining knowledge, experience and rights of colonized peoples.<sup>5</sup>

The debate about colonialism in Africa died down for several decades after most African countries gained independence. Africans believed that Europeans were gone forever, therefore, the inhabitants of the continent could move forward unhindered, enjoy their freedom and prosperity that, in their opinion, would soon come. But the euphoria and rising expectations were quickly replaced by disappointment and despair, because colonialism left behind its lasting legacy, including not only political and economic, but also cultural, intellectual and social one, that supported European domination. After independence, the deficient colonial state turned into a neo-colonial machine that not only oppressed the people, but also worked in interests of the former colonial powers and their allies.

Modern colonialism of a new type revives the old system of colonial exploitation and oppression, which disguis-

<sup>1</sup> Gray J. *The New Leviathans: Thoughts After Liberalism*. L.: Allen Lane, 2023.

<sup>2</sup> Бодрийяр Ж. *Прозрачность зла*. М.: Добросвет: Изд-во «КДУ», 2009.

<sup>3</sup> Фурсов А. И. *Наше «время Босха»*. М.: Наше Завтра, 2023.

<sup>4</sup> Deputy Director of the Institute for African Studies of the RAS, leading Research Fellow at the Center for History and Cultural Anthropology, Dr. Sc. (Historical Sciences), Associate Professor. Author of more than 120 scientific publications, including chapters in monographs and articles: “Ideological Foundations of French Colonial Policy in the Maghreb Countries in the 18th – First Half of the 20th Century”, “Counter-Terrorism Policies in North Africa: Morocco’s Approach”, “The Al-Qaeda Evolution: in Search of a Balance between Regional Conflicts and the Globalist Perspective” (co-authored), “Cross-Border Migration under Conditions of Intensifying Military and Political Conflicts: on the Example of the Sahel and Central Africa Countries” (co-authored), “The Security Crisis in Burkina Faso”, “The Situation in Libya and Russia’s Interests” (co-authored), “Post-Islamism: from Islamism to Muslim Democracy? Transformation of the Islamist Parties of Tunisia and Morocco”, “Africa: Colonialists’ Unpaid Debt” (co-authored), and others.

<sup>5</sup> Bulhan H. A. *Stages of Colonialism in Africa: From Occupation of Land to Occupation of Being* // *Journal of Social and Political Psychology*. 2015. Vol. 3, № 1. URL: <https://jspp.psychopen.eu/index.php/jspp/article/view/4853> (accessed: 20.04.2024).

es itself under the more cunning euphemism of globalization. The old and crude forms of colonial rule are being replaced by the more subtle and sophisticated, and simultaneously more intense and expansive form – consolidation of capitalism, liberal democracy and Western culture into a single and globalized force purposed for economic, political and cultural domination. The globalization ideology and values imply the interconnected and interdependent world with a common set of international laws, markets and monetary standards, formulated and regulated by so-called “neutral institutions”, such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank or the European Union. Ideology of the new-type colonialism is neoliberalism, which implies global economic integration, elimination of restrictions on the capital movement and flexible migration laws.

Under the auspices of neoliberalism, migration has become the third pillar of globalization, along with trade and finance. In the 1990s, when globalization had already taken features of obvious economic reality, supporters of the liberal path of development suggested the hypothesis that growth of illegal or unregulated migration was one of many symptoms of declining state sovereignty. They speculated how soon the universal regime would emerge, under which international agreements and conventions, as well as the rights acquired by migrants themselves, would gradually replace States in terms of controlling immigration.<sup>1</sup> Arguing that migrants to be illegal should enjoy a number of inalienable rights, human-rights defenders in Western host countries have begun protecting this growing category. Two decades later, disappointment seems to have taken over. And today, on the African continent, EU leaders impose new forms of colonialism as paramilitary border controls. Diplomats of the EU and its member countries have repeatedly stated that Europe’s border does not run in the Mediterranean, but, for example, in Sudan and Niger, which implies that European territorial control over Africa has never really ceased.

The reason for this resumption of European interaction with the African territory – and not just in terms of political and economic dominance – is largely due to one factor: the desire to control migration. Increase in the number of refugees seeking to enter Europe, especially after the war in Syria, has pushed migration to the top of the political agenda, releasing significant resources for border control. Since 2005, funding for the European Coast Guard and Border Control Agency Frontex has grown by incredible 5,233% – from 6 million euros to 320 million euros in 2018.<sup>2</sup> The EU has made migration control the central task of its international policy and its relations with third countries, insisting on border control agreements to be concluded with over 35 countries, for the purpose of controlling migration, which is referred to in Commission terms as “externalization of borders”. According to these agreements, the signatory countries must accept migrants deported from Europe, tighten border controls and the number of personnel at the borders, introduce new biometric identification and passport systems to control migrants, and build camps for detained refugees.

<sup>1</sup> Menz G. Neo-Liberalism, Privatization and the Outsourcing of Migration Management: A Five-Country Comparison // *Competition and Change*. 2011. № 15 (2). P. 116–135.

<sup>2</sup> Buxton N., Akkerman M. The Rise of Border Imperialism. Roar Magazine. URL: <https://roarmag.org/magazine/border-imperialism-europe-africa/> (accessed: 20.04.2024).

The EU explains that externalization will supposedly prevent the death of refugees, but the real goal of European countries is to try to stop refugees long before they reach European shores. Elimination of cross-border dynamics in the so-called “enlarged Mediterranean” has become a major security challenge for the European Union, with Libya and Sahel countries, such as Niger, Chad, Mali and Burkina Faso occupying an important place in this overall strategy. The EU global security strategy “Shared Vision, Common Approach: A Stronger Europe”, presented at this organization’s summit in June 2016, expresses its determination to strengthen border protection and maritime security.<sup>3</sup> On February 3, 2017, in Malta, the heads of the EU state and government adopted the so-called Malta Declaration, in which they confirmed their readiness to support this policy and agreed on a set of measures to curb the flow of illegal migrants from Libya to the EU through Italy.<sup>4</sup>

Acting on the basis of the EU declaration and the bilateral Italian-Libyan memorandum of understanding dated February 2, 2017, Italy has made significant efforts to strengthen Libya’s capability to control its southern border, guided by the conviction expressed by the Internal Affairs Minister M. Minniti that “closing the southern border of Libya means closing the southern border of Europe.”<sup>5</sup> Italy provided assistance in constructing border control infrastructure in southern Libya. Another area, which Italy has shown interest in, is creation of so-called “temporary camps”, detention centres for apprehended illegal migrants. Both sides agreed to improve the current 34 such centres, which are under the exclusive control of the Libyan Ministry of Internal Affairs. In these camps, illegal migrants are temporarily held pending voluntary or forced repatriation to their countries of origin. To make this possible, Italy and Libya persuade African states to agree to the return of their citizens and to facilitate conclusion of readmission agreements. Improving the infrastructure and financing these camps were supposed at the expense of both Italy and the EU. According to the memorandum, the Libyan Coast Guard has the right to intercept ships bound for Italy and return all the passengers to the disembarkation zones in Libya, where detained migrants are held in camps supported by the EU. For Libya, prolonged detention is a common decision, and major EU financial support has been allocated to developing the infrastructure for detention of migrants in Libya.<sup>6</sup>

The idea of a Western state or a group of them contributing to maintenance of refugees and migrants in a border country is not innovative, it has already been used in the EU – Turkey declaration of March 18, 2016. Implementation of this plan has caused the public’s contradicto-

<sup>3</sup> Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe. A Global Strategy for the European Union’s Foreign and Security Policy. 2016. URL: [https://www.eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/eugs\\_review\\_web\\_0.pdf](https://www.eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/eugs_review_web_0.pdf) (accessed: 20.04.2024).

<sup>4</sup> EC (European Council). Malta Declaration by the Members of the European Council on the External Aspects of Migration: Addressing the Central Mediterranean Route. 2017. URL: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2017/02/03/malta-declaration/> (accessed: 20.04.2024).

<sup>5</sup> Libia, le tribù del Sud siglano la pace e si impegnano a bloccare i migranti // *La Stampa*. 2017. 2 Apr. URL: <https://www.lastampa.it/esteri/2017/04/02/news/libia-le-tribu-del-sud-siglano-la-pace-e-si-impegnano-a-bloccare-i-migranti-1.34610687/> (accessed: 20.04.2024).

<sup>6</sup> See: Жерлицына Н. А. Стратегия ЕС в отношении центрально-средиземноморского маршрута миграции и пострадавших транзитных государств Сахеля и Ливии // *Геополитика и экодинамика регионов*. 2022. Т. 8, № 3. С. 51–59.

ry reaction and experts' criticism. The Libyan case differs from the Turkish one in several aggravating circumstances. First of all, the civil war in Libya is in full swing, therefore the country is still far from stable and effective governance. This is not applicable to Turkey, where, although the state of emergency has been declared, its Government fully controls the entire national territory. Secondly, Libya is a transit country for so-called mixed flows consisting of economic migrants and persons in need of international protection. In practice, in absence of state authorities in Fezzan, "temporary camps" are often not controlled by state authorities, and it is almost impossible to access them. The EU and Italy have agreements only with the Government of National Accord, one of the actors of the civil war in Libya. Another actor, the government in Tobruk, which controls significant part of the country's territory, has signed no agreements with the EU and the Italian government and, therefore, does not participate in implementing these agreements.<sup>1</sup>

The EU considers military intervention in new regional theatres of war the main method of solving security problems related to migration. The EU is the largest donor to the multinational Sahel armed forces, known as the G5, which includes troops from Niger, Chad, Mauritania, Mali and Burkina Faso. As part of this policy, Italy has deployed three police units for supporting Libyan border control, law enforcement and criminal justice. For the EU, Niger is the country of origin for the majority of migrants arriving in Italy via Libya, therefore, this state is given special attention in the Union's strategy. For the period 2017–2020, the EU financial contribution to the mission in Niger amounted to about 1 billion Euros.<sup>2</sup> Several military missions were deployed there: France sent 500 military personnel to its base in Niamey, opened additional bases in Madama and Aguelala; 50 German soldiers are also stationed in Niamey. In 2018, Italy began deploying its contingent to Niger. 470 military personnel were part of intelligence and command and control groups, instructors, medical personnel, engineers for assisting in infrastructure work, units for combating chemical, biological and radiological threats, as well as units for collecting information, surveillance and reconnaissance.<sup>3</sup>

The above measures have allowed the EU to effectively reduce unauthorized entry into Europe. But, paradoxically, illegal migration along the Central Mediterranean route is currently more deadly than ever before. According to the 2018 World Migration Report, the Mediterranean Sea is the deadliest border on the planet.<sup>4</sup> Numerous victims along this maritime border are closely related to the EU restrictive migration policy and comprehensive measures aimed at curbing illegal migration. Management of the EU borders is increasingly carried out outside the EU member states' jurisdiction, in the border areas and in the countries neighboring the EU. This is done through more or less formalized extraterritorial agreements between the EU and third coun-

tries. The expanding networks of intergovernmental actions on asylum and migration prevent both departure and entry of migrants without documents. The EU border controls are increasingly carried out in transit or sending countries outside the EU through policies of curbing migration or detaining migrants. These measures are aimed at preventing illegal migrants from entering the EU, where they could get permission to seek asylum. They are also aimed at deterring potential migrants from traveling to the EU at all. Traditional surveillance of external borders is increasingly complemented by pre-border controls in a non-EU country in front of the borders of receiving countries, along migration routes in international waters or in the territories of transit and sending countries. Intercepted illegal migrants are usually readmitted to third countries and detained there. This means that measures for ensuring compliance with its migration policy, taken within the sovereign powers of one state, are implemented and imposed in territories other than its own. This also means that there is no direct link between the state's physical territory and the persons whose rights are affected. Externalization of border management in the EU usually entails outsourcing or subcontracting these functions to neighboring countries.<sup>5</sup> Unauthorized agents are involved in migration management, as well as decision-making on sensitive issues such as imprisoning illegal migrants.<sup>6</sup>

Thus, detained stateless persons turn out to be completely rightless and often at the mercy of individuals without official powers. Migrants who leave Libya for reaching Europe, when intercepted by the Libyan Coast Guard, are usually deprived of access to standard asylum procedures and the opportunity for contacting European states' authorities, which exercise their powers through local agents in a third country. Along with this, migrants' chances to influence an European country's decision decrease. They cannot efficiently file their asylum applications, as well as cannot challenge the way their cases are handled or ignored. Illegal migrants are absolutely vulnerable to arbitrary, uncontrolled power being exercised over them because of their status.<sup>7</sup>

There is an obvious causal relationship between such EU migration policy and many human victims among illegal migrants crossing the Mediterranean Sea. The EU has closed legal entry routes, forcing migrants to make risky illegal trips and rely on traffickers and smugglers to move. The EU has taken measures for blocking the remaining illegal entry routes and detaining those who were able to break through heavily guarded borders. In case of Libya, both victims at sea and violence in detention camps were predictable damages that could have been avoided if appropriate actions had been taken. As stated in the 2019 Report of the UN Mission in Libya and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, conditions of detention in these centers are "generally inhumane and far from meeting international human rights standards."<sup>8</sup> They

<sup>1</sup> Жерлицына Н. А. *Op. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> Lebovich A. The real Reason UN Troops are in Niger // *Foreign Policy*. 2017. 27 Oct. URL: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2017/10/27/the-real-reason-u-s-troops-are-in-niger/> (accessed: 20.04.2024).

<sup>3</sup> La Camera approva la missione in Niger: 470 uomini contro il traffico di esseri umani // *La Repubblica*. 2018. 17 Jan. URL: [https://www.repubblica.it/esteri/2018/01/17/news/camera\\_approva\\_missione\\_niger-186698741/](https://www.repubblica.it/esteri/2018/01/17/news/camera_approva_missione_niger-186698741/) (accessed: 20.04.2024).

<sup>4</sup> McAuliffe M., Ruhs M. World Migration Report 2018 // *International Organization for Migration (IOM) Report*. 2018. URL: [https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/wmr\\_2018\\_en.pdf](https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/wmr_2018_en.pdf) (accessed: 20.04.2024).

<sup>5</sup> Kim S. Non-Refoulement and Extraterritorial Jurisdiction: State Sovereignty and Migration Controls at Sea in the European Context // *Leiden Journal of International Law*. 2017. № 30 (1). P. 49–70.

<sup>6</sup> Жерлицына Н. А. *Op. cit.*

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> UNOHCHR and UNSMIL 2019. Detained and Dehumanised: Report on Human Rights Abuses against Migrants in Libya. URL: [http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/LY/DetainedAndDehumanised\\_en.pdf](http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/LY/DetainedAndDehumanised_en.pdf) (accessed: 20.04.2024).

are characterized by severe overcrowding, insufficient ventilation and poor hygiene. Migrants constantly suffer there from malnutrition and limited or no access to medical care. They are usually subjected to torture and other ill-treatment by guards, mainly for the purpose of extorting money from their relatives for their release. Women are often victims of rape or other forms of sexual violence. The EU intervention actually has led to resurgence of the slave trade in Africa: refugees were sold as slaves.

Thus, today, European countries, due to their wealth and influence, are able to close their external borders almost hermetically by making huge investments in complex control systems and concluding agreements with transit countries that protect their interests in preventing unwanted migrants. This ability has a significant impact on the situation of the already defenseless and disenfranchised people from poor countries.

When groups of wealthy countries, such as EU member states, come together to stop unauthorized immigration into their jurisdiction and reach agreement to do so efficiently, disadvantaged neighboring countries tend to have to accept large numbers of illegal immigrants who are banned from entering the EU and who have “nowhere else to go”. That is, measures taken by the EU to ensure compliance with its own migration policy are implemented and have an impact on territories other than their own. While strengthening the external borders of the Schengen region is a key objec-

tive of the EU internal migration policy, cooperation with third countries in the field of migration control has become a key feature of its external migration policy over the past decade. In close cooperation with third countries, the EU has managed to curb the outflow of migrants from transit and sending countries.<sup>1</sup>

But the actions of the European Union raise doubts about their compliance with international law and its own declared principles of human rights protection. Paradoxically, when it comes to their own interests, the countries that have led the way in developing and disseminating standards and procedures that protect human rights have done everything to prevent asylum seekers from setting foot on their territory. In fact, migrants are not allowed to appear on the EU doorstep, which apparently exempts EU member states from the human rights obligations they have assumed. The activities of the institute of extraterritorial migration management, practiced regarding the Central Mediterranean route, can hardly be justified by reducing the number of migrants arriving from Libya, because this was achieved at the cost of human rights violations.<sup>2</sup>

Such border controls are a form of new colonialism, as they include population displacement, criminalization, racial hierarchy and exploitation of people. Borders are walls designed to block huge disparity between Africa and Europe, built during the colonial era and perpetuated by European economic and political policies today.

<sup>1</sup> Жерлицына Н. А. *Op. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

## Plenary Session DIALOGUE OF CULTURES AND CIVILIZATIONS IN THE NEW EMERGING REALITY

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April 12, 2024

A. P. Petrov Theatre and Concert Hall, SPbUHSS

### CHAIRPERSONS:

I. I. BUZOVSKY	<i>Deputy Minister of Information of the Republic of Belarus (Minsk), Ph. D. in Sociological Sciences</i>
S. V. KABYSHEV	<i>Chairman of the Committee on Science and Higher Education of the State Duma of the Russian Federation (Moscow), Professor, Honored Lawyer of the Russian Federation</i>
M. B. PIOTROVSKY	<i>Director of the State Hermitage Museum, member of the Presidium, Academician of the RAS, Dr. Sc. (History), Professor, Chairman of the St. Petersburg Intelligentsia Congress, Honorary Doctor of SPbUHSS</i>
M. V. SHMAKOV	<i>Member of the State Council of the Russian Federation, Chairman of the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of SPbUHSS, Professor Emeritus of SPbUHSS</i>
O. Yu. VASILYEVA	<i>President of the Russian Academy of Education (RAE), Academician of the RAE, Dr. Sc. (Historical Sciences), Professor</i>
A. V. YAKOVENKO	<i>Rector of the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia (Moscow), Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation (2005–2011), Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the United Kingdom (2011–2019), Dr. Sc. (Law), Professor</i>
A. S. ZAPESOTSKY	<i>Rector of St. Petersburg University of the Humanities and Social Sciences, Deputy Chairman of the St. Petersburg Branch of the RAS, Corresponding Member of the RAS, Academician of the RAE, Dr. Sc. (Cultural Studies), Professor, Scientist Emeritus of the Russian Federation, Chairman of the Executive Committee of St. Petersburg Intelligentsia Congress</i>

### SPEAKERS:

I. O. ABRAMOVA	<i>Director of the Institute for African Studies of the RAS (Moscow), Member of the Presidium of the RAS, Corresponding Member of the RAS, Dr. Sc. (Economics), Professor</i>
V. A. CHERESHNEV	<i>Deputy President and Member of the Presidium of the RAS (Moscow), Academician of the RAS, Scientific Director of the Institute of Immunology and Physiology of the Ural Branch of the RAS, Dr. Sc. (Medical Sciences), Professor, Honorary Doctor of SPbUHSS</i>
A. CROOKE	<i>Founder and Director of geo-political and geo-financial think-tank Conflicts Forum (London, United Kingdom)</i>
Ye. G. DRAPEKO	<i>First Deputy Chairman of the Committee on Culture of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation (Moscow), Deputy to the State Duma of the Russian Federation, Ph. D. in Sociology, Honored Artist of the RSFSR, Professor of the SPbUHSS (1994–1999)</i>
A. S. MAKSIMOV	<i>Chairman of the Committee on Science and Higher Education of the Government of St. Petersburg</i>
V. V. NAUMKIN	<i>Scientific Director of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the RAS (Moscow), Academician of the RAS, Dr. Sc. (Historical Sciences), Professor</i>
O. ROQUEPLO	<i>Professor of Sorbonne University (France), Dr. Sc. (History), Dr. Sc. (Political Sciences)</i>
N. V. STARIKOV	<i>writer, journalist, politician (Moscow)</i>
A. TRIGUNAYAT	<i>Ambassador of India to Jordan and Libya, High Commissioner to Malta (2012–2016), Honorary Fellow of the Analytical Center of the Vivekananda International Foundation</i>
M. V. ZAKHAROVA	<i>Director of the Information and Press Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia (Moscow), Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation, Ph. D. in History</i>

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – Dear friends, according to the established tradition, we open the Conference with a speech by Mikhail Borisovich Piotrovsky. The fact is that after the passing of Dmitry Sergeyevich Likhachov, Daniil Granin and I addressed the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin with a letter in which we asked to perpetuate the memory of the outstanding thinker and philosopher. In 2001, Vladimir Vladimirovich issued a Decree in which he instructed the St. Petersburg Intelligentsia Congress (Daniil Alexandrovich Granin and I were among its founders) and our University to hold International Likhachov Scientific Conference (previously, we annually held Science Days which were founded by Academician Likhachov). The Chairman of the Congress is Mikhail Borisovich Piotrovsky, so it is quite natural that the first word at the Likhachov Conference belongs to him.

So, the Director of the State Hermitage, Honorary Doctor of St. Petersburg University of the Humanities and Social Sciences Mikhail Borisovich Piotrovsky is invited to the podium.

**M. B. PIOTROVSKY:** – Dear friends, it is a great honor for me to open the next Likhachov Conference and a great pleasure to see you again in this hall. Many thanks to everyone who supports the spirit of the Likhachov Conference, the memory of the personality and legacy of Dmitry Sergeyevich and the atmosphere of intellectual activity that he created and which continues to live within the walls of this wonderful University.

One of the most important documents developed by Academician Likhachov together with scientists from St. Petersburg University of the Humanities and Social Sciences is the Declaration of Cultural Rights. Today, in many aspects, it has become even more relevant than in the years when it was created.

Nowadays, there are military actions in many regions worldwide, due to which culture also suffers. In addition, there is a powerful global trend called “cancel of culture”, and the cancellation of Russian culture has become a part thereof. Museums are declared unnecessary and harmful, and the right to cultural borrowing is considered aggression, and not a lever for the development of culture. In this context, although the Declaration I mentioned has not yet become a regulatory document, it can become a powerful intellectual argument, which is why we must speak even louder about the rights of culture.

Dmitry Sergeyevich Likhachov devoted a considerable part of his life to the protection of cultural heritage. Today, this activity is no less necessary than before – both because of the situation in the world in general, and due to the fact that we have to protect, for example, monuments of Christian culture in the Middle East, in particular in Syria. Here, in St. Petersburg, a heated debate continues about the new law regarding zones for the protection of cultural monuments. This law is of great importance not only for our city, but also for the whole of Russia, and for other countries, because all over the world they are currently thinking about how to preserve cultural heritage and at the same time not to erect barriers to the further development of the human environment, do not interfere with the coming of the future.

Not so long ago, the concept of cultural sovereignty became relevant in the global cultural life. What is it about? A multipolar world means not only the political sovereign-

ty of countries, but also the sovereignty of cultures, which, nevertheless, must be combined with the global cultural unity. Such unity is necessary so that in further development the peoples of the world build their relations on the basis of mutual respect and understanding. On this path we need appropriate theory and philosophy, and for practical implementation we can turn to the experience of the Soviet Union, the United States of America, the European Union and other multicultural associations. It is clear that previous practices require rethinking taking into account new realities, and now the necessary solutions are being developed. I believe that our discussions within the current Likhachov Conference, for instance on further economic and cultural cooperation of the BRICS member countries, will contribute to this. In Russia there are matrices that allow you to put forward your proposals and practices. One of these matrices is a museum. For example, the Hermitage, a real encyclopedia of global culture, written in Russian, is a clear example of the combination of national and world values. Also, yesterday I watched the new version of Alexander Nikolaevich Sokurov's film “The Sun”. The film, as before, shows the life of the Japanese Emperor Hirohito in the last days of Second World War, just before the surrender, but the updated film has largely become an educational work about different cultures and cultural sovereignty, the consequence of which can be the unfolding or, conversely, cessation of military actions.

At the Hermitage we have recently implemented two projects that, we believe, Dmitry Sergeyevich Likhachov would approve. The first is an exhibition of the artistic heritage of the Old Believers of Pomerania. This is a grandiose exhibition dedicated to the Vygov Old Believer Hermitage, the largest spiritual and cultural center of Pomerania. Among the exhibits, there are various types of Vygov art: icons, handwritten books, copper castings, wood carvings, etc. Academician Likhachov highly valued the spiritual history of pre-Petrine Russia. The second project is also an exhibition shown both in St. Petersburg and in Moscow; we prepared it together with our Moscow colleagues. This time, the exhibition is dedicated to the “Salons” of Denis Diderot, which is already related to the era of Enlightenment and world culture, which was also very important and valuable for Dmitry Likhachov. So, we are trying to do in all directions what would be interesting to one of the greatest Russian scientists and humanists.

I wish us all successful Likhachov Conference, interesting ideas and fruitful discussions.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – Dear colleagues, several video cameras are installed in this hall, and a live television broadcast on the federal channel “Scientific Russia” is now going on. Of course, the audience of this channel is smaller than those where pop stars perform. But we are interested not so much in quantity as in quality. The vast majority of viewers of “Scientific Russia” are doctors of science, and live broadcasts of forums of such a level as ours commonly attract 10–20 thousand people to the screens, and tens of thousands more will watch it in the recording. Of course, among them are not only doctors of science, but also candidates, graduate students, and simply people interested in science.

On behalf of one of the founders of the International Likhachov Scientific Conference – the Russian Academy



of Sciences – I give the floor to the Deputy President of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Academician of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Honorary Doctor of our University Valery Aleksandrovich Chereshevnev.

**V. A. CHERESHNEV:** – Dear colleagues, participants of the Likhachov Conference, let me greet you on behalf of the Presidium of the Russian Academy of Sciences and its President Gennady Yakovlevich Krasnikov.

Today is the 12th of April, Cosmonautics Day in Russia. On this day in 1961, for the first time in the history of mankind, a manned space flight was performed, which is an evidence of the enormous successes of domestic science, including scientists of the USSR Academy of Sciences, the legal successor of which is the Russian Academy of Sciences.

This year, the Likhachov Conference are dedicated to the BRICS international association as a space for cultural dialogue. In this regard, I would like to say a few words about how our cooperation with our colleagues from China, one of the BRICS countries, is progressing. Today China is a superpower. A year and a half ago, in October 2022, the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of China took place, at which the country's leadership proclaimed two new tasks. The first is that by 2035 China should become a leader in the innovation process, the second is that by 2050 it should become the largest scientific and technological power by most indicators. No one doubts that this will happen.

This autumn marks the 75th anniversary of our diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China, which were established in 1949. Almost simultaneously, the Chinese Academy of Sciences was created, and the Chinese took the experience of the USSR as the basis for organizing science in their country. In organizational terms, the Chinese Academy of Sciences has actually become a copy of the USSR Academy of Sciences – president, vice-presidents, branches, regional divisions, etc. But these days we note a “small” difference: if in China 2.4% of GDP is allocated to science, then Russia has only 1.1% of GDP. So, the comparison here is not in our favor. But we cooperate, and work together in many areas. In recent years, Chinese science has become a world leader. We hold joint conferences and congresses and create research centers. Thus, the Russian-Chinese Science and Education Center has been operating for four years. The coronavirus pandemic prompted us to join forces, and together we studied prevention methods and new treatments.

Nevertheless, the main thing now is to ensure a safe future for humanity. Meanwhile, all forecasts indicate that the 21st century will most likely become the century of viral infections. The reasons are environmental problems, unprecedented anthropogenic pressure, and air pollution. Fires and floods, in addition to direct damage, have long-term consequences. Thus, when large areas are flooded, the microflora of animals and plants passes to humans. If previously it took 100 years for an infection to turn from zoonotic to anthroponotic, now this happens within a few years. Zoonoses, anthroponoses and anthroponoses threaten human health and life. Well-known examples are HIV and COVID-19. HIV has been known for more than 90 years, but coronavirus has become an absolute anthroponosis in just 20 years.

Humanity must show determination and take certain actions to avoid further deadly threats posed by the virus. Therefore, currently many people remember the teachings of Academician Vernadsky about the noosphere. From the technosphere that mankind has created over the past 250 years, we must return to the biosphere. Dmitry Sergeyevich Likhachov said that the past is a blueprint for the future. Therefore, we must learn to look at the past in order to take positive and useful things therefrom and henceforth not make mistakes that we made out of ignorance.

Vasily Nikitich Tatishchev, an outstanding Russian statesman and political figure, a member of Peter I's circle, who wrote “Russian History”, asserted three centuries ago: “All actions arise from intelligence or stupidity.” Therefore, he came to the conclusion, “teaching” and “enlightenment” are necessary. And we always come to St. Petersburg with great interest and joy to take part in the Likhachov Conference at the University of the Humanities and Social Sciences: they are invariably imbued with enlightened reason. This important and wonderful tradition was started by Dmitry Sergeyevich Likhachov and successfully continued by Alexander Sergeyevich Zapesotsky.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – Thank you, Valery Aleksandrovich. The floor is given to member of the State Council of the Russian Federation, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of our University Mikhail Viktorovich Shmakov.

**M. V. SHMAKOV:** – Good afternoon, dear colleagues! The Likhachov Conference, which are held at St. Petersburg University of the Humanities and Social Sciences for the 22nd time, invariably attract the attention of the entire country and the President of Russia. Therefore, let me read out Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin's greeting to the participants of the 22nd International Likhachov Scientific Conference.

“Dear friends,

I greet you on the occasion of the opening of the 22nd International Likhachov Scientific Conference. Your meetings, which annually bring together famous scientists, cultural and artistic figures, politicians and diplomats from various countries in St. Petersburg, provide a good opportunity for meaningful, constructive discussions. Moreover, the agenda of the Conference invariably includes a wide range of issues relating to the main trends in the development of modern society – both at the national and international levels.

The current Conference are dedicated to the place and role of BRICS on the world stage. The choice of such a topic is especially relevant in light of Russia's chairmanship in this authoritative and influential association, which ensures effective joint work of participating states in many areas based on the principles of equality, respect and mutual consideration of interests.

I hope that you will thoroughly discuss the prospects for the development of BRICS at a high expert level, and that your ideas and initiatives will help us to develop new forms and areas of mutually beneficial multilateral cooperation – for the benefit of our countries and peoples, in the interests of building a more just, safe and prosperous world order.

I wish you fruitful communication and all the best.”

Even 10 years ago, we talked about the transition to multipolarity as a possible and most likely trend in the de-

velopment of the entire human community. Today this is the reality with which we have to correlate all our decisions and actions. The transition to a multipolar world is accelerating and intensifying, and one of the most important factors in this process is the military operations that are taking place today in different countries. The hotbeds of conflict are localized in Ukraine and the Middle East, and we hope that they will not escalate into a large-scale world war.

Meanwhile, a number of states recently celebrated a milestone – the 120th anniversary of the formation of the Entente – the first ever military coalition of several countries. Today there is also a serious division into coalitions. 54 states oppose Russia and wish us defeat on the battlefield, but the rest, and their majority, even if not support our country in this confrontation, then at least do not agree with the confrontation that these 54 countries are imposing on us. Their hostile attitude towards Russia which has become the cause of many wars over several hundred years, pursues the same goals: to continue their colonial policy, “take away and divide”. In the past 30–50 years, we treated their possible aggression as a theoretical assumption, but today we are faced with it in practice. Unfortunately, for our country, what is happening is a deadly threat, and we have no other way but to win and defend our sovereignty and right to life.

As for BRICS, it is indeed a growing and already very powerful center for the development of the world economy and politics (this year under the chairmanship of Russia). Trade unions in our country are taking an active part in the preparation of the 12th BRICS trade union forum which will take place in September this year in Sochi. We have a special responsibility for carrying it out according to the planned program. But the main thing is that we are on the verge of creating a large international trade union alliance, BRICS. It is likely that this alliance will unite trade unions from all 10 countries currently included in BRICS, as well as, possibly, those that would like to join this international organization in the near future. So, we have a lot of work ahead of us, and I am confident that we will succeed.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – Thank you, Mikhail Viktorovich. Dear colleagues, I remind you that one of the co-founders of the Likhachov Conference is the Russian Academy of Education. It is with great pleasure that I give the floor to the President of RAE, Professor Olga Yuryevna Vasilyeva.

**O. Yu. VASILYEVA:** – Dear colleagues, following a good tradition, this year the St. Petersburg University of the Humanities and Social Sciences again hosts leading Russian scientists, specialists, public figures, politicians and diplomats. The Likhachov Conference are not only the coordination of common approaches to the problems of the development of civilization and the dialogue of cultures, but, primarily, practical assistance in the development of higher education in our country. It has become a platitude that we live in a rapidly changing world, and the speed of change is increasing year by year. But in this frantic pace of life, we began to understand more and more clearly that the most important thing for us is to preserve our identity and traditional values. As a natural consequence, the education system comes to the forefront, which, starting from kindergarten, plays a leading role, first of all, in the sociali-

zation of the younger generation, future citizens. Education is more closely connected with the civilizational model of society than all other spheres of life, which is why approaches to the targets of educational systems in various countries at different historical stages differ so much. We know that civilizations can collapse, but if the values and traditions of education remain intact, then revival becomes possible. History knows other examples when civilization perishes precisely because, despite the general apparent prosperity, value guidelines that always underlie education are lost. Therefore, today, more than ever before, we must consider the domestic education system primarily from the point of view of historical experience and the goals that we set for the country. This means that we must approach with caution those innovations that are based on principles that are alien to us.

The most obvious example of our mistakes in education is the transition to the Bologna system. I remember a forum held several years ago by lawyers in the field of education. Truly highly qualified specialists took part in it, and I asked them the question: “When we began to introduce the Bologna system into our education, was this decision given a qualified legal assessment?” It turned out that no, there was no such assessment, but the most surprising thing is that it does not exist today.

Now we are reviving our traditional education system, which has worked successfully for many decades. By the way, I would like to remind you that before European countries began to join the Bologna process, the Association of European Universities objected and put forward arguments against this. We must draw conclusions not only from our own, but also from other people’s experience, that is, make carefully thought-out, balanced strategic decisions that will contribute to the improvement of the Russian higher education system. Such decisions are vital for us.

The urgent tasks of higher education today are the training of highly qualified personnel who will meet the long-term needs of the country, primarily economic ones. In May 2023, the President of Russia signed a decree on the implementation of a pilot project for a gradual return to the traditional model of higher education. The transition period will last until 2026, that is, for three years.

Let me remind you of the key points of the project. The bachelor’s degree program is being replaced by basic higher education with a duration of study of four to six years, depending on the needs of the industry. We must turn to past experience, which contains brilliant examples of success. Thus, in the USSR, the training of teaching staff for secondary schools was carried out by teacher institutes in which training lasted four years and six months; in some specialties – four years and eight months. And only starting from 1958, when a graduate of a pedagogical university acquired two specialties in his/her diploma, the period of study increased to five years, and then to five and a half.

The master’s degree program is being transformed into specialized higher education. On the one hand, our students at this time have the opportunity to enter science, on the other hand, they acquire skills and knowledge that are in demand primarily in economics. The duration of training is from one to two years, and only in medical specialties it is longer. Now we are at the stage of searching for an effective structure of our national higher education system, which, naturally, also faces the task of modernizing the content.

The organization of higher education at all its stages must be treated very responsibly. Thus, the training of engineering and technological personnel, all its components – fundamental, practical and educational – must be supported by connections with the employer. We must ensure high level of professionalism of university graduates, and most importantly, instill high civic responsibility in them.

The Russian Academy of Education is the successor to the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of the RSFSR, which was created in October 1943. More than a year and a half remained before the victorious May, but the country understood that it was necessary to prepare highly qualified people – teachers for all sectors, primarily for the economy. A full-fledged revival of the activities of the “big” academy occurred in 1946, after Stalin’s famous speech within the walls of the Bolshoi Theater, in which he emphasized the importance of science and announced the focus on the nuclear industry development. However, such development required specialists, and they had to be trained, which is why the education system became the most important priority of the state policy.

In memory of the president of one of the leading Russian universities, Lyudmila Alekseevna Verbitskaya, who headed St. Petersburg State University for many years, this year the Russian Academy of Education established the “Mentor in Science” medal to be awarded to our colleagues from all fields of knowledge who work with students and postgraduate students for at least 10 years. Thus, within the framework of the state assignment, we were actively involved in the process of educational activities in higher educational institutions. We consider this approach to be competent, because education is not only a science, but also, to a great extent, an art. Only by combining our efforts can we together achieve the results we talk about so much.

In conclusion, I would like to once again thank Alexander Sergeyevich Zapesotsky and this wonderful University for the opportunity to take part in the scientific conference and once again emphasize that today in the domestic educational policy, with our original guidelines, we must unite the efforts of practitioners, scientists, mentors, psychologists in order to strengthen the very positions to which we are currently moving, and most importantly, to translate all our intentions into reality, because the future of Russia depends on the young people who are now receiving education in our universities.

On March 14, the Presidium of the Russian Academy of Education decided to award Alexander Sergeyevich Zapesotsky with the Cyril and Methodius Medal of the Russian Academy of Education. It is awarded for special merits which we have formulated as follows: “For significant contribution to the development of scientific and educational activities”. Dear Alexander Sergeyevich, I ask you to accept this award which is important for us.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – Dear friends, I am very pleased to receive the Cyril and Methodius Medal of the Russian Academy of Education. Although I am already a holder of a number of high awards of the Russian Academy of Education (K. D. Ushinsky Medal, Gold Medal of the RAE, etc.), this medal is of particular importance for me.

The fact is that in the early 1990s, during a very difficult period for the country and higher education, employees

of our University approached me with an unusual request, namely, to consecrate St. Petersburg University of the Humanities and Social Sciences. I was raised by a pioneer organization and the Young Communist League, worked for a long time at the State Optical Institute where I was engaged in the development of defense space technology, and generally understood the laws of the physical structure of the world. And when I was offered to consecrate the University, I personally was not ready for this, but I followed the advice because I saw how difficult life was for people.

We invited a wonderful man to consecrate the University. Later I became friends with him, and later on I baptized my daughter and grandson with him. It was Father Bogdan, the dean of the St. Nicholas Cathedral. After the touching consecration ceremony which took place on May 24, 1992, the university’s affairs improved: we completed the construction having invested 30 million dollars earned by St. Petersburg University of the Humanities and Social Sciences in the 1990s.

The path of our educational institution to the University that it is today began in 1926, when it was founded by trade unions. In 1948, Joseph Stalin being the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, signed a decree that granted our trade union university the right to issue state diplomas. I must say that the more I think about the figure of Stalin, the more I understand his special significance and greatness in the Russian history.

The date of May 24 was not chosen by chance. This is the day of the founders of Russian writing, Saints Equal-to-the-Apostles Cyril and Methodius, an all-Russian holiday. At the suggestion of Academician D. S. Likhachov, since 1993 we have been celebrating this day as the beginning of a new stage in the life of the trade union university – in the status of a University. In accordance with the Likhachov’s concept, the celebration program necessarily includes an exhibition of scientific works of our team and a scientific conference which Dmitry Sergeyevich thought of as “Science Days at St. Petersburg University of the Humanities and Social Sciences” (later renamed into Likhachov Conference). That is, we have found our way uniting believers and non-believers.

I consider it my duty to say that not only the Russian Academy of Education, but also the Russian Academy of Sciences did not ignore the merits of our institution. Recently, the President of the Russian Academy of Sciences G. Ya. Krasnikov noted our achievements with a Certificate of Honor from the Russian Academy of Sciences.

Now I would like to invite to the podium a representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, which is a co-founder of the Likhachov Conference, a Member of the Board of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, the rector of the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Professor Alexander Vladimirovich Yakovenko.

Before Alexander Vladimirovich begins his speech, I would like to say a few words about him. A. V. Yakovenko has been collaborating with our University for more than 20 years, since 2003. During this period, he held various positions: he was Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation (2005–2011), Ambassador of the Russian Federation to Great Britain (2011–2019), and is now rector of the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. In order to par-

ticipate in the Likhachov Conference, each time he had to write a special note to the minister in order to be released to Russia. If he could not attend the Conference, he participated in them remotely, sending his reports. That is, Alexander Vladimirovich did not betray the Likhachov Conference in any of his positions. And we are glad that today he is here in person.

**A. V. YAKOVENKO:** – Dear friends, the Likhachov Conference have always been related to foreign policy and diplomacy. That is why in those distant years when this forum was established, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs took an active part in this important undertaking.

But Alexander Sergeyevich did not mention one more important point. Since 2008, together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, the Diplomatic Program of Conference “International Dialogue of Cultures” has been carried out, within the framework of which ambassadors of foreign states speak expressing their views on the most important issues of our time. Foreign ambassadors accredited in Moscow fuel the intellectual thought of this scientific forum.

In light of the theme of the 22nd Likhachov Conference – “BRICS as a new space for dialogue of cultures and civilizations” – one can recall how many future BRICS members presented their ideas on this platform. And we at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs benefited greatly from this intellectual contribution.

In my speech I will highlight two thoughts that are one way or another related to foreign policy.

The first one is that on March 31, 2023, Russian President V. V. Putin approved the new Concept of Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation. The main thing in this concept is that for the first time Russia was defined as a distinctive state-civilization. If translated from the language of foreign policy into normal Russian, this means that we will no longer integrate into the Western coordinate system – something that we have been doing for 30 years, succumbing to a certain romanticism. We thought that the West would change and as a result a more equitable system of international relations would be created. But this, unfortunately, did not happen. And everything that we see today in Ukraine is evidence of this.

I must say that the Foreign Policy Concept pays great attention to the dialogue of cultures. I also want to emphasize that we do not reject the European heritage. The concept clearly speaks of the deep historical ties of Russian culture with traditional European culture, which is by no means the same as Western civilization or Romano-Germanic Europe.

The second thought is directly related to foreign policy and international relations – the world today is divided into two parts: the global majority (about 140 countries) to which Russia counts itself, and the global Western minority (about 50 states), mainly NATO countries, the European Union, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, etc.

What is the difference between the politics of the global majority and the minority?

The first difference is the attitude towards international law. The global majority favors the development and compliance with international law. This means that agreements must be developed jointly and everyone must follow them. As for the world minority, the Anglo-Saxon formula was in-

vented – a world based on rules. Its essence lies in the fact that a small group of Western states invents rules that are then imposed on other countries. The rules can change at any moment, as we can see in many examples nowadays.

The second difference is the attitude towards private property. The paradox is that the countries of the international majority advocate respect for private property rights. While the global minority – Western countries – do not respect this right, which is manifested in the expropriation of assets not only of our country, but also of Afghanistan, Syria, and Venezuela. They can take away money at any time, not only from the state, but also from individuals.

The third difference is the attitude towards traditional values. The world's majority countries respect traditional values. They may be different, but the basis is always respect. While Western countries, unfortunately, do not show such respect. And what we are seeing today in Western Europe is, by and large, a bacchanalia.

These elements are important for Russian foreign policy. And the issues that are being discussed today within BRICS are a reflection of these trends. I look forward with great enthusiasm to the BRICS summit in Kazan this year. From my point of view, the key issue that will be discussed there, in addition to political aspects, is the creation of an alternative financial system in the world. The topic is not a simple one, but it is at the heart of the big changes that can happen.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – Our guest from Belarus will continue the speeches. I must say that the Belarusian delegation at these Likhachov Conference is the largest: seven people take part in the forum, primarily from the Belarusian State University with which St. Petersburg University of the Humanities and Social Sciences entered into a co-operation agreement many years ago. The floor is given to the Deputy Minister of Information of the Republic of Belarus Igor Ivanovich Buzovsky.

**I. I. BUZOVSKY:** – Dear participants of the Likhachov Conference, it is a great honor for me and my colleagues to be present in this hall and to participate in all the events of the Likhachov Conference.

I would like to voice several theses that are fundamentally important to me within the framework of the stated theme of the plenary session “Dialogue of cultures and civilizations in the new emerging reality”.

Recently, within the framework of the education system of Belarus, we conducted research (this is the norm for our educational process) on the value component, which conceptually reflects the situation not only in the Republic of Belarus, but throughout the entire former post-Soviet space.

Analysis of the educational process allowed us to draw conclusions about how the educational process is organized in the system of higher and secondary education. The results are depressing. Let me give you one indicator: 43% of parents showed a misunderstanding of the educational tasks and goals that are implemented in the education system, that is, in fact, a misunderstanding of the categories that we define as values.

The Belarusian State Economic University, which conducted the study, presented it as a matrix that reflects the entire civilizational system and poses tasks not only for the education system. This study can be projected onto all

socio-political processes that are currently taking place. In conditions of civilizational confrontation, we need to jointly analyze and form common categories. The unity of understanding and the formation of a common axiological matrix is, in my opinion, one of the key components that we need to discuss.

Even when we understand problems such as environmental threats, resource depletion, and overpopulation, we can choose wrong strategies that lead us to dead ends. The awareness that the economic, technological, material components relate to means, not ends, should be a priority.

Today, speaking about BRICS, we note first of all the economic component of this association, its effectiveness, which basically is not disputed. But the deeper we dive into economic strategy, the more we realize that we need a value-based, meaningful development strategy that will allow us to consolidate efforts not only and not so much in achieving economic indicators, but also in uniting society and civilization in order to withstand the confrontation.

At the same time, I would like to note that this strategy does not mean refusal or struggle, so that the consolidation of international formations does not turn into a struggle against something. This is the key message that I try to voice from different platforms – we must fight not against, but for. We need to develop a strategy and targets that will allow us to consolidate. This strategic task is one of the key ones. I see the way out of the crisis not in abandoning scientific and technological development and improving economic strategies, but in giving them a humanistic dimension.

In fact, these tasks also correlate with today's holiday – Cosmonautics Day. For the Republic of Belarus, it became significant thanks to the great Russian science and the implemented strategy of relations between our countries and was marked by the flight of the first Belarusian female cosmonaut M. Vasilevskaya to the ISS as part of an international crew. I am grateful to the entire scientific community, primarily to those who contributed not so much to the economic component, but to the value component that we are talking about.

I am also grateful for the opportunities provided by the Likhachov Conference platform, where we can share our thoughts and work in a single information field.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – Dear colleagues, today the Chairman of the Committee on Science and Higher Education of the Government of St. Petersburg, Andrei Stanislavovich Maksimov, who has been associated with St. Petersburg science for many years, and has been working with scientific institutions and universities, is taking part in the work of the Likhachov Forum. President of the Russian Academy of Sciences G. Ya. Krasnikov spoke warmly about this person, which speaks of the authority of our scientific community and those who support it with their highly qualified leadership administrative work.

**A. S. MAKSIMOV:** – Dear Alexander Sergeyevich, presidium and participants of the congress! Thank you for your kind words; I work for the benefit of St. Petersburg and the city's system of science and professional education. Today I have an honorable and significant mission – I would like to announce the greetings of the Governor of St. Peters-

burg Alexander Dmitrievich Beglov to the participants of the 22nd Likhachov Conference.

“Dear friends,

I am glad to welcome the participants and organizers of the 22nd International Likhachov Scientific Conference. The large-scale forum is once again becoming a popular discussion platform for discussing current humanitarian issues that are significant for the present and future of Russia. It occupies a strong place in the calendar of socially significant events of our city and country and annually brings together over one and a half thousand domestic and foreign researchers – specialists of the highest professional level.

Holding Conference is a wonderful long-term tradition that is carefully preserved and developed by St. Petersburg University of the Humanities and Social Sciences. This year, the focus of everyone's attention is the important role of the BRICS interstate association in the modern world order. In this regard, the statements of the outstanding scientist and educator Dmitry Sergeyevich Likhachov about the role of the Russian culture in the global space acquire special value and resonance. I am confident that the Likhachov Conference 2024 will become an effective tool for maintaining a broad humanitarian dialogue and a continuation of the important educational mission.

I wish you successful and fruitful work.”

I would like to say a few words on my own behalf. I listened with pleasure to the speeches of outstanding scientists, politicians and diplomats. The relevance of the Likhachov Conference dedicated to BRICS is also evidenced by the fact that today the issue of education is being considered in a new light. In this regard, the words of Dmitry Sergeyevich Likhachov come to my mind: “Humanitarianization of education is the path to the humanization of society.” I hope they will serve as guidelines to today's congress, and together we will implement them. I wish you success!

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – Dear colleagues! I think everyone present understands the difficult situation in which the International Likhachov Scientific Conference are being held after the outbreak of hostilities in Ukraine. For many years we have been building relationships with scientists around the world. Since the early 2000s, since the presidential decree on holding the Likhachov Conference, our forum has been visited by representatives of 58 countries. A significant proportion of the total number of scientists who took part in the Conference were representatives of the Western world (the USA, Western European countries, Japan, Australia, etc.). We spent a lot of effort establishing relationships with these scientists and maintaining contacts, conducted joint research, and published materials from the Conference, which also reflected the position of the West.

Now the situation has changed, and creative and scientific contacts have ceased. As Chairman of the Organizing Committee of the Conference, I maintain close remote relationships with almost all the main participants of the Conference, but it is becoming increasingly difficult for them to do this. This year, not a single scientist came to us from Germany, where the toughest stance can be traced and even a recommendation was published not to travel to Russia. In Germany, they recreated the situation of 1930–1945 – a terror for thinkers when a scientist cannot express what he/she thinks on a wide range of issues without the risk of going to

prison. Goebbels' ideas turned out to be much more tenacious than the world thought in 1945.

Two of my wonderful friends – one from Poland, the other from the Balkans – at the very beginning of the special operation sent me letters in which they tried to officially disassociate themselves from contacts with Russia, at least for the period until all this is over. One of them is from the university where I was awarded an honorary doctorate degree. I am an honorary doctor of five foreign universities, but none of them have officially rejected me in this capacity, although I am mentally prepared for this.

I have all the more respect for our friends who, maintaining independence, free-thinking and loyalty to the ideals of science, attended the Likhachov Conference this year. First of all, I would like to note a number of scientists from France who presented their reports and came to St. Petersburg. These are the writer, pianist, historian Jean-Louis Bachelet, His Highness the Prince of Sheriff, President of the Alliance for France party, writer Morad Al-Khattab Al-Ibrahimi Al-Sherifi Al-Idrissi, outstanding French economist Jacques Sapir. We are very grateful to them for their participation.

Now I would like to give the floor to another representative of France – Olivier Roqueplo, Professor of the Sorbonne University.

**O. ROQUEPLO:** – Dear friends, dear colleagues! The history of the twentieth century can be called the history of the struggle not between communism and liberalism, but between colonialism and anti-colonialism. This fight continues to this day. The colonial world today is represented by the G7 countries. Anti-colonialism is the BRICS+ countries. The West does not understand the cultural significance and dimension of BRICS precisely because it is still colonial. The Russian special operation is part of the struggle between colonialism and anti-colonialism.

What are the differences between the colonial and anti-colonial worlds? They are associated with the ancient archetype of “kings of the world”. Historically, there were civilizations, such as Russian, Arab, Chinese, Indian, which were traditionally ruled by emperors, but at the same time these rulers recognized the sovereignty of other sovereigns. This made it possible to think about joint actions. At the same time, some other civilizations did not recognize the rulers of other countries already in ancient times. Thus, in the history of the West and Japan we will not find the archetype of “kings of the world” among the Italians, Germans, peoples of Northern Europe, etc.

On one side there are the Eurasian and African civilizations which since ancient times have had a collective style of thinking, that is, an image of the real world and world order. On the other side there are Western Europe, the USA, Japan, which recognize only one center. This is colonialism.

It seems to me that the significance of BRICS+ lies in the fact that this union of states can and should establish a real world order based on the fundamental values of ancient cultures after 250 years of colonial chaos and terror in all continents.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – Today in this hall there is a person who is more popular in our country than many film stars, although she does not act in feature films, but performs state duties, representing the position of the Ministry

of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation in the public space. This is the Director of the Information and Press Department of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation Maria Vladimirovna Zakharova.

**M. V. ZAKHAROVA:** – Dear colleagues and friends! I would like to begin my speech by congratulating the citizens of Russia and other countries on Cosmonautics Day, which our country celebrates by giving a gift to all humanity. This is not a figure of speech, not a desire to embellish reality. On the eve of Cosmonautics Day, a fundamentally new heavy lift space launch vehicle “Angara-A5”, the first developed in Russia after the collapse of the USSR, was successfully launched. For the first time, the Vostochny cosmodrome was used for these purposes. Our country has confirmed its status as a great space power.

There is a wonderful Russian proverb: “In the carriages of the past, you can’t go anywhere.” And no matter how much we remember the great predecessors – Korolev, Gagarin and the entire Soviet people, new achievements are needed. And now we saw them.

The second thing our country has confirmed is its focus on the peaceful exploration of outer space. This great achievement which should not be forgotten is directly related to the discussed agenda of the Likhachov Conference, namely, intercivilizational dialogue, the future of our planet. We must remember what the first cosmonaut Yu. A. Gagarin dedicated his flight to, what Soviet science and our state dedicated the space discovery to.

Having been the first in space, did our country and people begin to post advertisements with price tags, talking about how much it would cost to visit outer space, given that we were the leaders? Has space been politicized and declared a zone of geopolitical competition? Was it stated that since the Soviet Union was the first in space, it would dispose of it and, as they say now, weaponize it, that is, place types of weapons of various classes in outer space? Nothing like this.

Despite the fact that space exploration took place in the first decades after the Second World War, which affected our country like no other in the history of mankind, the Soviet Union had the right to all of the above. But our country said that space will not become an arena for an arms race or competition to demonstrate dominance over other states. It was stated that this was a territory of peaceful development and scientific research.

After the flight, the first cosmonaut Yu. A. Gagarin, a man with a radiant smile, travelled all over the world, talking not about the exceptionalism of the Soviet Union, but about the knowledge and emotions that he had received. He did not divide countries into those that threatened the USSR and those who wished well and expressed their solidarity with the position of our country. He talked about the great achievement, the mission that the people entrusted to him, that we have another attempt to build the future of humanity on the basis of peace, friendship, mutual respect, understanding and synergy of efforts – scientific, humanitarian, cultural ones. Today we see what this was later turned into by a number of countries.

The demonstration of the achievements of Russian science, in particular, the “Angara-A5” rocket is now orbiting the planet before our eyes, is taking place against the back-



drop of fundamentally important discussions. And no longer theoretical, but having practical implementation, conducted not only in our country, but at the suggestion of our country on the entire planet – discussions, philosophical reflections and analysis of how to preserve civilization, traditional spiritual and moral values, morality and ethics for the future generations so that the planet does not reach a dead end.

When this discussion was just beginning, including at the Likhachov Conference, we were told: “You are turning back the Middle Ages,” that traditional values and development are incompatible and only Western progress ensures scientific achievements and their application in the interests of humanity. But it turned out that everything was compatible. Moreover, one cannot exist without the other.

Science can and should move forward and make discoveries only on the basis of true values. And we have already arrived at that holy of holies that give an idea of our universe and the essence of man.

I would like to say one more thing. Over the past decades, dozens of international conferences on various topics have been held every day in the world. All of them are not just broadcast online with the help of modern information and communication technologies, but also preserved for future generations and instantly translated into various world languages. This suggests that the analysis of these scientific conferences and international symposia, primarily those related to geopolitics, international relations, movement towards the future, is the evidence of what each country has come to this truly critical point in the development of our planet today. Those planning to study the Munich Security Policy Conference will find evidence of how a number of countries have done their best to lead the planet to the current times of crisis. And those who look into the past of the Likhachov Conference, read the printed reports, watch the broadcasts, will understand that our country and those who supported it in this did everything to preserve civilization.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – Dear colleagues, Mikhail Viktorovich Shmakov asked to speak to report urgent information from the Kremlin, which he has just received.

**M. V. SHMAKOV:** – Dear comrades, dear friends! Here is an urgent decree of the President of the Russian Federation: “For merits in scientific and pedagogical activities, training of highly qualified specialists and many years of conscientious work, to award the Order of Alexander Nevsky to Alexander Sergeyevich Zapesotsky, rector of the non-state educational institution of higher professional education St. Petersburg University of the Humanities and Social Sciences”. Vladimir Putin. Moscow. Kremlin. April 12, 2024. Alexander Sergeyevich, we congratulate you.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – Dear friends, I’ll say simply: I serve Russia and Russian trade unions. As you understand, the restructuring of our University in the context of a sharp complication of keeping contacts with Western scientists – I cannot use the phrase “import substitution” here – was accompanied by the need to sharply intensify scientific relations with the rest of the world. They were already very active, but currently even more has been done. Today, representatives from 19 countries of the world take part in our Conference. And I am very glad that not only me, but also

other major Russian scientists and institutes of the Russian Academy of Sciences were involved in attracting new participants. I would especially thank Alexander Vladimirovich Yakovenko, rector of the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, who recommended us so many bright and strong scientists that, in addition to the Likhachov Conference, we will be able to invite them to give lectures to our students. The Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences provided enormous assistance. The scientific director of this institute, a unique orientalist by world standards Vitaly Vyacheslavovich Naumkin is present here. If the United States of America had such specialists, they probably would not have invaded Iraq, started a military conflict in Afghanistan, etc. Academician Evgeny Maksimovich Primakov once warned them against rash steps in relation to the East. I would like to thank Academician of the Russian Academy of Sciences Vitaly Vyacheslavovich Naumkin for his active work in forming the list of participants in the Conference and give him the floor.

**V. V. NAUMKIN:** – In the Middle Ages in the East, comparing three nations or three groups of peoples, they said: the Chinese know how to work with their hands, the Europeans work with their brains, the Arabs speak the language. But I believe that today our multinational people, as it has already been said here, have all three, and our new space achievements are an indicator that we can do everything.

I also want to emphasize the importance of the Arab world, which I have been studying all my life. It is no coincidence that the medieval thought that I conveyed highlights the beauty of the Arabic language, of which its speakers are very proud, just as we are of ours, Russian. There has been a lot of talk here about the “Global South” and the “Global West”, and I would like to point out several lines of interaction and how today BRICS acts as the embodiment of the idea that I spoke about – that we have everything. And this is exactly what the special structure that BRICS is shows. And BRICS is not a military bloc, not a political alliance, but a structure that presupposes sovereignty, independence, and freedom of action for each member of this organization. It is no coincidence that, to the surprise of our opponents, it includes countries that are sometimes not on the best terms with each other and compete, which is, in general, normal. Not only such states as Iran, on the one hand, and the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia, on the other, receive an incentive to interact through BRICS; third countries that are members of this community also act as conciliators for these states when finding common platforms for their actions. This applies in particular to China. And it is absolutely clear that membership in BRICS does not imply a violation of any international obligations undertaken or that such obligations, with the exception of certain ones, do not exist at all. There is no exclusivity here, but a common desire for broad cooperation.

In addition, it should be noted that the BRICS organization is a mechanism that helps to regulate and overcome conflicts – we have been convinced of this more than once, and I think this trend will continue. Furthermore, BRICS has great potential to facilitate balancing in relations between such global partners as Russia, China and India, where there are also some issues. I think this is a very im-

portant point even for those who want to simultaneously maintain certain relations with the states of the “Global South”, and interaction with the collective West, and with countries such as, in particular, the United States, if this suits their interests, and no one imposes anything on them. And this is the peculiarity of Russian politics.

Also, an essential element for analyzing the development prospects of this alliance is the optimization of priorities in cooperation with individual BRICS states on a bilateral track, including with new partners, in order to achieve the greatest benefits in ongoing projects. And when we discuss the negative sides of aggressive globalism, which opposes state-majesty and sovereignty (which was already mentioned here when our French colleague spoke about colonialism and its legacy), we should also note some positive understanding of the opportunities that international cooperation provides on a global scale. We scientists need to have a deep enough understanding of issues such as, say, demographic policy and the policy of all kinds of global interaction in various fields in order to succeed in solving emerging problems.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – I invite to the podium the Deputy of the State Duma of the Russian Federation, Honored Artist of the Russian Federation Yelena Grigorievna Drapeko. She worked as the Chairman of the Committee on Culture and Tourism of St. Petersburg, then as the dean of our Faculty of Culture, and is now the First Deputy of the RF State Duma Committee on Culture.

**Ye. G. DRAPEKO:** – Dear colleagues, I want to share with you the sorrows that today overtake our power structures and require your help and support. Our colleague from Belarus spoke about a certain unified ideological matrix that would need to be derived. At the previous Likhachov Conference, I allowed myself to present the stance of a number of our scientists and philosophers who believe that this matrix has been taking shape over the last, let’s say, thousand of years in the space of Russia, among the Russian people, and is embedded in our epos. And the values that our ancient ancestors professed and outlined in the folk epic are still preserved by the peoples living in this territory. We, like our heroes Ilya Muromets and Alyosha Popovich, consider the holy things that we recognize, such as the Motherland, faith, honor, dignity to be the main values. We still admire the feat that our ancestors accomplished. The essays on comparative axiology that I cited as examples show that the West has a completely different system of values, which also developed over the centuries. Their epics speak of a different hierarchy of values.

I would like to note two important points. First: there is a presidential decree on the traditional spiritual values of the Russian Federation. And we, as politicians and deputies, are ordered to implement these values into Russian legislation. This means that we must incorporate this value system into the Criminal, Civil and Family Codes. The decree names the values, but doesn’t hierarchize them. And we were faced with the question: what is more important – the right to life or the defense of the Motherland? Is it possible to demand to give one’s life to defend the Motherland? Today this is extremely important for us in the context of the special military operation and the international tension that has developed around us. This issue is being

discussed on our platforms. We have created two commissions, and I work in both. One of them is under the State Duma, it is headed by Vice-Speaker of Parliament Anna Yuryevna Kuznetsova. The second one is under the Government of the Russian Federation, headed by Tatyana Alekseevna Golikova. The topics of their discussions are virtually the same – traditional spiritual values and their reflection in our regulatory framework.

The second point I would like to note is that we have had periods of fascination with the West and bitter disappointment in it. This could be due to the fact that, among other things, we did not agree in our assessment of some basic principles. This does not mean that we are better and they are worse, it means that we are different. And when they began to break the Russian cultural code, the code of our people, and rebuild it according to the Western model, our people began to die out. Why? Because for a thousand years we believed in one thing, and then we were forced to believe in another. I once discussed with one professor who said that Russians have been going in the wrong direction for 500 years. And even then, many years ago, I told him that, probably, we had chosen Iasi law, not Roman law, because we were different. Comparative axiology also shows that we are different. And today, in order to avoid the same fascination with and then disappointment in our eastern and southern neighbors, we must understand in what ways our value systems coincide and in what ways they do not. We need this in order to negotiate with them and reach agreements – we must know with whom we are conducting such negotiations. These issues are backbone, and today they are extremely important for the authorities and for the formation of our society which of course is beginning to change.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – Dear colleagues, let me invite to the podium the famous Indian scientist and diplomat Mr. Anil Trigunayat.

**A. TRIGUNAYAT:** – It is a great honor for me to be invited to the prestigious Likhachov Conference in St. Petersburg, the cultural capital of Russia and one of the most beautiful cities in the world. I was lucky to work in Russia in 1999–2002 and 2010–2012.

BRICS formation is a new look at the world and the dialogue between civilizations. The oldest civilizations of the world are presented in this dialogue: India, Russia, China, the Arab world, Mesopotamia. Their ancient culture teaches that attitude towards people should always come first. In India, there is a well-known appeal to the universe, written in Sanskrit: “Please bless the whole world and everyone in this world, so that no one has any problems.” This is the goal we should all strive for, and we are trying to promote this idea through diplomacy and other means.

During the year that India presided over the G20, we tried to work under the motto: “The whole world is a big family.” By the word “world” we mean not only humanity, but also the rest of living nature – animals, plants. Many of them need our protection. But, unfortunately, even in the BRICS countries there are certain problems that require solutions. In order to approach them, we must first understand whether we believe in the power of argument or whether we consider the disputes themselves, the clashes of opinions to be more important to us.

There are geopolitical tensions even among BRICS members. But we still must develop joint solutions, based on the fact that the world should be inclusive and not exclude anyone. We must strive for cooperation and avoid conflicts, look for general rather than local ways to resolve problems, and smooth out ideological differences. We must be open for the well-being of the whole world. It is necessary to listen carefully to each other.

In this context, it is important that the Likhachov Conference focus on civilized dialogue. Now the world is witnessing a confrontation of civilizations. The West did not have such an ancient history as the East, which largely explains the approaches of Western states to modern problems. Scientists and politicians must understand and take this into account. We also need to be aware that the values of one civilization may not work in relation to another. For example, in India, when the question "why" is asked, the answer must include a way to make things as good as possible for everyone. And this answer should not come from a desire for dominance. Domination cannot be the basis for dialogue, and dialogue is something that the modern world urgently needs, because now there is a lot of denial and readiness to undermine the world order. We must overcome this. The global landscape is changing, so we will see this actually happening in the near future. India offers some principles that will help take certain steps along this path. We must respect each other, take into account mutual interests and be attentive to each other's global goals.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – Dear colleagues, let me invite to the podium the outstanding Russian scientist, Professor Irina Olegovna Abramova.

**I. O. ABRAMOVA:** – I would like to comment in a few words on what previous colleagues said. Maria Vladimirovna said that the West is considering its own version of progress. In my opinion, the Western version of technological progress completely excludes man as such from its concept. It is absolutely unmanned. A person is not needed, they need artificial intelligence and people who will carry out certain commands. What is needed is unification, not diversity. And diversity is precisely the global majority. This was heard in the previous speech of our colleague from India. We have global challenges and we must solve them. But we are all different and must take this diversity into account. BRICS+ allows us, while maintaining diversity, to approach the solution of common, and humane tasks. Why? Just because the global majority is really a majority, countries where the most part of the world's population lives, which are developing and want to make the future for their population beautiful, interesting, diverse, and not the same.

I was also very glad to hear our French colleague say that the 20th century was a century of struggle not between communism and liberalism, but between colonialism and anti-colonialism. What is happening today is in fact a clear manifestation of the colonial approach in everything. Traditionally, colonialism is a relationship of political oppression and subjugation of nations. Think about it: with the formal acquisition of sovereignty, have we gained real sovereignty, or are we still in the paradigm of this subordination? We looked at the West for a very long time and thought that this is "a city on a hill" and we need to do everything the way they want. But it turned out that this was wrong. And here

humanitarian and traditional values, and first of all, the education that we will give to our children and our colleagues around the world, play a huge role. For example, in Africa – the continent I study – 60 % of the population is under 25 years old. And a lot in our development depends on what kind of education this population receives. Education is everything to us.

There is a well-known phrase by US President John Kennedy, which is also associated with today's holiday – Cosmonautics Day. After we were the first in space, he said that the Soviet Union won the space race at the school desk. Others clarify that he said that it was the Soviet education that had won. But this is precisely the question. Our future depends on what kind of education we, our children, the children of the countries of the world majority, receive. It is necessary that this education be humane, diverse, and reflect global interests, because many problems can only be solved together, and at the same time this amazing culture and diversity that are inherent in absolutely all countries. There are more than 2 thousand languages in Africa alone! Just think about it. And we must preserve this diversity.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – The floor is given to Mr. Alastair Crooke from Great Britain, the founder of the Conflicts Forum analytical center.

**A. CROOKE:** – I'll start from afar. In 1451, a Roman was walking around Rome and fell into a deep hole. It turned out to be an ancient Egyptian temple with beautiful decorations, ornaments depicting various living creatures, birds, and animals. The Roman fell into the castle of Emperor Nero who portrayed himself as a pharaoh in the form of the god Ra, traveling between the real and immaterial world. But then it was completely forgotten, buried, covered with earth, and until this man fell in, no one knew that Nero's palace was there. The effect of this discovery was like an electric shock. Later, various researchers, including great artists such as Michelangelo, who then lived in Rome, descended down the rope, frozen with fear, delight, anticipation, to look at these beautiful treasures of ancient culture, to become familiar with them, because it was another civilization, literally another universe.

Then the Renaissance began. And then the text of the Corpus Hermeticum known since ancient times, accidentally surfaced. It is believed that it was written by the ancient sage Thoth. It was translated in 1471. This is what you might call multipolarity. This news swept across Europe, and it seemed that it could defuse the situation at a time when there was a threat of war between Protestants and Catholics. Tension in society arises at different stages of history. Today, many people talk about cancel of culture. We can say that this also happened in 1471, when the Inquisition was in full swing. And 10 thousand Western Europeans were declared heretics because their narratives at that time were politically incorrect, and they were burned at the stake. This further led to nihilism, etc. In any case, we can say that this bubble burst, and the Hermeticists were discredited.

Today Western Europe is again engulfed by imposed dogma, eschatological dogmatism. And I want to emphasize that in Western countries there is currently a civil war and a cultural revolution happening at the same time. These phenomena are historically intertwined, sometimes there is

a bias towards violence, sometimes towards a cultural revolution. It is quite unusual and, perhaps, the inhabitants of these countries do not notice that they are having a revolution. Some say: "Everything is fine with us, what are you talking about." And others are well aware that a revolution is really taking place. We must understand what is happening now. Imagine February 1917, and then you will understand what we in Europe feel today: like your premonition of the February revolution, and this revolution itself. This is, one might say, epistemological enmity and hostility. The West has become hostage to this kind of thinking. It simply hides its head in the sand and does not want to see another reality.

But now the process is still underway. We do not know how this revolution that is sweeping the whole world will turn out. In Russia and China, everything is also moving into other areas. America is probably going to continue to wage trade wars with China and dominate Europe, but there are a lot of difficulties. The BRICS path is also not an easy one, because the unification faces great political confrontation. But there is currently both diplomatic and economic collapse in Europe. The West has driven itself into this corner and found itself under a historical siege. This siege is simply unprecedented in the world. And what Russia and other BRICS countries are doing now is partly a peaceful revolution. They want to bring multipolarity to this world. But the West cannot come to terms with this, because it is the same as the fall of Constantinople. The Western civilization is accustomed to something completely different. And now Russia dominates. Now there are also battles for traditional values. We are experiencing a revolution, but also a counter-revolution. All this has been described since ancient times and is embedded in our cultural code. Counter-revolution also suggests traditionalism.

The new values – what we see now – are intended to drive a stake into the traditional culture, into what the BRICS countries have in common in terms of moral values. But we must survive all this. History also teaches us that if revolutions begin, it is impossible to return to previous positions, just as it is impossible to enter the same river twice. I want to say that as a result of all this, what is now so lacking in the Western world and what is so important for BRICS will develop. BRICS should not turn into just another political bloc. It must conquer moral and cultural space. It's very difficult now – look what's happening in the Middle East. Everything is turned upside down, and moral norms and values are destroyed. It is important to put everything back in its place, to turn it from head to foot. Thank you very much.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – Let me invite to the stage the famous St. Petersburg writer Nikolai Viktorovich Starikov, who in recent years has been paying a lot of attention to international issues.

**N. V. STARIKOV:** – Today we have gathered to discuss BRICS as an important alternative to what the West has built, but currently is destroying. I would like to focus on one illustrative example. All that the West has been telling us for many years and continues to tell us is that there is supposedly some kind of competition: market, ideological ones, and this is the reason and method to grow the best.

In fact, there is no competition, neither politically nor economically. Why does the West dislike this BRICS organization so much and try to weaken it, split it, and use it for purposes completely different from those for which it was created? Simply because it is the most serious alternative. And most importantly, it has already produced a definite and significant result. As soon as the special military operation began and all the sanctions, pressure, insults and threats against our country started to increase, the West probably harbored hopes that Russia's BRICS partner states would join the sanctions, get scared, waver, and not actively interact with it, will be shunned. But none of this happened. Therefore, what BRICS was created for has already worked out. An example that gives us an understanding of how this whole system works is sports. Just recently, two Russian pranksters called the head of the International Olympic Committee, Mr. Bach, and he, with Bolshevik, so to speak, outspokenness, stated that he strongly, even to the point of threats and promises of problems, does not recommend African athletes to participate in the games that Russia is holding. One would think, where is the International Olympic Committee which does not allow Russian and Belarusian athletes to take part, and where are the games organized by Russia? What difference does it make to him? Let there be games like this and that. We are not holding alternative Olympic Games. But he understands that the worst thing that cannot be allowed is the alternative.

We are talking about sports. Can you imagine how afraid they are of the alternative when it comes to owning the world, supremacy, domination, a world that is based on the very rules that no one has seen, but which everyone must follow. The tools there are on a completely different level. So, the main thing I wanted to say is that BRICS is precisely the structure that provides an alternative. And the alternative frightens the West to no end. And it's not just about China, economic growth or Russia's military power. It's not even about meanings. We are talking about the very existence of an alternative. Because in the West it's the other way around. If it talks about a wealth of choice, it means that choice does not exist.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – Dear colleagues, our discussion is coming to an end.

In conclusion, a few words about freedom. I have a wonderful friend in Switzerland, Bruno Degardin, a very strong financial analyst who advises a large number of people with enormous capital and sends amazing analytical reports on his research to our University. He is quite skeptical about BRICS and believes that it is untenable and nothing good will come of it. I invited him to St. Petersburg to talk about all this in a calm atmosphere at the Likhachov Conference. They are scared in the West that something is wrong here. He says: "Of course, I would come, but I would feel uncomfortable because I have an alternative point of view". We in turn explain to our students: in order to get an "A", answering each question on each exam they must give three alternative points of view from scientific or popular science literature. Then comment on them and give their own opinion. Our students know that in a civilized society it is customary to discuss alternative opinions. It's very sad that this happens. Therefore, we hold open discussions in which all major scientists who want this participate. Thank you all for your opinions.

## Panel Discussion

### “GLOBAL WEST” AND “GLOBAL SOUTH”: PATHS OF DEVELOPMENT

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April 12, 2024

A. P. Petrov Theatre and Concert Hall, SPbUHSS

#### SPEAKERS:

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- I. O. ABRAMOVA *Director of the Institute for African Studies of the RAS (Moscow), Member of the Presidium of the RAS, Corresponding Member of the RAS, Dr. Sc. (Economics), Professor*
- D. O. BABICH *columnist of the RIA Novosti agency (Moscow), Member of the Russian Union of Journalists*
- A. P. BINEV *Deputy editor-in-chief of the radio station “Govorit Moskva”, journalist, writer, screenwriter*
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- O. ROQUEPLO *Professor of Sorbonne University (France), Dr. Sc. (History), Dr. Sc. (Political Sciences)*
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**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – Dear friends, we are starting a panel discussion dedicated to the ways of development of the “Global West” and the “Global South”. This is a debatable issue, as reflected in the reports of participants in the current Likhachov Conference.

According to one point of view, the BRICS association which we have designated as the “Global South”, is a rather weak, amorphous formation that has no basis for unification, except for consolidation on the basis of anti-Americanism and anti-Westernism. The BRICS countries are not comparable to each other in terms of economic weight. On the one hand, Saudi Arabia, on the other, less rich countries. How can they interact, and even on the principles of equality? And then follows a series of questions that are typical of the modern West. Hence the desire to make the most of the contradictions within BRICS and the problems that arise during the formation of this bloc.

Another point of view is that BRICS, as an association of different countries, which is heterogeneous and has historical contradictions, is the future. More than 40 countries are queuing up to join this organization. For the BRICS states, the Western concept of world development is unacceptable, and they are ready to do a lot to ensure that the West stops dictating its conditions.

In practical terms, it is extremely difficult for states around the world to break free from the shackles of the West. An authoritative scientist with whom we spoke on this topic expressed the opinion that no one likes the global dictate of the collective West, but everyone except Russia is forced to play by its rules. The Western monopoly is evident in a number of areas, such as the financial sector. Russia was able to overcome this barrier, but for other countries, disconnection from the financial system is disastrous. Therefore, the West has a strange relationship with each BRICS country: one step forward from the United States, two steps back, towards America. The financial leverage is just one of many, in fact there are much more hidden contours of governing other countries.

Thus, Finland did something that was unprofitable for it from the point of view of national interests – it joined NATO. Sweden in its turn claims the presence of Russian submarines nearby. As a specialist in defense technology (by first education), I understand that Russian submarines have nothing to do off the coast of Sweden – we have enough other tools.

The Americans keep the leaders and national elite of other countries on a short leash: their children study at American universities, they keep money in the US banks. What is the national elite ready to do in the name of BRICS? Quite a lot of such doubts are expressed.

To summarize, we can distinguish two extremes: the first one is that the future is with BRICS, and it will come literally tomorrow; the other is that it won't work, the United States will continue to dictate its terms, mocking Western Europe and destroying other countries where they control what is happening.

I propose to consider these and other questions related to the stated topic, but with a focus on the real consideration of the problems. What will the near future be like? The topic of the panel discussion – paths of development – corresponds to this question. The so-called “Global South”, together with Russia, will go in one direction, and the “Global West” – in the other, or, conversely, they will develop together. There are many other development models in this range. Let's talk about this today.

The floor is given to Corresponding Member of the Russian Academy of Sciences Irina Olegovna Abramova.

**I. O. ABRAMOVA:** – The issue of the development paths is quite interesting. As scientists, we talk a lot about directions of development, but it seems to me that the task of modern science is to determine the tools. As it was said in the plenary, we need to move from the question “why” to the question “how”.

What needs to be done to make the world more just and develop more evenly, in order to finally defeat the colonial subordination of the world majority to the world minority? There are three possible main directions of development – what we can do now. It is necessary to resolve the issue of transition to new financial relations, fill the information space dominated by the West with alternative content, more objective and diverse, and develop our own technologies.

For objective reasons, the economic basis today is shifting from West to East. The countries of the global majority play a major role in the world economy, but the entire toolkit, that is, the superstructure, not only political, but also financial, informational, and technological, is still in the hands of the West. In order to resist the West and achieve solutions in our favor, we first need to establish work in the above three areas in the format of BRICS+ and the world majority. It is clear that it is impossible to start from scratch, but we have a very significant foundation.

Let me give you Africa as an example. For Russia, issues of technological and educational cooperation with this continent are coming to the fore, and the interests are mutual. During a meeting of the Russian delegation of the Federal Service for the Oversight of Consumer Protection and Welfare (Rospotrebnadzor) with local virologists in Rwanda (most of them were educated in the United States), the latter stated that within the framework of grants provid-



ed by the USA, they are only allowed to identify the virus, but not to study it, much less produce a medicine to combat it. They expect Russia to provide a complete process chain, involving cooperation in the study of the virus, the creation of vaccines and the production of medicines.

Many people believe that all advanced technologies are concentrated in the West, but this is not true. For example, back in the late 1970s, with the help of Israel, South Africa created its own atomic bomb, and South African Nobel laureate Godfrey Hounsfield received the prize for the development of computed tomography, etc. In terms of the number of international patent applications filed, China was ahead of the United States in 2019.

Another thing is that we need to join forces and move to an awareness of objective processes, because the dominance of the West, and in particular the dollar, is largely based on faith. This financial instrument has turned into a religious one – everyone is afraid to move away from it.

Today, scientists (economists, philosophers and historians) should think about developing a system of tools to make the world more just, because this is the quality that underlies the activities of the BRICS.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – Professor Roqueplo, you have the floor.

**O. ROQUEPLO:** – First of all, it should be said that the word "West", on the one hand, and NATO, the USA, the European Union and Japan, on the other, are synonymous today. The West does not mean Europe because it does not coincide with the European culture. This is important to determine, since BRICS (Brazil, Russia, etc.) includes countries with European culture (Portuguese culture in Brazil, Russian culture as part of the common European heritage, etc.).

Napoleon once argued that the Spaniards had never been Europeans, and the Russians would never become Europeans, and showed how Western Europe differs from the rest. That is, Portugal, Spain, Russia are a different Europe, a different European culture, and the West includes only the northwestern part of Europe.

The countries included in BRICS (Brazil, Russia, China, India, South Africa and new members, including Iran, the UAE, etc.) have a lot in common, even if it is not very obvious. These ancient civilizations held sway even before the era of colonialism. Everything that began in the 18th century, especially the French Revolution, the emergence of modernism, and so on, has already ended. Hence the collapse of the West, the dominance of obscurantism in Europe. It is at this moment that the cultures and civilizations of the BRICS countries should develop, but without abandoning traditional values.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – I give the floor to Academician V. V. Naumkin.

**V. V. NAUMKIN:** – In light of what we have talked about here, the idea arises that the future of the world, the reformatting of which is now taking place (we are living in an interesting period of reformatting the entire system of the world order), is uncertain. The international community, especially the expert groups that are partly represented here, have shown incompetence in the face of the pandemic,

the escalating conflict between man and nature (as an example, the recent flood in Orenburg, Orsk, etc.).

The uncertainty of the relationship between man and nature, their dependence arose unexpectedly and is based on parameters that did not exist before. All this suggests that uncertainty will also affect the BRICS and other countries, because security systems, in particular agricultural security, and various resources are based on the relationship between man and nature. The struggle for resources will intensify and arouse a desire to use force.

I think talk about creating a single currency and abandoning the dollar is pointless. This is a long-term process, perhaps in twenty years it will happen. But today there is no need to transition to a unified financial system and scrap the old one. We must solve problems, and not indulge ourselves with illusions that a single currency will soon appear, with which we will pay for bread.

There are also issues of a political nature. Konstantin Fyodorovich Zatulin is present here, who not so long ago participated in St. Petersburg in a discussion about whether Russia is part of Europe. Of course it is. We are the saviours of Europe. To develop further, we must save Europe, which is perishing because it has abandoned Christian values, and Russia is extending a helping hand to it. There is no need to say that we have a different value system, and everything should be destroyed in Europe. Christian values came to us exactly from there.

I just want to sow the seeds of doubt so that we can ask more questions and give serious answers based on expert assessments, carefully checking the consequences of the calls we make.

Traditional values are our wealth, and we must defend them and fight what the West imposes. But at the same time, we must adhere to the position of realism, which I always encourage everyone to do, and take an inventory of values and what is the basis of our civilization. Russia is a great civilization. But there is no need to set impossible tasks.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – Outstanding diplomat Alexander Vladimirovich Yakovenko, please.

**A. V. YAKOVENKO:** – I agree with Academician V. V. Naumkin that there is uncertainty in the development of the world. Today, certain trends have clearly emerged. Although at first glance it may seem that BRICS is an amorphous entity, a key point should be taken into account: the countries that are currently part of BRICS, and those that want to join this association, are ready to work in two key areas.

The first policy direction is to shape a new agenda. In retrospect, ten years ago we had a climate agenda that was imposed on us by Western countries. I don't believe that the climate situation is as dramatic as they are trying to make us believe. This is about imposing Western technology on the climate agenda. No one has allocated the hundred billion dollars that the West promised to transfer to developing countries five years ago.

The second direction is the creation of an alternative financial system. A single currency for the BRICS countries is a distant prospect. But the creation of an alternative financial system today is quite realistic. Within the Western frame of reference, most countries do not understand where they can store their financial resources, because now

the Western side is threatening with expropriation and seizure of assets. But this did not start yesterday, when the collective West stole 350 billion dollars from Russia; before that, the same thing had happened with Venezuela, Syria, Afghanistan, Libya, etc.

While working as an ambassador in London, I asked a member of parliament how much money Gaddafi had kept in London. He answered carefully: "About 24 billion". When asked what would happen with this money, he replied: "Let them go to court". That is, these 24 billion were simply confiscated.

The creation of an alternative financial system will allow BRICS and other countries, in particular the states of the Middle East, to protect their interests and create an alternative. I am not calling for the replacement of the dollar or other reserve currencies. But we must have an alternative to it. By the way, Middle Eastern states are now actively withdrawing funds from the United States because they fear their expropriation for a number of reasons: political, economic, etc.

The main political thesis is the creation of an alternative agenda that will be based on common sense. Here it is appropriate to ask the question: what has the transition to a green economy led to in Western Europe? Essentially, they have ruined their economy, for example Germany is spiraling downward because of the economic decisions it makes.

In the first place should be the global agenda which involves the formulation of new tasks that most states are ready to subscribe to, and the financial agenda, because this is the basis for the future development of the world. The main thing is to get rid of the dictates of the dollar.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – Representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Maria Vladimirovna Zakharova, the floor is yours.

**M. V. ZAKHAROVA:** – I would like to draw attention to the fact that our topic today concerns the "Global South" and the "Global West", but there is no Russia in this paradigm, since our country cannot be fully attributed neither to the West, nor even less to the South. We are everywhere, and at the same time we do not fit into these structures. There are approaches according to which Russia is associated either with the "Global North" or with the "Global East". And the Foreign Policy Concept 2023 defines the Russian Federation as a distinctive state-civilization, a vast Eurasian and Euro-Pacific power. That is, there is a concept broader than this framework, into which we fit. And in the context of our discussion, it is impossible to ignore Russia, taking into account its influence on world processes.

By "Global West" we mean the United States, the European Union, and partly the Asia-Pacific Region, which are welded together by American-centric military-political and economic alliances and held together by North Atlantic, as they call them, values. It is a product of the historical West, which, over the course of half a millennium, has probably consistently extended its influence to the rest of the non-Western world and sought to dominate it by all means. The only correction is that we very broadly call the current era neo-colonialism. I wouldn't call it this way. Colonialism means France, Spain, Portugal, cultures with all their faults, but with history. In recent decades, in

the United States and Britain, those whose mentality was piracy and robbery, and not colonialism, which is also not good even from the point of view of philosophical understanding, broke through to power; and robbery and burglary are worse than neo-colonialism. At one time I used such a metaphor: the United States behaves like a cowboy in the Louvre, firing at everything he sees, not realizing that there are works of art in front of him.

The "Global South" is a less unambiguous concept, since it was initially pejoratively applied to all poor or, as they were later called, developing countries. And in comparison with the rich North, the South with its history and culture looked like an inferior phenomenon, and even more so in comparison with the West. Today it also includes India and China, and it is absurd to talk about these powers of the world's largest economies as developing ones. But we continue to do this with fantastic persistence, not paying attention to the fact that there is no longer such a thing as a "developing country". Alexander Vladimirovich put it correctly: currently Germany is a developing country, because it is in such a dead end that it can only be overcome by starting to develop. However, the countries of the "Global South" cannot be left out, since, within the framework of today's discussion, we are invited to discuss the ways of development of the Western, and not just the Southern, but the non-Western world, that is, the Global Majority.

What is the connection between these, relatively speaking, macroregions? Historically, the interaction between them developed, first of all, in the course of colonization of non-Western states by Western ones. And the present day not only bears the hereditary imprint of that long, five-century era, but reproduces old practices in new forms. Now this is called neo-colonialism, only with an admixture of banditry.

When we talk about this ugly phenomenon, which will eventually become a thing of the past, we mean Western illegal methods such as sanctions bypassing the UN Security Council, which are actually trade wars; abuse of dominance in international organizations, primarily financial ones; the use of the dollar and loans not as a means of pressure, but as a weapon; financial and economic pressure, including pressure to increase debt dependence; restrictions on development through unfair competition and non-market protectionist measures; freezing of public and private assets for geopolitical reasons; provoking coups d'état and armed conflicts; manipulating the consciousness of entire nations and carrying out subversive operations in the information space; crude imposition of ideological guidelines; finally, promoting one's own exclusivity. The "Garden of Europe" and the "jungle of the rest of the world" in the interpretation of Josep Borrell became proof of this, as did the revelation of the current US National Security Advisor Jacob Sullivan, who, even before taking office in 2019, wrote that the victory condition for the concept of American exclusivity could mean only "the defeat of the paradigm that foregrounds ethnic and cultural identity". In the same row is the story of the signing in November 2023 of the Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the countries of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific countries, in the text of which Brussels forcibly included the LGBT<sup>1</sup> agenda, that is

<sup>1</sup> The International LGBT Social Movement is recognized as an extremist organization, its activities are prohibited in Russia.

to say the surreal concept of a rules-based order promoted by the West; no one knows what are the rules – this is not communicated, but is imposed by force.

Now let's turn to statistics. According to the most conservative estimates, since the 19th century, the United States has tried to influence domestic political processes in at least 150 countries, and of the current 193 UN member states, only 22 have never been subjected to armed attacks by Britain. Over the past few decades, the West has cracked down on the countries that stood in its way, such as Yugoslavia, Iraq, Libya, and Syria. In August 2021, the 20-year stay of the United States and the coalition it led in Afghanistan ended ingloriously. The United States abandoned the country, leaving it in ruins. This contrasts with the way the Soviet Union left Afghanistan – with plants, factories, functioning structures and central heating. Thus, the "Global West" demonstrated its unceremonious and arrogant attitude towards the countries of the "Global South", using them as instruments of influence for the non-stop pumping of resources in the broad sense of the word. This is not only oil, gas, gold, but also labor resources. Are people invited and given advantages so that they come to work in countries, for example, of the West, when they, driven by an extremist LGBT agenda, find themselves without labor resources? No.

Previously, in order to invite and lure resources, some kind of competitive advantages were created: a social package, a good salary, housing. Now the "Global West" is fueling conflicts that drive people out of their own countries, making it impossible for specialists to be present in their homeland, because the homeland is literally on fire; creates conditions when people do not have the opportunity to receive an education or realize what they have received. Thus, millions of migrants or refugees are forced to leave their homes without the right to compensation or any kind of moral support.

I didn't talk about the "Global South", but the fact is that this is that very resource base that, thanks to the colossal movement of the 20th century led by the Soviet Union, gained independence in its use. Globalization has added scientific and technological capabilities to the states of the South, and now these are new centers of power.

Let's return to the foreign policy of our country. The Russian approaches, as formulated in the 2023 Concept, are based on "the formation of a system of international relations that would guarantee reliable security, preservation of its cultural and civilizational identity, and equal opportunities for the development for all states, regardless of their geographical location, size of territory, demographic, resource and military capacity, or political, economic and social structure." Now I will quote a phrase from the US National Security Strategy adopted in 2022: "There is no people better suited to the role of a strong and purposeful leader than the United States of America." And these same authors call their country a global power with global interests and say that it is called upon to lead the strength and determination.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – As I know, Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin has already responded to this quote. He said this way: "They will receive the ears of a dead donkey." Our trade union leader Mikhail Viktorovich Shmakov, please continue.

**M. V. SHMAKOV:** – I'll begin with almost the same words that Maria Vladimirovna finished with. There is no stronger people that can lead everyone than the Russian people. This is our goal and we have this ability. When we talk about the "Global South" and the "Global West" and conduct a discussion at the scientific, academic, expert government level – and this is a fairly high level – then we do not mention Russia, because this does not affect the citizens of those countries which we assess and compare with each other in any way.

Trade unions, and global ones, in all countries, including the Russian Federation, have a unique opportunity. Firstly, this is the only public organization that can work within enterprises and organizations. And secondly, we work with people who talk about the problems of themselves, their family, each person and share these problems. And when we say that we protect economic and social interests, we start from the needs of people. What is the global confrontation or struggle that we are discussing: "Global South", "Global West", BRICS? What exactly are all countries fighting for? This is a general competition between countries – their elites earn money, they have already saved and want more, but are forced to look at what happens to their voters or to the citizens of the countries they represent. Having information from both the West and the South, I can tell you that we in the Russian Federation live on the whole en masse better than people in America, Germany, Great Britain and other Western countries. I'm not even talking about the countries of the "Global South", where the standard of living is lower than in Russia. According to our data, there 10 thousand dollars or 10 thousand euros in free savings are a colossal amount for any ordinary citizen. It's not something that's saved in retirement funds or long-term financial assets – they can't be tapped, they're not debts, mortgages or car loans, but something that can be used when you need the money. 10 thousand dollars is equal to a million rubles. For more than 80 % of the citizens of the Russian Federation, this is not that much money.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – Mikhail Viktorovich, the audience is clamoring. It seems to me that our professors doubt that a million rubles is not money.

**M. V. SHMAKOV:** – Of course, it's money. But I want to remind you that we have a state guarantee on deposits in banks, up to 1.4 million rubles in case the bank goes bankrupt or something happens to it and it stops paying, and now they want to double or triple this amount for some items. Let's relate this to real life, and not to how much someone has in their pocket now – 100 or 1000 rubles.

We discuss global issues. We had a project called "socialism". It was an attractive project for the whole world. We abandoned it and moved away. Today there is a project called "BRICS". BRICS will be successful when it is also a fairly attractive project for the countries that join it. I would like to end with the thought that the Russian people are the people who are capable of uniting the world and making this life comfortable and decent for everyone.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – I give the floor to Konstantin Fyodorovich Zatulin, a specialist in CIS affairs.

**K. F. ZATULIN:** – You know, I was going to start with some other information, but two wonderful ladies – Irina Olegovna Abramova and Maria Vladimirovna Zakharova – provoked me into confession. You know, in the movie...

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – You are a married man, Konstantin Fyodorovich.

**K. F. ZATULIN:** – Yes, but what can be done? What can be done? Many married people will understand me. In the film “Kill Bill”, Uma Thurman who killed her husband Bill (David Carradine), got nervous and said: “I’m probably not a good person.” Now, I’m probably not a good person, because after listening to everything that has been said about how we must get involved in the struggle for a just world and make it truly just for the first time in the history of this world, I can say that I am not ready for this.

I am ready to defend what I consider to be the national interests of the Russian Federation. To look for allies for this, to get out of the difficult situations in which we find ourselves. Because during the 20th century, our country twice suffered huge historical defeats, which other countries, in principle, have not always coped with in their history. You know this very well. We, however, remain, albeit in a reduced form. And we must fight in every possible way to regain the positions that we have lost.

Here, for instance, we mean BRICS. In fact, last year – last year was landmark one – the gross domestic product of the BRICS countries exceeded the gross domestic product of the G7 countries for the first time. 31.5 % is the share of BRICS, the BRICS economies, in global GDP. Based on this, where should we strive to regain our positions, develop our capabilities, trade, and form alliances? Of course, this is true, to BRICS, where there is room for action in this area. And this makes sense to me.

By the way, I congratulate our discussion on the fact that here, at the forum at the St. Petersburg University of the Humanities and Social Sciences, the “death of the East” was highlighted for the first time. There is no East now. There is West and South. And there has always been the East. Generally speaking, in 1654, at the Pereyaslav Agreement, Bogdan Khmelnytsky and the Cossack elders swore allegiance to the Eastern Orthodox Tsar. We were eastern. And we were the heirs of the Eastern Roman Empire. Now we are discussing South and West. These are very characteristic changes.

I would like to draw attention to the fact that in this space that we are discussing today, the South or Southeast, we own a part that is and was called the post-Soviet space after the collapse of the Soviet Union. And for some time now, at the suggestion of some of our friends, it began to be called the Eurasian space.

Although I’m not a fan of how we sometimes overuse this term without putting any sense into it. It was actually given to us by our wise friend Nursultan Nazarbayev, who interpreted Gumilyov in this way. Gumilyov understood Eurasianism completely differently than Nursultan Nazarbayev. But it was important for Kazakhstan that it was one of the main drivers of this Eurasian idea. And therefore, for our, so to speak, own pleasure, Nazarbayev actively developed this idea in our classrooms.

By the way, curiously, there was zoning in the Soviet Union, everyone knows this – the Baltic states, Ukraine,

the Caucasus, and then Central Asia and Kazakhstan. So, “and Kazakhstan” meant that Kazakhstan is not quite Central Asia yet, it is something somewhat different. And now, when we are developing our unions within the framework of this somewhat different way – the Eurasian Union, the Collective Security Treaty – we talk all the time, and our leaders talk about the need to develop four freedoms here. This is freedom of movement of capital, goods, services and labor.

But, dear friends, we must look objectively at what is going on with the challenges that are associated with the spread of these freedoms? Unfortunately, this is so; our partners, under the influence of that same West, are reducing the possibility of free flow of capital. They are cunning, of course, they are deceiving both us and the West. They say to the West that they will not fight sanctions, that they recognize sanctions. At the same time, they are transit countries for supplies of what we currently cannot buy in the West. It all happens at the same time. Both sides benefit, because, you know, “a friendly calf sucks two mothers.” This is a well-known story. But the fact remains.

Today, under the influence of what is happening to us, an anti-migration wave is rising within the country. Well, I know this better than anyone, because for the second term in a row I am the special representative of the State Duma on citizenship and migration issues. And I turned from a friend of the Russian people into an enemy of the Russian people during this time. If you read the Internet, you can open any page where certain individuals who suddenly discovered nationalism of the highest standard in themselves, demand the immediate introduction of a visa regime with countries included in the Eurasian Union, the Collective Security Treaty, expel migrants, etc.

Just think about it. We are waging a war in the West, and they want to start a new conflict here, taking a whole series of steps for this under the pretext that we cannot today guarantee that Tajiks, Uzbeks, Kyrgyz and others who come here will not bring drugs with them, will not bring terrorism with them, etc. All these figures, all these facts are exaggerated and create the ground for the growth of xenophobia in the country.

Xenophobia in a multinational country, like Russia, means the death of this multinational country. Because, having started with the Tajiks, it will not end with them. It will go further when it comes to the Caucasus. Stop feeding the Caucasus! Tatars, Bashkirs, etc. This will affect our country itself. What do these people want? To create a state of “pure” ones, only Russians? Let’s count how many nationalities are in this hall.

I want to say that this danger is very serious, because behind it there is a sacred desire to protect oneself, to secure oneself from terrorism, from some other negative phenomena. But instead of finding ways to combat this, we begin to call for pogroms. I’m not joking, by the way. The day after the tragedy in Crocus, one of the deputies of the State Duma – a Deputy of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, by the way, which in itself is surprising – stated in his Telegram channel: “Moscow is mentally ready for pogroms, but the government is still hesitating.” Can we afford this if we are generally thinking about confrontation with the global West, about turning to the East? We understand that by doing this, we become enemies of all our former tsars, emperors, first secretaries, Skobelevs, Przhevalsk-

kys, Kaufmans, who moved in this direction, bringing with them culture, our statehood and at the same time the opportunities that the Russian people offered and realized in these territories. And who built all this? This is known. We need to understand ourselves. We need to figure out what we can and cannot do. Because you cannot magically combine the desire to establish yourself as an advanced country and at the same time protect yourself with some kind of fence due to the fact that we cannot cope with some phenomena.

Let's figure it out, maybe those who are trying to cope are not working the right way? Maybe the Ministry of Internal Affairs, which created a corruption trough from migration, is not enough, something else needs to be created? The President has already said this. These are very important issues, mind you.

And one more thing that I would like to say, moving away from the internal agenda. We constantly dream of a multipolar world. We say that we (this started with Evgeny Maksimovich Primakov and earlier) are for a multipolar world, because we are for a just world. As a propaganda slogan, this is true. This is completely acceptable. But we have never lived in a multipolar world. It seems to me that the only period when we lived in a multipolar world was during the Second World War, when Germany was on one side, we were on the other side, and our allies were on the third side, the third center of power – the British, the Americans.

It was a multipolar world to some extent. And what happened after that was a bipolar world – the USSR and the USA. And now, although we dream of a multipolar world, we increasingly get the impression that in reality the world is becoming bipolar again. But at one pole there is the United States, at the other there is China. And this is what I would like to avoid for us. I would like to avoid that we would so definitely end up at the same pole. We are being driven there by the position of the West, which has lost its way, its European way. We need to keep our limitations in mind.

And one last thing. Here Vitaly Vyacheslavovich (Naumkin, head of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences) is present. Yesterday, we together participated in a conference "Russian-Iranian relations in a changing world" held by our institute. I want to say that, of course, we should not allow ourselves to doubt that our statehood, our people are primarily Europeans. This is the European origin of the Russian people. I don't want to give the European Union, the NATO bloc, that Europe of Shakespeare, Lope de Vega, Umberto Eco, Pushkin, Turgenyev, Dostoevsky. Neither I agree to consider that Europe is them, and we are Eurasians. We are Europeans. We are Europeans who have reached the Pacific Ocean. And we must pay attention to this. You will not dress us Europeans in the most wonderful oriental robes, as Baron Ungern planned. He, as you know, did not gain anything from this.

This must be understood when developing relations with Asia, with all respect. It is clear that we need allies, and today our allies are within BRICS. Today our allies – to a certain extent, of course, to the extent that they themselves are capable of it – are the Chinese, Indians and others, since they are conducting a dialogue with us. They are also looking for their own benefit.

I am finishing. But we need to understand what a difficult situation we are in. We shouldn't multiply the num-

ber of your opponents; we should really see our potential. BRICS is important for us due to the fact that with the collapse of the Soviet Union we have lost the quality of a country that can be self-sufficient. When there were 300 million consumers, then it was possible to do anything within the country, including making space rockets or submarines, ships. But now we require cooperation, because the market has narrowed, and we need a wider market. That is why we are doing the right thing in this regard today, turning to the East and South. But this does not mean that we should deny our origin, our cultural historical code. Thank you.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – Dear colleagues, not so long ago, Mikhail Borisovich Piotrovsky, colleagues from the Russian Academy of Sciences and me had a discussion about whether Russia is Europe and whether the West is Europe. Our opinions coincided in many ways (but, of course, not in everything), and we came to certain conclusions.

Dmitry Sergeyevich Likhachov argued that Russian culture is undoubtedly European. And we – our University and our scientific school – firmly stand on the same position: Russia is Europe, from Kaliningrad to Vladivostok. Orthodoxy is the eastern branch of Christianity, but the point is not even in creeds, but in the fact that any religion is the core of the development of the culture of a particular people. Christianity once split into Western and Eastern, and as a result, two different models of social development emerged. This difference is still clearly evident. Russia remained in the position of European values, and the West eventually came to "new ethics", other "new" ideas and, as a result, ceased to be a European culture.

Dmitry Olegovich Babich, who is present here, explained his theory to me several years ago. The twentieth century saw the birth of three ideological bastards. The first is socialism, which at the stage of Bolshevism took on an absolutely inhuman form. The second is the national idea. There is nothing wrong with nationalism if it is love for one's nation without hatred of others, presupposing respect, willingness to cooperate, etc. Loving one's nation, one's Motherland, striving to work for the good of one's country – all this is human. But when nationalism grows to a hypertrophied size, an ideological "dislocation" occurs, which is what fascism became.

And the third bastard is liberalism. In general, the liberal worldview is quite positive. It provides for a certain system of values, including work, respect for the person, individualism – also reasonable, not opposing one's interests to the interests of other people and society. Healthy liberalism encourages a person to balance all values and live in harmony. But suddenly something unexpected happened. The West which has always been distinguished by pragmatism, began to devour itself. True, the United States prefers not to devour itself, but there is virtually no democracy left, no freedom of speech, no independent judicial system, no advanced economy (otherwise why did the United States begin to lag behind China in terms of the pace of economic development?). At the same time, they rob the rest of the world. The USA has lost its status as a model state that has recipes for prosperity using its resources. It is still thriving, but, as their colleagues correctly said, only through theft.

Thus, the West ceased to be a full-fledged branch of European culture and turned into something flawed and rot-

ten. Special kindergartens for LGBT children are already being created – is this normal? It is clear that the rights of people with “peculiarities” cannot be infringed upon, but this does not mean that their peculiarities should be considered the norm. Let’s say a person was born blind – of course, he/she needs to be socialized and somehow supported. But we won’t give him/her a driver’s license, right? The same is true with the love of a man for a man, a woman for a woman. Such couples cannot produce children, and this cannot be considered the norm for humans. Moreover, in some countries they decided that it is possible to register the marriage of a person and an animal. We look with surprise and, of course, cannot accept this as the normal development of the European civilization. Therefore, it is an absolutely right step to adopt our own national foreign policy doctrine. We need to isolate ourselves from all this ugliness. The less we have to do with it, the better. Of course, we really don’t want to give up classical European culture, visiting the Louvre and the Prado, but we’ll have to get over it.

Currently, Russia is experiencing a real economic take-off – 4 % per year! Although, Russian banker Oleg Vyugin, who is called an outstanding economist, predicts a deterioration because the balance of payments is disrupted. But what was this balance before? Money used to come from the West and go back then. And now the outflow has stopped. Oligarchs no longer transfer billions of dollars to Western banks and are forced to invest them in the domestic economy. Of course, no one forbids them to continue withdrawing their capital, but now it is unsafe – it can be taken away. As a result, the growth curve of the Russian economy went up.

At the same time, Russia stays with the rest of the world which is building BRICS. What is new about the BRICS association? Western countries are trying to maintain a unipolar model, where they will continue to dominate, dictate their terms and at the same time live by robbing the rest of the world. But other countries advocate that in a free world community everyone should have equal rights and respect each other. Of course, relations between states are never completely cloudless, and disagreements also occur. But if we strive for the same goal – cooperation for the common good, then all issues will be solved in working order. I think that the West is doomed in its opposition to this aspiration. Of course, for now they are holding everyone by the throat, because they still have very powerful levers of influence. But the more persistently they impose their will, the more resistance will stiffen, that is, the tendency to move away from the West, because no one wants to tolerate its dictates anymore.

Western hegemony will not fade away gradually – it will simply collapse at some point, and this moment will not have to wait long. Western Europe will probably stop subordinating to the United States – they simply will have no other choice. And the financial collapse in the United States is inevitable – the national debt cannot be increased indefinitely. As a result, a new system of international relations will be built, primarily economic and financial ones, but also cultural. And Russia will enter this system as an equal participant.

In any case, the future certainly does not belong to the Western model of civilization. Just 15 years ago, we believed that the United States and Europe had a chance for salvation. Academician Stepin and other prominent Russian

scientists said that the West will either sink deeper into crisis, or draw conclusions from a series of disasters and direct all resources to elaborate a new development trajectory and follow it. Now we can conclude that Western countries were unable or unwilling to take the second path, so I believe that a sad future awaits them. Although, I must make a reservation: my opinion is not the ultimate truth.

Now, as a moderator, I want to ask the attendees a few questions. I am addressing the rector of the Belarusian State University, Professor Korol. Andrey Dmitrievich, how do you see our future?

**A. D. KOROL:** – Let me remind you of the famous statement of Claude Lévi-Strauss that the 21st century will be the century of the humanities or it will not exist at all. The education system can largely influence the implementation of the first option, and we are doing everything possible for this.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – That is, the world will get on the right path?

**A. D. KOROL:** – Yes, I am deeply convinced in it.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – Alexander Vladimirovich, what will you say?

**A. V. SHERSHUKOV:** – I would also like to answer in the words of a respected person (not accurately, but close to the text): if events subsequently unfolded somewhat differently than Švejk predicted, then we must take into account the fact that he had not completed diplomatic education.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – Not long ago a very interesting book about color revolutions was published. I address one of its authors: Sergey Grigorievich, what awaits us in the near future?

**S. G. MUSIENKO:** – The doubts about the prospects of BRICS that I hear from some colleagues remind me of how in the past many doubted the future of relations between Belarus and Russia. They turned out to be wrong.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – Mr. Binev, what is your opinion?

**A. P. BINEV:** – I perceive the future as something “behind the curtains”. You don’t know what’s in there until it opens.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – Perhaps Mr. Babich knows?

**D. O. BABICH:** – Since totalitarian, that is, distorted, liberalism has won in the West, victory will be ours. But we may lose if we return to totalitarian socialism, which many are pushing us towards, unfortunately. Under no circumstances should this be allowed to happen.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – Professor Gromyko?

**AI. A. GROMYKO:** – I agree with those who believe that Russia’s European roots are very strong. We should not leave the very concept of European culture to the West, but



we must remember that in the times of Pushkin and Dostoevsky, our country was stronger than it is now integrated into what we now call Eurasia. Diversity is the fate of Russia. Being a northern European country in its cultural foundation, it still cannot focus only on Europe due to its natural geography. In the 21st century, at the next turn of historical development, we must integrate into both the global East and the global South. This is the task facing us now.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – Thank you. Sergey Alekseevich, your opinion?

**S. A. TSYPLYAEV:** – "The world is falling into the abyss", the Archbishop of York used to say a thousand years ago. But the abyss turned out to be not as terrible as he had feared. And now, I am sure, we will overcome the fears that torment us, become more open and enter the next phase of modernization, feeling confident and not afraid of influences from the outside. The way Peter I did it, the way it happened to a large extent during Soviet times. We can do this.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – Academician Chereshev, a couple of words.

**V. A. CHERESHNEV:** – I am an optimist. I believe in the next 10–20 years we will reap bumper crops in Texas and Oklahoma.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – What will happen next, Mr. Okoli?

**M. OKOLI:** – BRICS is, first of all, a very serious idea that is already becoming a reality. Of course, there will be challenges – not a single big project can do without them. But BRICS will cope with them, because it has a new promising agenda. And the West, with its value system, will not be able to brush aside this reality that has already arrived.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – That is, you think that BRICS will exist and develop. Evgeny Ivanovich, what awaits us in the future?

**E. I. MAKAROV:** – The second wave of BRICS expansion will occur in Brazil in a year.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – Academician Nigmatulin?

**R. I. NIGMATULIN:** – The future depends on the younger generation, whose representatives are present here.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – OK, we need to treat students more strictly. Abdusalam Abdulkirimovich, your opinion?

**A. A. GUSEINOV:** – I believe that Russia will get out of its current problems.

**G. F. FEIGIN:** – I think that now it is simply necessary to reformat the global institutional architecture, because many of the previous projects have not shown sufficient effectiveness. And I believe in the future of BRICS as a global institution that will contribute to and participate in

such a restructuring. This is the direction in which the world should develop.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – The latest remark was from Professor Feigin, Doctor of Economics. And now I turn to Sorbonne Professor Olivier Roqueplo. What can you say on the issue under discussion?

**O. ROQUEPLO:** – In my opinion, BRICS is the first step towards a multipolar world. But I would like to emphasize that we have not seen a multipolar world for a very long time, several centuries. Therefore, now BRICS is the hope of humanity.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – A very strong thesis! Alexander Vladimirovich, welcome.

**A. V. YAKOVENKO:** – What to expect? Firstly, new technological standards and dividing the world into technological zones – for the very simple reason that technologies will determine the economic development of countries. Secondly, regionalization of the currency sphere, since the influence of the dollar is steadily declining. If 10 years ago payments in dollars in the world trade and financial turnover reached 70%, now their share has decreased to 46%. Here are two trends that will shape the world's economic development over the next 10 years.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – Maria Vladimirovna, do you want to ask a question? Welcome.

**M. V. ZAKHAROVA:** – Yes, a question for my colleague Zatulín. Konstantin Fyodorovich, you say that we should not take on issues of global justice, but should take care of our own internal affairs. But imagine that you have a beautiful house and a well-kept garden, you keep them in perfect order, but suddenly the supply of water, electricity stops, and a whole series of other problems arise. You'll have to go and settle it.

The history of mankind knows many examples when such voluntary isolation of states focusing exclusively on life within their borders, led humanity to disaster. By the way, the Second World War was possible for this reason. Politicians in European countries said: "It's not our business," and many allowed the Nazi troops to transit through their territories, believing that they would not be touched. Therefore, unfortunately, in order to preserve our civilizational identity and develop in the way we consider correct, we must strive for a more equitable world order.

**K. F. ZATULIN:** – The country that annoys us so much has developed a formula: we do not have permanent friends, but we have permanent interests. I do not propose to copy it, but I want to draw your attention to the fact that in the past we have been at enmity with all of our current neighbors, with the exception of the Armenians and Georgians. But at the moment we are not doing well with them.

I don't think we should cut ourselves off from the rest of the world in order to build a city on a hill. I just want to say that the very BRICS that we are talking about must be used, improved in every possible way, etc. But it has not yet passed any checks either by time or by trials, it has not gone through fire and water. Individual BRICS members

behave differently in different situations. Therefore, no matter how much we want to see what we want, we must see what is. That's what it's really about. And don't make anything a fetish.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – Now Mikhail Viktorovich Shmakov will express his opinion.

**M. V. SHMAKOV:** – Two final theses. Firstly, when we talk about technology, let's not forget that today Russia is the generator and owner of a number of the most advanced technologies. For example, we have a fast neutron nuclear reactor which will ensure energy independence and electricity in our country for several hundred years to come, because it uses a special type of fuel. So in this matter we should not rely on either the West or the East – we can do a lot ourselves.

The second thesis concerns BRICS. What is the future of this association and the world in general? My answer is: it depends on how we work. At the heart of everything is work, which gives the right to a decent life. Unity, solidarity and justice — these values should be our motto.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – I must make one clarification: Mikhail Viktorovich is not only the leader of the Russian trade union movement, but also a graduate of one of the best technical universities – the Bauman Moscow State Technical University. He also worked in the defense industry for many years, participating in the development of rocketry and space systems.

Academician Naumkin, you have the floor.

**V. V. NAUMKIN:** – Probably, in the near future, subjects of global politics will continue to search for partners based on common interests. As a result, a system of partnerships will be created, and now we cannot say what it will look like. Perhaps BRICS will expand to gigantic proportions, but this association will still not be the only one. Whatever the circumstances, Russia will need at least 15–20 years to remain at the center of this system.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – The floor is given to Professor Irina Olegovna Abramova.

**I. O. ABRAMOVA:** – I will also discuss for a while with Konstantin Fyodorovich. I believe that we still need to set big goals now – both within our country, and within the BRICS framework, and for the entire “Global South”. When we formulate tasks, opportunities arise, but under one condition: it is necessary to clearly define the mechanisms for their realization.

And the second thesis. It is necessary to abandon stereotypical ideas, in particular the perception of the world and global culture as Eurocentric. Yes, Russia is a part of Europe. But even our education was structured in such a way that a huge layer of culture fell out of it. And it's also time

to get rid of the low self-esteem. We often hear complaints that we are weak, that we have nothing. But what Mikhail Viktorovich said refutes this opinion.

Well, the future, of course, belongs to the young.

**M. V. SHMAKOV:** – But the answer to Maria Vladimirovna's question has not sounded.

**K. F. ZATULIN:** – We agree that we should not isolate ourselves, but rather set big goals and fight for sacred goals. “In your struggle you will find your right” – this is the slogan of the Socialist Revolutionaries, in fact, before the first Russian revolution.

**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – Let's support the slogan of the Socialist Revolutionaries. But it is still necessary to put your home in order.

Dear friends, in conclusion I will express my personal opinion. It's unlikely that I understand more than others, so I don't pretend on having the ultimate truth. But from everything that is happening in the world now, I conclude that humanity is on the verge of very big changes – hopefully, positive ones. A completely new model of the world order is gradually being built.

Academician Likhachov once expressed the idea that the development of society proceeds according to completely different laws than the development of nature. If Darwinism wins in nature – the strong wins and rules – then in culture this law ceases to operate, since humanism gradually grows in people. Sometimes it seems that this is not so, that savagery still triumphs. An aggressive state seeks to destroy a people it does not like, burning villages with napalm and shooting civilians — the victory of the one who is stronger is obvious. But in fact, Likhachov believed, culture and humanism ultimately break through like grass through asphalt, although this asphalt may look very hard and durable. The law of cultural development is the law of the continuous rise of humanism. It's just that at some moments it retreats a little, but then moves forward again. As a result, the world truly becomes more humane.

I think that's what is happening. I would like to believe that we are now on the threshold of the next stage in the progress of humanism. After all, what goals do the BRICS countries pursue? This is a new type of association; it cannot be judged by the criteria by which the European Union or NATO were created. Previous alliances were formed for the purpose of dominance – economic or military. And the BRICS countries are united by the idea of more free and equal development, when countries do not infringe on each other's interests. I repeat, I really want to believe that this will happen.

Meanwhile, military confrontations continue, people are dying in huge numbers, leaving their homes, and becoming refugees. But any conflicts always end in peace, and we all hope for their end soon. Humanism will certainly triumph.

# Round Table

## CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS FOR FORMING A NEW GLOBAL PLATFORM FOR CULTURAL COOPERATION (science, culture, art, education, economics, law)

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April 13, 2024

Stasov + Ushakov Conference Hall (Nevsky Royal Hotel)

### CHAIRPERSONS:

I. I. BUZOVSKY	<i>Deputy Minister of Information of the Republic of Belarus (Minsk), Ph. D. in Sociological Sciences</i>
M. V. SHMAKOV	<i>Member of the State Council of the Russian Federation, Chairman of the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of SPbUHSS, Professor Emeritus of SPbUHSS</i>
A. V. YAKOVENKO	<i>Rector of the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia (Moscow), Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation (2005–2011), Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the United Kingdom (2011–2019), Dr. Sc. (Law), Professor</i>
K. F. ZATULIN	<i>First Deputy Chairman of the State Duma Committee of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation on CIS Affairs, Eurasian Integration and Relations with Compatriots (Moscow), Deputy to the State Duma of the Russian Federation, Director of the Institute of CIS Countries</i>
M. V. ZAKHAROVA	<i>Director of the Information and Press Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia (Moscow), Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation, Ph. D. in History</i>

### SPEAKERS:

I. O. ABRAMOVA	<i>Director of the Institute for African Studies of the RAS (Moscow), Member of the Presidium of the RAS, Corresponding Member of the RAS, Dr. Sc. (Economics), Professor</i>
M. AL-KHATTAB AL-IDRISI	<i>His Highness the Prince of Sheriff, President of the Alliance for France party, writer, winner of the literary prize for Peace and Tolerance (Paris, France)</i>
S. ATLAGIĆ	<i>Professor of the Department of Political Sciences at the University of Belgrade (Serbia), Dr. Sc. (Political Studies)</i>
D. O. BABICH	<i>columnist of the RIA Novosti agency (Moscow), Member of the Russian Union of Journalists</i>
J.-L. BASHLE	<i>writer, pianist, historian (Paris, France)</i>
V. A. CHERESHNEV	<i>Deputy President and Member of the Presidium of the RAS (Moscow), Academician of the RAS, Scientific Director of the Institute of Immunology and Physiology of the Ural Branch of the RAS, Dr. Sc. (Medical Sciences), Professor, Honorary Doctor of SPbUHSS</i>
A. CROOKE	<i>Founder and Director of geo-political and geo-financial think-tank Conflicts Forum (London, United Kingdom)</i>
D. A. DEGTEREV	<i>Leading researcher at the Center for the Study of Problems of the Transition Economy Institute of Africa of the RAS (Moscow), Dr. Sc. (Philosophy), Professor</i>
A. K. ISAEV	<i>Deputy Head of the “United Russia” party faction in the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation (Moscow), Deputy to the State Duma of the Russian Federation, Deputy Chairman of the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia, Ph. D. in Political Sciences, Professor of SPbUHSS</i>
A. M. KRAMARENKO	<i>Director of the Institute of Topical International Problems of the Diplomatic Academy Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation (Moscow), Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation</i>
V. K. MAMONTOV	<i>Chairman of the board of directors of the newspaper “Komsomolskaya Pravda” (Moscow), Director General of the radio station “Govorit Moskva”, director of the Foundation for the Support of Network Initiatives “Smart Internet”</i>
V. V. NAUMKIN	<i>Scientific Director of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the RAS (Moscow), Academician of the RAS, Dr. Sc. (Historical Sciences), Professor</i>

G. V. NAUMOVA	<i>writer, culturologist, President of the Miracles Association (Paris, France), Ph. D. in Philology</i>
M. OKOLI	<i>Professor of the Northeastern Federal University named after M. K. Ammosov (Yakutsk), Research Fellow of the Institute of Africa of the RAS and E. M. Primakov Institute of World Economy and International Relations of the RAS, Dr. Sc. (Philosophy), President of the Nigerian Community Russia</i>
C. OKRAY	<i>Vice President of the Marmara Group Strategic and Social Research Foundation (Istanbul, Turkey)</i>
E. RAKHMATULLOZODA	<i>Professor of the Department of Diplomacy and Foreign Policy of the Republic of Tajikistan Tajik National University (Dushanbe), Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Republic of Tajikistan (1990–2001), Monetary and Full Ambassador</i>
O. ROQUEPLO	<i>Professor of Sorbonne University (France), Dr. Sc. (History), Dr. Sc. (Political Sciences)</i>
V. A. SHAMAKHOV	<i>Scientific supervisor, Advisor to the Rector of the North-West Institute of Management of the Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration (St. Petersburg), Dr. Sc. (Economics), Ph. D. in History, Professor, 1st class State Counsellor of the Russian Federation, Colonel General of the Customs Service</i>
A. TRIGUNAYAT	<i>Ambassador of India to Jordan and Libya, High Commissioner to Malta (2012–2016), Honorary Fellow of the Analytical Center of the Vivekananda International Foundation</i>
S. A. TSYPLYAEV	<i>Editor-in-chief of the Vlast magazine (St. Petersburg), representative of the President of the Russian Federation in St. Petersburg (1992–2000), PH. D. in Physical and Mathematical Sciences, Full State Adviser of the Russian Federation 3rd class, member of the Council on Foreign and Defense Policy</i>
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**A. S. ZAPESOTSKY:** – Dear friends, today we will talk in more detail about the topics that were raised at the plenary session and during the panel discussion.

First of all, on behalf of the Organizing Committee of the Likhachov Conference, which I represent, I would like to say a few words about our traditions. We expect that participants review in advance the reports of their colleagues published on the scientific portal “Plushchad D. S. Likhachova”, and right here we will discuss them, without reading, as well as what has been expressed by others during the Conference. We need dialogue, not monologue.

In addition, I would like to note that the Likhachov Conference are being broadcast throughout Russia on the telecommunications Internet portal “Scientific Russia”. Only the announcements of the broadcasts of the plenary session, panel discussion and section 1 of the 22nd Likhachov Conference were viewed by about 20 thousand people. Perhaps this is a small figure for the sphere of mass culture, but in any case, the attention of the scientific community to the Likhachov Conference is significant.

I give the floor to the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation, Member of the Collegium of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, rector of the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Alexander Vladimirovich Yakovenko, who will lead the discussion.

**A. V. YAKOVENKO:** – The topic of our section is very interesting. We at the Diplomatic Academy and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have recently been increasingly concentrating not so much on challenges, but on prospects. Because prospects determine both topics and challenges, and challenges induce prospects. It will be very interesting to look into the future from the present day. The topic is capacious, since it touches on almost the entire spectrum of humanitarian cooperation, perhaps only without taking into account sports. We know what the situation is in this area: on the eve of the Olympic Games in France, the West completely politicized sport, leaving no chance for equal international cooperation.

Moreover, American elites, during the ultra-liberal revolution, turned against history and decided to cancel culture in an attempt to destroy the traditional identity of Americans themselves. We’ll see what they get, at a time when everywhere in the world, and Russia is no exception, issues of identity are coming to the fore. In the United States, the so-called cultural wars, reminiscent of the “cultural revolution” in China, go on the rise. That is, there is active debate about what constitutes American identity.

The floor is given to the Chairman of the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia, Mikhail Viktorovich Shmakov.

**M. V. SHMAKOV:** – The topic of our section touches on aspects of cooperation throughout the world, but since

the Likhachov Conference this year are focused on BRICS, I will focus on this association.

Russian trade unions perceive cooperation within the BRICS framework as an opportunity to deepen ties with our colleagues from other countries, developing and systematizing it without resorting to a formal description.

For 12 years now, the Trade Union Forum has been operating within the BRICS framework. It is a global trade union structure where information is exchanged on all important areas of life in the BRICS+ countries (about 20 states). We are now establishing closer relationships with our colleagues in all BRICS+ countries. Not all BRICS+ states are yet ready to cooperate in the field of trade union activities, but I hope that later, depending on the interests and agenda that we will promote, they will join this forum.

We are studying data showing which BRICS+ country is most comfortable for wage earners to live in. The competition of countries for a more decent life for the population is, on the one hand, a point of rivalry, and on the other, a uniting matter. In the area of protecting the rights of workers, the criterion of a decent life, which includes the concept of "decent work", comes to the fore. Of course, this is the most important issue – trade unions have been fighting for decent work for more than 150 years.

Discussions on the rights and interests of employees entail a discussion of the interests and behavior of the governments and elites of those countries that gather in formal and informal associations. Yesterday we talked about the confrontation or competition between the countries of the "Global West" and the "Global South". This is at the same time the major problem – the desire of some to live at the expense of others, and it can escalate into war.

Despite various theoretical constructions, this happens constantly throughout history. Today we are seeing this conflict at a new technological level in science, technology, art, culture, education, economics, etc. It can spill out onto a battlefield. Currently two large conflicts are being fought, and many small ones in which new technologies are being worked out. The latter are developed in history when some attack, while others have to defend themselves with the help of advanced technologies.

Returning from military issues to cooperation, I would like to once again talk about our experience. We get information about what is happening in the BRICS countries and other states, including those in the West and East, from our colleagues who provide reliable data about the lives and interests, incomes and problems of wage earners.

Russia as a country-civilization must be a labor power. Some time ago, within the framework of other economic theories, it was stated that labor is not the most important thing in life; there are other ways of accumulating capital, for example virtual ones. This results in an increase in gross domestic product and shows that from the point of view of virtual capital, some countries are more successful, while others are less successful. But when life comes up against realities, for example the need to fight, it turns out that the amounts on virtual accounts cannot help in any way on the field of real confrontation. There metal is needed, as well as other products of technological development, which in the real economy are transformed into products. And this is the only way to develop and win.

We believe that the BRICS Trade Union Forum, which has been operating for 12 years, is a platform for coopera-

tion and mutual understanding. I am confident that with the further development of the BRICS coalition, we will be able to strengthen and expand this platform for discussing topics related to science, culture, art, education, economics and law.

**A. V. YAKOVENKO:** – Improvement of the quality of people's life is a serious topic that was also touched upon in the message of the President of Russia to the Federal Assembly. For other BRICS member states, this is a topic for discussion because they have different rates of development. Today, in terms of economic development, the size of the financial bubble has reached 75%, while under normal conditions this figure is 10%. The financial bubble, which is based on the monopoly of the dollar and the Bretton Woods system, will burst sooner or later.

The floor is given to the Director of the Information and Press Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Maria Vladimirovna Zakharova.

**M. V. ZAKHAROVA:** – In relation to the topic of the section, I would like to highlight several points.

First: we are brought up on such concepts as "cooperation", "interaction", "cultural exchange". Or, as the title of our section puts it, on a global platform for cultural cooperation. All this meant a positive agenda in the cultural sphere. This has been our cultural code for several generations. It acquired a special scope in the 20th century, including after the Second World War, when the world was on the verge of self-destruction. Having managed to find a balance of power and taking a step back, everyone drew their conclusions. Our country has greatly increased its desire to establish cooperation, strengthen interaction and develop a positive agenda.

Currently, a diametrically opposite situation has developed in the world, although Russia continues to adhere to a positive agenda, like the countries of the world majority. But at the same time, we see that countries that accumulate the most powerful levers for the implementation of humanitarian cooperation (mass media, digital platforms today become a way to conduct cultural policy) have completely different goals. This applies not only to the aggressive steps they take, but also to the terminological vocabulary.

The words "peace", "friendship", "love" are generally absent from the speeches of modern world leaders. Although both traditional modes of life, and modernist approaches are all about love, harmony, for everything good and against everything bad. But at the same time, this vocabulary is absent from the leaders' speeches, as if it had become toxic and even marginal. Let me remind you that the word "friendship" was one of the most popular in the 1980s, but now it is generally not used.

These words and concepts which in politics can be considered as plans that determine the development direction, have been replaced by cancel culture in all its manifestations, including at the lexical level: cancel, prevent, restrain, etc.

Throughout history, Russia as a country-civilization and our people have tried to resist cancelation. Alexander Nevsky, the Order of whom A. S. Zapesotsky was awarded, was elevated to the rank of saints because he did not allow Russian culture to be cancelled. Our country and people have

made this choice more than once in other periods, when the threat came from both the West and the East.

Sometimes cancelation transformed into genocide. Residents of Leningrad – Petersburg are well aware of this. Finally, in addition to the word “siege”, which is meaningful for us, the word “genocide” appeared, characterizing what was happening in Leningrad during the Second World War. Siege is our internal concept, although it has entered the culture of a number of countries that favor us. But for states that are not friendly to us, the word “siege” is an empty phrase. Therefore, the documents finally recorded the legal and sociocultural concept of “genocide”, which is understandable to everyone when describing what was happening in Leningrad. The essence was the same – to stop the existence of our country. But every time we fought back.

Hence the second point I would like to talk about. Yesterday I entered into a debate with Mr. Zatulin regarding the fact that we definitely need to pay attention to external perimeters (trade, global logistics, transport corridors, geopolitical circumstances) and strive to establish a more just world order.

In this sociocultural context, with all the understanding of the importance of international cultural and humanitarian cooperation, in my opinion, first of all it is necessary to pay attention to the internal development. How can you go outside without the main factor – the education of Russian youth, without passing on the cultural code to future generations? All for nothing if children do not know a single significant fact about the Great Patriotic War, the siege of Leningrad (which only St. Petersburg children know about). How to bring this information to the outside? We will do our best in this direction. The most important thing is not to rely on the capabilities of our information work or external propaganda in a good sense, but to make every citizen of our country a promoter of their own culture. This is where the strength lies. We need to do this energizing the citizens of our country for a feat of arms. Every person must carry out this mission. Then the path to international cultural and humanitarian cooperation will be easier to pave. The people themselves must become a source of strength – cultural and humanitarian interaction.

**A. V. YAKOVENKO:** – Deputy Head of the United Russia faction in the State Duma of the Russian Federation  
Andrey Konstantinovich Isaev, the floor is yours.

**A. K. ISAEV:** – Dear colleagues! Although Alexander Vladimirovich urged us to pay attention to prospects rather than challenges, I will play the role of *Enfant terrible* and say that there are many more challenges than prospects.

From my point of view, we are at the beginning of a general world conflict, which is based on a clash of cultures, and it will gradually worsen. Therefore, it seems to me premature to talk about the formation of a unified cultural platform in the world today. If the First World War unfolded as a conflict of bourgeois nations, the Second World War and the Cold War as a conflict of ideologies, then today's world conflict is a clash of civilizations and cultures. Although the West is trying to present this as a clash of ideologies, which is natural, since in the West the last “winning” ideology, liberalism, prevailed. They try to present the conflict as a clash of the values of victorious liberal de-

mocracy, which is odiously formulated in the famous work “The End of History and the Last Man” by Francis Fukuyama, with backward reactionary regimes and ideologies. But the Second World War destroyed fascism as an ideology, the Cold War destroyed the ideology of communism. I expect that liberal ideology in its most radical form, which dominates the West today, will also be defeated.

And yet the clash of cultures continues and worsens. And before we talk about the formation of a global platform, humanity will have to make a choice which path it will take. These two paths are clearly marked today. On the one hand, the G7, on the other, BRICS. The G7 is an ideologically uniform structure, strictly hierarchical, with its own commander, the United States of America, and a political officer, Great Britain. It is opposed by the BRICS organization, which is distinguished by a combination of different political cultures, implying different political systems. But within this union, Iran is not trying to turn Brazil into an Islamic republic, and Brazil is not trying to achieve Russia's transition to Catholicism.

The choice of one path or another, which humanity now has to take, will predetermine the possibilities of forming a unified cultural platform. The victory of the G7 will mean the spread of Euro-Atlantic civilization as the only possible and universal one. Under the guise of liberal ideology, they are trying to export to us the culture and civilizational values that dominate the West today. These values cannot be universal, since the culture and civilizational characteristics of each country are determined by its history and geography. In this regard, countries have different understandings of the meaning of human life, the relationship between the individual and society, society and the state, which is predetermined by the development history of each country. If Russia was formed as an anti-colonial, essentially defensive empire over a vast space, the role of the state in it will never be the same as in those states that were formed as a federation of religious communities.

In this clash, as logic seems to suggest and Western ideologists repeat many times, the West must win. It is more economically powerful and ideologically united.

But if we analyze previous world collisions, we will see an interesting pattern. The First World War involved, on the one hand, a bloc of politically homogeneous continental powers – Austria-Hungary, Germany and Turkey, which was close to them; on the other, autocratic Russia, democratic France, semi-democratic Great Britain and a number of other countries which were very different. The “hodgepodge” team won. In the Second World War there was a similar picture: a homogeneous bloc of fascist powers, and against them were the liberal democratic USA and Great Britain, the communist Soviet Union, etc. The “mixed” side won. The Cold War: an ideologically united bloc of socialist states opposes the bourgeois West, which was joined by the sheikhs of the Persian Gulf countries, the Afghan Mujahideen, the apartheid regimes in South Africa and Southern Rhodesia, and Latin American dictators. And again the opponent who is distinguished by diversity wins. Perhaps this happens because history does not want to stop, and in case of uniformity, further development becomes problematic.

I believe that we have sufficient grounds for optimism and for the belief that the victory in the end will not belong to the homogeneous structure that the West now represents, trying to impose its model on the rest of the world. The di-



versity that BRICS represents will win. But we have to fight for this victory.

In conclusion, I would like to support Mikhail Viktorovich Shmakov's point of view on the phenomenon of labor civilization. The entire Western civilization is based on the dominance of financial capital, as Rudolf Hilferding understood it: industrial and commercial capitals are subordinated to the banking one. It is the victory of banking capital that dictates the formation of a unipolar world. Banks produce one product – currency – and promote it. Therefore, a clash is inevitable, and any competition leads to the establishment of a monopoly, as Karl Marx taught. The victory of BRICS will mean a reformatting of the world economy and the predominance of productive capital.

**A. V. YAKOVENKO:** – Director of the Institute of CIS Countries Konstantin Fyodorovich Zatulin, welcome.

**K. F. ZATULIN:** – Maria Vladimirovna reproaches me for not understanding the need to fight for a just world in the international arena. I'm not that simple. I just believe that problems need to be addressed not only in foreign policy, but also in one's own country. Therefore, I will risk touching on an issue that seems quite clear and resolved in our country, but in fact is not so. This becomes obvious not when authoritative experts gather at a round table, but when we try to plunge into the mood of the broad masses. I'm talking about the national question in Russia.

How does Russia differ from the Soviet Union in terms of nations? It differs in that in the Soviet Union a little more than half of the population were Russians, the rest were representatives of other nations within the Soviet Union, and before that the Russian Empire, and for tens and even hundreds of years they somehow coexisted within the same state. But in 1991, the Soviet Union collapsed and the Russian Federation appeared, in which at the moment about 80% of the population is Russian, and only 20% are other peoples. We have been saying since Soviet times that we have resolved the national issue in an exemplary manner, that we have not only a multinational, but also a multi-religious country and friendship of peoples.

In the 1970–1980s, everyone, from the CPSU Central Committee to university departments, believed that the national issue in the USSR was an issue of preserving small nations and developing national borderlands. This was, as we know, Lenin's plan at one time. But the Russian issue practically did not exist, since Russians make up the majority of the country's population. In fact, the most important thing in the national policy of the Russian Federation is the Russian issue. Why? One can fantasize whether Russia will exist as a state if national republics separate from it. (I believe that it should not, although we have witnessed how national republics broke away from the common Soviet space, and currently they are new independent states.) But I cannot imagine Russia in which there are no Russians. That is why I, as a State Duma Deputy, in 2020 made a proposal to include a relevant amendment to the Constitution. My proposal was that the preamble of the Constitution should state that the Russian people, in alliance with other peoples, created the multinational Russian Federation.

The Constitution of the Russian Federation states that in order to amend the first or second chapter of the Fundamental Law, Constitutional Conference must be convened.

This requirement does not apply to the preamble, however, at the insistence of the Chairman of the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation Valery Dmitrievich Zorkin, they also did not edit the preamble in 2020 and all proposals, including mine, were postponed. In addition, my colleagues – the leaders of the group that collected the amendments – said that the Russian people do not need to be “stuck out”. At that time I even wrote an article “Let the Russians into the Constitution”, because there was no mention of the Russian people at all. It was only said that Russian is the official language.

I asked whether all proposals for amendments are shown to the President of the Russian Federation or does he receive those that have already been selected? I was assured that he sees all the amendments. This calmed me down. As a result, as you know, the Russian people were “let” into the Constitution: in the article on the state language it is written that the Russian language is the language of the state-forming people which is a part of the multinational union of equal peoples of the Russian Federation. True, the phrase “Russian people” has not appeared in the Fundamental Law, but this is an editorial matter.

Why am I telling you about this? Now our people find themselves in difficult circumstances caused not only by the special military operation, which makes many feel uncertain about the future, but also by the aggravation of the migration problem. There are many people trying to speculate on this topic. They demand tightening of migration policy, up to a complete retreat from Russia's openness towards the former Soviet republics, primarily Central Asia, where the main flow of labor migrants comes from. Indeed, migration from Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan is associated with certain problems – drug trafficking, the use of migrants to commit terrorist acts, as happened in Crocus City Hall, etc. As a result, we are now at a crossroads. In my opinion, the scale of the problem is not yet fully understood at the “top”, but the “bottom” understands it quite well. If you follow the logic that opponents of any cooperation with other nations build, then this is fraught with a surge of xenophobia, and I am not sure that it will be limited only to citizens of other states and will not create problems within the Russian Federation itself as a multinational country. It is critical.

Unfortunately, instead of really solving the long-standing problem, we often take seemingly logical, but essentially odious initiatives. Such as the new law, recently adopted in the first reading, which establishes a two-year requirement for being married to a Russian citizen to obtain not even citizenship, but a residence permit. It would seem like a small thing, but the enthusiasm that was shown in the adoption of this law suggests that we are going in the wrong direction, using the wrong means, and calling for the wrong things.

**A. V. YAKOVENKO:** – I invite Alexander Mikhailovich Kramarenko, Director of the Institute of Current International Problems of the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, to speak.

**A. M. KRAMARENKO:** – Konstantin Fyodorovich, I understand your concern, but I must remind you that now many countries are at a crossroads, Russia in this sense is

no exception. Our issue of a titular nation and the coexistence of different nationalities within one country is also not unique. Thus, in Great Britain there is no Parliament of England, although there are parliaments in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. And the English (though mostly of mature age) try to emphasize that they are English, and not British. Yes, we have to deal with the Soviet legacy, but this requires careful, balanced approaches.

And on the topic stated in the title of the section, I think we must proceed from the fact that the global empire of the West really exists, and we live in this empire. At the same time, BRICS has its own space of freedom, the opportunity to cooperate and expand ties. In general, regionalization will occur in global politics. There are already macro-regions within which countries will continue to develop and find solutions to common problems with their “neighbors”. Because global structures, such as the United Nations with its Security Council, UNESCO and other institutions, are controlled by the West, which is able to neutralize the initiatives of other participants and ensure that these institutions do not function as they were intended in their time.

In this regard, I would hope that BRICS will be an important association for developing ties in the field of culture and education. As Maria Vladimirovna rightly said, over the past decade and a half, cooperation within the BRICS framework has shown great progress. Joint documents are being adopted, forums are being held – this year alone, about 200 events are scheduled, including 20 at the ministerial level. Of course, there is the issue of creating an information pool of countries included in the association.

Of course, we are experiencing certain opposition from the West. Around 2010, Francis Fukuyama wrote in the *New York Times* that Western political thought has not yet overcome the objection to the equality of human dignity. This primarily concerns attitudes towards other cultures and civilizations, towards other religions.

One more point. Russian thinkers who were expelled from Russia in 1922 (the well-known “philosophers’ ship”) – Nikolai Berdyaev, Fyodor Stepun, Semyon Frank, Yakov Bukshpan – in response to the first volume of Spengler’s famous work “*The Decline of Europe*”, wrote their own where they argued that nothing universal to mankind exists. Not only art, religion, morality have their own characteristics in each culture, but also such seemingly “objective” things as space, time, numbers and the like are different in each cultural era.

I think the establishment of equality of cultures and civilizations will take place within the framework of BRICS. This is a prototype of the future – not only political cooperation, but also cooperation that will come “from the roots”, taking into account the original identity of cultures. And this will be a guarantee that the cultural and civilizational diversity of the world will finally find its worthy reflection in the political structure of the world, in the new polycentric world order.

**A. V. YAKOVENKO:** – Alexander Mikhailovich, thank you. I must say that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is actively working on issues that Russia has to resolve as the BRICS chair, including the cultural component of cooperation. Therefore, we will definitely present the ideas expressed here in the form of a special concept note on the de-

velopment of cultural interaction between the BRICS countries. Among these ideas, not the least important is the issue of equality and respect for all cultures and civilizations.

Director of the Institute for African Studies Irina Olegovna Abramova, the floor is yours.

**I. O. ABRAMOVA:** – Dear colleagues, I want to speak not as the director of the Institute for African Studies, but as a Member of the Presidium of the Russian Academy of Sciences, because our meeting today is dedicated, among other things, to cooperation in the field of culture, science and education.

When someone sets a goal to destroy a country or society with minimal losses for themselves, the easiest way to do so is to start with education, health care and science. While we set ourselves great goals, the West is inventing more and more sophisticated tools. It would seem, what is the problem? We took the Western foundations of education and science development. In education it is the Bologna system, and in science it is the scientific citation system, the Hirsch Index. It seems like there is nothing to worry about, but in fact all this leads to the colonization of education and science, when professors and scientists work in the interests not of their country, but of the West. If you want to publish a work on a particular topic, you will one way or another send your research results to the journals that we have identified as the main ones, that is, American and Western European. Moreover, they themselves “inflate” the ratings, and we readily assess the results of our own science not by the level of solving the issues of developing our economy or human capital, but by how unknown experts in the West assess them.

You see, this is simply a refusal to protect one’s own national interests and goals. At the Russia-Africa Summit, the Minister of Science and Education of Mozambique said that Africans would like to set scientific goals for themselves, but they are not allowed to do this. And in Russia, let me remind you, the greatest achievements in recent years were in “closed” areas – the nuclear project and weapons development, because they did not fall under this system.

Unfortunately, the level of our science has fallen dramatically over the past 30 years, and largely because we are not working on what we need, but on what they need. Therefore, I believe that the most important task for the near future is to liberate the Russian education system and Russian science from colonial dependence.

I agree with Konstantin Fyodorovich: we must understand what to do within the country. But it is surprising that now, in the conditions of the Special Military Operation, the system of the Academy of Sciences has passed the so-called hundred-million grants, which determine the main tasks of our development. Despite the fact that a moratorium on publications in Scopus and Web of Science has been declared, a circular is coming from the Ministry of Education, which names publications in first and second quartile journals as the main criterion. How can it be?

This particular issue is an indicator of deep fundamental problems. What is the goal of science? What role does a person play in today’s society? It is on the platform of BRICS and BRICS+ that we need to develop our own criteria for the development of national education and science, because the future of society will be based primarily on

the achievements of science. Of course, if we want to develop.

Yesterday we talked about the financial system – about the need to gradually abandon the use of the dollar and create new financial instruments. Since 2018, we have regularly repeated that we need to return to clearing and other instruments, but all calculations still only use the dollar or euro. But all for naught – there is still no law.

**M. V. ZAKHAROVA:** – It is impossible to ensure that every step of a subordinate organization is monitored by a supervisory authority. Traffic rules exist so that drivers follow them themselves, control themselves, and only in case of violation of the rules do consequences occur.

A story happened in our region that illustrates what Irina Abramova is talking about. Scopus has supplanted our subordinate VAK journal “International Life” – it somehow “accidentally dropped out” from the list of journals publication in which gives points that measure the quality of printed work. And points mean, among other things, a salary. Of course, we restored justice, but, unfortunately, the points awarded for publication in our journal are not comparable with those of Scopus and other Western publications. There, it is a private system, and the level of influence and lobbying are completely different.

Why do we need laws regulating those activities? First of all, because we are talking about public funds here. Even if a university carries out some work privately, the basis for this work is still public, and the money that is paid for these publications ultimately does not come from private sources. It can be enshrined in the law, for example, that VAK publications are part of the scientific process.

**A. V. YAKOVENKO:** – Andrey Konstantinovich, your comment.

**A. K. ISAEV:** – The problem is that the basic laws related to the financing of certain areas are considered at the initiative of the government. The budget can only be adopted in the form in which it was submitted by the Government of the Russian Federation, and until 2014 the official course suggested integration into the Western scientific system. Since 2014, this course has been changing, but due to the inertia of the bureaucratic apparatus, changes are happening slowly.

**A. V. YAKOVENKO:** – We will fight with Hirsch. Floor is given to Valery Aleksandrovich Chereshev, Deputy President of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

**V. A. CHERESHNEV:** – BRICS was formed by five countries. There is a council on science and on young scientists within it. But recently the issue was discussed that it is very difficult for young scientists in BRICS to communicate, since it is a long way to fly to Brazil, China or India, and funds were allocated to solve the issue of communication, inter alia by our country.

We analyzed the number of publications in highly cited journals from 2019 to 2023. China published 5,273,707 articles, India – 1,482,682, the Russian Federation – 731,581, Brazil – about 700 thousand and South Africa – 198. That is, China, with 5 million inhabitants, published more than all other BRICS countries combined. Russia and China or-

ganized joint laboratories, centers, etc., and together they published 22,122 articles, which is 1% of China's scientific output and 3% of ours. That is, today joint cooperation is small and does not produce the significant results that it could.

We began to analyze why China is ahead in terms of the number of publications. There are innovation centers there, just like here, but there are more of them. The Chinese Academy of Sciences and the USSR Academy of Sciences were created on the same day, and the Chinese Academy completely copies the Soviet one – the same departments, regional orders, institutes. The only difference is that in the 1950s the Chinese removed the title of corresponding member, and in 1978 they separated social sciences into an independent Academy of Social Sciences. But our funding for science is 1.1% of GDP, and in China it is 2.4%. The United States and China are currently the world leaders by all indicators, and in terms of patents, China is twice ahead of the United States.

The Chinese are happy that they have such a developed Academy of Sciences, and they ask: why is your funding little? We explain that these are specifics of the current moment, etc. But we are glad that on February 8, at the celebrations of the 300th anniversary of the Academy of Sciences, the President said that the role of the Russian Academy of Sciences in the life of the country is fundamental and the Academy needs to be integrated into the process of adopting key government decisions. And when the law on the Russian Academy of Sciences reforming was adopted, the entire Academy was against it – there was an understanding that the law that could stop the science development was wrong. It's good that there is an example from China – our system works great there, bringing dividends, real results and authority, and we have also begun to improve. Dmitry Likhachov was right saying that the past is the design of the future.

**A. CROOKE:** – It has been mentioned today that Russia feels the threat of the West, and St. Petersburg which remembers the siege, seems to be experiencing a second – global – siege again. I live in the West, but I don't speak in the name of the whole West, and many of us do not consider themselves related to these false Western ideas. People living in Europe and America are losing sight of the civil war and revolution that are currently unfolding in Western countries. Further on this all will continue to escalate, and it is still unknown who will become president of the United States, what will happen next, what this will mean for the country.

When we talk about revolution and counter-revolution, we miss the changing dynamics of the future. The West lost in Ukraine, this is the loss of its reputation and goodwill. The same applies to NATO, which is losing in the Middle East. This is already a huge mistake. The way China has now advanced indicates that the West is losing ground in trade wars, and reveals a deep economic crisis, a national debt crisis in both the United States and Western countries. This will change Europe and America. Which way, we don't know yet, because those who hate Russia hold the commanding heights. It's not allowed to be mentioned in the mass media, but you have to take it into account – when you talk about the collective West, you're talking about those who hate Russia because it challenges

their values. A civil war is coming or is already underway in the West, and it is still difficult to predict who will win, what will happen to America and the countries of Western Europe. Now the image of the enemy has taken root in the minds of the collective West – this is Russia, and in Russia this is the collective West. But other times are coming.

**A. V. YAKOVENKO:** – I agree, these are completely uncertain processes, and we don't know much, but we have already seen the failures of the United States in Afghanistan, Libya, and other places, their losses. I hope that NATO will lose completely, it is a very dangerous period in Ukraine now. But we do not oppose BRICS to the collective West, but try to create an alternative, because we are looking to the future. Most international institutions and organizations are now almost completely controlled by the "Global West". And at the latest General Assembly vote on Ukraine, the majority of countries supported the resolution which puts us in a very bad position.

As for revolutions, those countries and organizations that ignore sanctions assist their occurrence.

**S. ATLAGIĆ:** – I will also talk about values. Many of my students don't even know what it is. Some believe that this is something that is desirable within a society, and perhaps contributes to the development of that society. This means that what is valuable to you may not be valuable to me. But there are universal, epochal, historical values, such as freedom, justice, well-being, etc. There is no other people at the end of the 20th century who doubted some of these values as much as the Serbs did in the 1990s. It all started not in 1999, when Serbia was bombed, but in 1991–1992, when the Croats and Slovaks, with the help of Germany, defeated Yugoslavia.

Russia, of course, must turn to itself, achieve economic and technological success, because this changes people's perception of it. But, on the other hand, it must be politically and economically present in the world. I have devoted my entire professional life to the study of propaganda and I tell my students that every person should become a propagandist for their culture. But I can't shake the impression that Russia doesn't promote its culture well enough. I see this in Serbia; despite the fact that the majority of our people adore Russia, more than 80 % of Serbs support what Russia is doing at the international level, and the pro-Western is a minority. In our public discourse, in conversations, BRICS is mentioned and written about, but, in my opinion, if Russia were not part of this association, it would not mean anything to the Serbs. It's just that Russia means BRICS, and Russia means justice and freedom. And Russia is a value for us.

In a few days, the UN will consider an EU resolution accusing the Serbs of genocide in Srebrenica. And the Serbs have now turned to Russia again, which means Russia is a value for them. But it seems to me that Russia is not a value for many Russians. I often come to Russia, give lectures at universities, and I cannot come to terms with the fact that Russian or Russian-speaking students do not realize what a unique civilization and culture they belong to. And the first step that needs to be taken is the promotion of Russian culture within Russia itself.

**D. A. DEGTEREV:** – The hegemony of the West rests on structural power – the relationship of "control and influence" associated with the regulation of resources and the distribution of zones of influence, that is, it creates the rules by which everyone plays. This is the NATO security mechanism, IMF finance and loans, and in production it is the OECD and control over the creation and dissemination of knowledge. Last February, the US Joint Chiefs of Staff adopted the Joint Concept for Competing, a document on US strategy, in particular the need for a global approach to competition. In it, the space of international competition is formed by military forces, the formation or manipulation of the international agenda, and cognitive mental warfare, that is, influence through ideology, education, information, and innovation.

But the main thing, of course, is the formation of meanings and values. There are ratings of academic publishing houses, for example, the Sense Ranking of Academic Publishers, where the publishing houses of Cambridge, Oxford, etc. are among the first. That is, these are those who form, for example, the concept of democracy. And second-tier publishers consider democracy in Asia, Africa, etc. Naturally, there are no Russian publications in this hierarchy. The question here is precisely about the formation of meanings. Even the term "contemplative regional studies" is used when we simply study other regions without any applied aspect, since theory structures consciousness.

But not all theories are equally useful. Let's say there is a theory of internal colonization and, accordingly, internal decolonization, which justifies the decolonization of Russia. Let's say a conference is being held in the West, and if you are followers of this theory, then when applying for participation in the conference, in your affiliation you indicate not Russia, but Ichkeria, Cherkessia, etc. And in this regard, we learn a lot even from Africans, because they have richer experience in dependent development and have created conditionally safe theories that we can partially borrow.

Western countries dominate not only due to objective preconditions – we are now leaders in many areas, but due to the configuration of the network, all contacts go through Western structures, centers, bibliometric systems, through their publishing houses and international conferences. BRICS is an attempt to somehow change this system, form new centers and reconfigure the network.

There is a lot beyond Western social theories. At one time we conducted basic Soviet research on neocolonialism. By now, the most serious anti-colonial discourse was written in the Soviet Union, and it is 80% topical.

Of course, very little is published in Russian. We need to cooperate in this regard. This is an issue of the capacity of BRICS publishing houses and the mutual recognition of our bibliometric entry systems, that is, the process is already underway, but it goes slowly. For example, the Chinese have begun to include our journals in their ratings. Many countries do not have their own ratings and rely on Scopus and Web of Science.

**V. V. NAUMKIN:** – Indeed, we have systemic problems in the orientation of the state and public policy. Everything goes heavily and slowly, different interest groups collide. This is reality, and we are fighting against it both in our parliament and in society. And we take some positions one way or another.

I am against dedollarization, I am an ardent supporter of dollarization. We have it, and the deputies present here do a lot to that end, for example Irina Olegovna. But there is an objective reality. And the other side of the issue is the extreme difficulty of creating a single currency for any association. No one succeeds in it. There is a key trend – the strengthening of nation states; this is a common trend in the world. And you don't need to get carried away by some misleading ideas.

By the way, we are not doing enough to promote the Russian language and Russian culture. For example, in some even friendly country there is an organization that is engaged in the propagation of the Russian language, but look – there is a lock hanging on the door there all the time. And we need financial resources, which the state lacks, especially now. There are priorities that overshadow cultural integration and cultural imperatives.

But we must care about the attractiveness of what we do. And it's not just that our Russian journal has the same rating as some leading American one. It also has to do with financial resources, the level of scientific research, language issues, the propagation of the Russian language and Russian culture, which is loved and respected. And we see this happening. However, against this background, some countries fall out of our sight. Let's say Serbia is a nation that is friendly to us, but there is Bosnia and Herzegovina nearby, which, in my opinion, everyone has forgotten about. And we, on the contrary, are working on this, although we are the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences. This year alone we had several trips there, and joint programs. We have done a lot in terms of applied science, the ideas and proposals that we send, *inter alia* to your department. But currently this must be difficult in this mass of states to pay attention to each of them. Right sense of priorities in foreign policy and cultural cooperation is required. With regard to the unpleasant limitations associated with the system of priorities and ratings, something is being done, *inter alia* by the Academy of Sciences. But the Academy made a mistake by actually transferring the rights to disseminate the achievements of Russian science to the American publishing structure Pleiades Publishing. For now, they are mainly in the hands of our American partners, and it is not possible to change this immediately.

**A. V. YAKOVENKO:** – The floor is given to Professor Olivier Roqueplo.

**O. ROQUEPLO:** – I would like to comment on what my colleagues have said. Professor D. A. Degterev expressed the opinion that is consonant with mine, namely that every time we talk about something global, we note the strength of the Anglo-Saxon world. Since the 18th century, thanks to it, a global world began to be created, which affects all nations. BRICS should become the next pattern and break the monopoly of the Anglo-Saxon world on international communication.

Today I speak to you in English, but in the future, I hope this need will no longer arise. I am convinced that real exchange between cultures should be conducted in the native language. BRICS should use Russian, Chinese, Hindi, Portuguese, African national languages instead of English.

English as an international language of communication is associated with globalist culture. And this is the enemy

of culture and civilization. Today, the globalist culture is destroying existing cultures in Europe. The generations that were born after me are completely illiterate and do not understand the world they live in.

However, there is a beacon of hope – BRICS. This organization continues to follow the idea of anti-colonialism, which originated in the Soviet Union and existed throughout the world through the ideology of communism, trade unions and labor organizations. In this case, we are talking not so much about ideology, but about the general humanistic anti-colonial movement, including cultural and scientific potential.

We must build a bridge between civilizations that will help people to understand each other better. India, China, South Africa, Brazil and the new BRICS+ members (Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Ethiopia) all once faced the threat of colonialism. Russia was in the same situation – under the threat of colonialism, which existed for a long time.

I believe that science, art, culture, education are associated with the anti-colonial movement, so they need to be supported. There must be resources, centers for BRICS cultural activities. We are fighting for the cultural existence of all peoples and civilizations. In my opinion, BRICS can become a humanistic organization or it can cease to exist.

**A. V. YAKOVENKO:** – This union at least offers equal rights and opportunities. From this point of view, BRICS is a humanistic organization where there is no hint of dictatorship: at the meetings of the participating countries, no one advances their agenda, sacrificing the interests of others. When Russia was part of the G8, it was a G7 group against one country. If we look at BRICS today, we will see that there is no pressure there, no attempts to block initiatives, but there is a desire to find a common denominator in the work. The BRICS countries have many things in common. As for the UN, here we see resistance from the West, which controls this organization. That's why now we are halfway there. There is a lot of work ahead – it is necessary to formulate a humanistic agenda that will suit all countries.

The floor is given to Jafar Okray from Turkey.

**J. OKRAY:** – First of all, I would like to thank the organizers of the Likhachov Conference for the opportunity to take part in the forum. I represent the independent foundation for strategic and social research Marmara Group, which was created 37 years ago by a group of businessmen, scientists, politicians with the goal of establishing a dialogue and communication, first in the Balkan region, and now in a wider area (we have friends in Austria, China and etc.). Our message is that peace at home means peace around the world.

Today, representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation M. V. Zakharova has expressed the idea of cultural genocide that is currently taking place. Yesterday evening we visited the theater where we watched a wonderful ballet. 99% of the people in the hall were Russians. It reminded me of the times of the Soviet Union. The same thing is happening nowadays. I would like cultural events (plays, ballets, etc.) to take place all over the world.

I represent Turkey, which will find it difficult to join BRICS in the short term. Turkey is a NATO member and is quite close to the European Union. But I am inspired by

what BRICS, which has clear goals, is doing. For example, the issue of money transfers needs to be resolved. It is now difficult for Turkish businesses to do business with Russian companies due to the payment systems blocking; the same is for many BRICS countries. That's why a solution to this problem should be found, and everyone will benefit from it.

BRICS should be focused on the future and include as many African countries as possible, because Africa is the future. Today is the time for the BRICS countries, Turkey, and African states. The interaction should be beneficial both for us and for Africa.

**A. V. YAKOVENKO:** – I ask the Deputy Minister of Information of the Republic of Belarus Igor Ivanovich Buzovsky to speak.

**I. I. BUZOVSKY:** – I would like to say a few words about the challenges and prospects for the formation of a new global platform for cultural cooperation, BRICS. This refers primarily to geopolitical space. This also includes the approaches of individual states. But both a state, and the BRICS union, are not just a geopolitical space.

BRICS as an association will carry out a real mission when it gains an understanding of its member countries' mission which represents a certain historical cultural platform that consolidates them all. We must understand that the future is not just economics, but it's first of all geopolitics, philosophy, sociology, meanings, and only then economics. History confirms that as soon as we lose meaning, we lose understanding of the development of economic strategies, including theoretical ones.

Who will formulate the semantic component that we have consolidated today — the prospects for forming a platform for cultural cooperation manifested in culture, education, and art? Elites. V. V. Putin said that today it is necessary to rethink the concept of "elite", due to the fact that it has lost the meaning it should have. Elitism is not wealth, not success in the version in which liberal philosophy thinks of it, but trends that we must develop and mechanisms for identifying or cultivating in society the best in education, science, and culture. In my opinion, this is the key task today. For this reason, public organizations, political parties, and the cultural sphere are focused on promoting the best, those who make up the elite heritage – the intelligentsia. Philosophers and intellectuals are often targets for opposing forces, and to this day we consider them almost marginal.

At the present stage, the theoretical component should be one of the determining factors in the development strategy of society, including the BRICS.

I will give one indicator to outline how Belarus is oriented towards the Russian Federation, civilization, people who are changing the global space and whom we want to follow. Creating strategies is a task that is also transmitted through books and publishing houses. The latter work today with the sphere that shapes meanings and the elite, so it should be concentrated in the hands of people who govern or plan to govern the state. A study conducted in Belarus among reading people by the Institute of Sociology of the National Academy of Sciences revealed that nowadays about 80% of all literature in Belarus is from Russia (and about 85% read paper books).

I perceive this indicator as a problem. Because concepts and meanings are transmitted through literature from

the Russian Federation, and not always those that we consider priority. Today, this colossal problem underscores the need to work with the elites, the people who not only write, but also read books.

As you know, a pessimist is a well-informed optimist. Judging by what is happening and the emerging trends, now we have the hardest times, but it will not be easier later on. Therefore, we can say: "Blessed be the obstacles, through them we grow". This tempers us, as today's time has shown. We are becoming stronger, healthy forces are being consolidated.

If we talk about the future, here I want to argue a little with D. S. Likhachov. The future is determined, but we are going towards it in different ways. We are from different countries, we have different philosophical and cultural messages, and within BRICS we will move together on different paths. This future, I am sure, will be bright, because we are moving towards God, the light, which is what everyone gathered here sincerely strives for today.

**A. V. YAKOVENKO:** – Our friend from Tajikistan Erkinxon Rakhmatullozoda, the floor is yours.

**E. RAKHMATULLOZODA:** – This is my first time participating in the Likhachov Conference and I consider it my duty to express sincere gratitude to our colleagues from the University of the Humanities and Social Sciences and A. S. Zapesotsky for creating excellent conditions, an atmosphere of benevolence, justice, equality and mutual respect, which, by a happy coincidence, turned out to be the main principles of the BRICS work.

The invitation to the Conference stated that the main topic of the forum was BRICS as a new platform for dialogue among civilizations. Presenting the positions of the countries that have joined the BRICS, especially recently, is of interest to our audience. Since I know a little less well how the political elite of the BRICS countries approaches the issue of membership in this organization, I decided to make a report on Iran's position on this issue.

This was facilitated by two circumstances. In January 2024, I was in Iran to establish partnerships between the Tajik state, our National University and relevant Iranian research institutions. Iranian colleagues proposed including the issue of jointly promoting the dialogue of civilizations on the agenda. I then said that this issue has not been discussed since the time when this initiative was put forward in the 1990s by the country's President Seyed Mohammad Khatami. Even articles by colleagues from MGIMO appeared about why the issue of promoting the dialogue of civilizations is not moving forward. I said that I would think about it, and in the evening I received an invitation to the Likhachov Conference, the topic of which was consonant with the dialogue of civilizations. The next day I replied to my Iranian colleagues: "Let's put this issue on the agenda."

Iran and Tajikistan have a lot in common – language, literature, history, etc. Therefore, I decided to present some aspects of Iran's position on the issue of membership in BRICS. Iran is a country with a rich culture, a unique geopolitical position, which has established contacts and ties with almost all the BRICS countries, and with some of them for hundreds of years and millennia. Therefore, the issue of membership in BRICS was on their agenda and was a log-



ical step on Iran's part. Especially since for many years, against the backdrop of pressure from comprehensive sanctions from Western countries, Iran has been increasingly actively looking for ways to cooperate with other states.

BRICS represents an attractive alternative to traditional Western partners for Iran. In this regard, the participation of this country in the work of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, where the BRICS countries play a leading role, has acquired particular significance. In such a situation, Iran's entry into BRICS was a predictable and logical step, which happened in January 2024.

I express the opinion of Iran's political science community, the country's intellectual elite. Many people see Iran as predominantly a theocratic state with little political pluralism. But, oddly enough, it is out there. There are pro-government, conservative, reformist forces operating in Iran – there are ongoing discussions between them, including on the issue of membership in BRICS. Iranian analysts point out that everything is not quite like that – it is much more complicated than we imagine.

**A. V. YAKOVENKO:** – On this note, I give the floor to Professor Vladimir Aleksandrovich Shamakhov.

**V. A. SHAMAKHOV:** – The BRICS global platform is associated with four main goals-terms: alternative, equality, traditionalism and sovereignty. Where sovereignty, as colleagues have already said, is not so much economic as it is semantic and value-based. Using the example of the five BRICS countries that created this organization, we see that they all followed the path of semantic sovereignty. And only after that did they acquire serious economic sovereignty, individually for each and for the five as a whole. Seeing this, other countries began to join BRICS.

Compared to the BRICS countries, there is no value sovereignty in the G7: the countries included in the G7 are dependent. Turkey is in a difficult position in this regard, as J. Okray has said today. It strives for value sovereignty, but cannot do this within NATO. Therefore, Turkey will have to choose.

Economic sovereignty is based primarily on semantic, and then on financial sovereignty. For a long time it was supposed that the economy is shaped primarily by finance. But now we clearly see that it is formed by meanings, and finance becomes a tool of development.

Dmitry Ivanovich Mendeleev formulated the concept of "moral economics". For many it sounds unusual, but in fact it is absolutely correct. Today's reality confirms this. Economics must be, above all, moral.

Speaking about the great Russian culture, St. Petersburg, ballet, let's turn to the history of their formation. The culture that we are proud of was developed by merchants who later became factory owners: they opened museums, theaters, etc. Therefore, the thesis "If there are factories, there will be culture", which Mikhail Viktorovich has voiced today, seems correct and fair to me.

BRICS today is not a state, not politics, not power, but first of all people, different communities, culture, history, traditions, etc. The diversity of cultures is important, but we also need to think about the fact that this community is largely determined by language, as our colleague Roqueplo has said. A common language is more important than a common currency.

Academician V. V. Naumkin proposed to join forces, including in this company. It seems to me that Alexander Sergeyevich, together with his team, colleagues, friends, partners, is quite ready for the Likhachov Conference to be held not just once a year, but to work on an ongoing basis. Why don't we create a club like Valdai or Izborsk ones? I propose to organize the Likhachov or Neva Club and ask you to consider this proposal.

**A. V. YAKOVENKO:** – The idea is interesting, especially since there are modern technical means that allow for an exchange of opinions. But the most important thing is the development of points of view and the projection of meanings.

**M. V. SHMAKOV:** – The Federation of Independent Trade Unions has a Fund of 100th Anniversary of the Trade Union Movement in Russia. We will help Alexander Sergeyevich if such a decision is made.

**A. V. YAKOVENKO:** – I give the floor to Sergey Alekseevich Tsyplyaev, Member of the Council for Foreign and Defense Policy.

**S. A. TSYPLYAEV:** – Most often, we consider the following picture as a model of what is happening in the world: there is a state that is consolidated from the point of view of culture, politically, and to a large extent ethnically. There is a process of interaction, competition, and search for a common basis between states. However, the real picture is much more complex. We are entering a post-Huntingtonian world. There are no separate civilizations that conflict on the borders, but they are intermingled at tremendous speed, since representatives of all kinds of cultures and nationalities appear in each country.

The question arises: how to organize life and find a cultural basis during the great intermingling of peoples? Several positions are possible here. We cannot go to the extreme and say: "Let's create mono-ethnic, mono-religious, mono-ideological countries." The other extreme suggesting opening of all the gates is also wrong, since the speed of a human adaptation to new realities is related to the speed of generational change. As a recipe, apparently, illiberal ones will also be proposed, for example, restriction of migration (here we need to discuss the visa regime, the selection of the most interesting and suitable ones, etc.).

It is necessary to do everything within the country in order to exclude the actualization of what divides us, and to look for what unites us from the point of view of the cultural foundation – common in different religions, ethnic groups and traditions.

The main task is to create a powerful culture that can become a "solvent" for those who fall into it. We need to invest in education and training of children. But the intermingling process cannot be stopped – this is the dominant feature of future decades and centuries.

The right set of methods and tools should be used. For example, one of the important points is maintaining the secular nature of the state. I consider the introduction of religious education in schools to be strategically short-sighted, since instilling the concept of division from childhood largely leads to a split of the country into warring factions that compete and do not mutually accept each other's posi-

tions. The key challenge is how to create a powerful culture that will absorb and attract the best.

In the course of our discussion, we sometimes act from a position of fear in relation to the outside world, making attempts to close ourselves off from it. This is the position of the weak, because if we believe that we have something to present to the world, then we should not be afraid of openness and communication with other cultures.

We want to follow the example of China, but we do exactly the opposite. The first testament of Deng Xiaoping (1977) states: no country in the world, regardless of its political structure, is able to carry out modernization if it adheres to a closed-door policy. And China began to “open the doors” step by step. It is clear that thoughtless acceptance of absolutely everything is inappropriate, but mechanical isolation on the principle of “let’s close ourselves down” will also lead to no good. For example, the Chinese successfully apply the Bologna education system, although they did not formally introduce it. Will we be able to cooperate with China in the field of higher education if we build a sovereign system that has nothing in common with China’s one?

The position of representatives of the Russian Academy of Sciences which is, let me remind you, an imported structure, is somewhat surprising. At one time, Peter I not only adopted the organizational structure, but also brought the first academicians from the West. Today, representatives of the Academy advocate the creation of our own, sovereign science. I am a physicist by training and studied mathematical methods of quantum field theory. We know how our genetics was destroyed several decades ago. They also wanted to destroy quantum physics, but it turned out that the atomic project would be impossible without it. By the way, in this example you can see how important international cooperation is in science. I would advise everyone to visit the Museum of the Foreign Intelligence Service – it clearly shows the contribution our intelligence made to the implementation of the atomic project. This was also an exchange of information with the West, although through such a “peculiar” channel.

There are also many questions regarding the organization of scientific activities. I worked in the structure of the Academy of Sciences, namely in Steklov Mathematical Institute. So, the researchers there, doctors of sciences, often did not understand what the neighboring laboratory was working on. How, in this case, can ministry officers assess the work of scientists?

In my opinion, the funds allocated for the development of science should be at the disposal of the Academy of Sciences. Nobody knows how to optimally manage them except for the scientists themselves. But this requires self-organization of scientists, and this is one of the functions of the Academy. Of course, financial control by the government is necessary, but now, since officials have to assess what they cannot understand, they are starting to come up with artificial methods of assessment. Scientometric research was not carried out at our institute, but everyone knew who was worth what. And our journals “Theoretical and Mathematical Physics”, “Journal of Experimental and Theoretical Physics” were translated into English and published in America (we then received checks).

A short comment on the speech of Konstantin Fyodorovich Zatulin. I objected to introducing any amendments to the preamble of the Constitution, including enshrining

the special role of the Russian people. In my opinion, this is a sign of weakness, as if we are afraid of something in our own country, where we are 80 %. What should the rest of the nations say in this case? Are they also state-forming? And if not, then what? State-destroying? Every time representatives of the Russian national movement say that it is necessary to draw the borders of the Russian land, I have a question: “Do you understand that this means dividing Russia into Russian and non-Russian? Are you sure that the non-Russian part will not demand sovereignty?”

Any idea that works to divide a single political nation into diversity can be explosive. The Russian people have nothing to be afraid of. We have a great history and a great culture, so we need not be afraid of foreign influences. No one will change us if we don’t want it ourselves.

**A. V. YAKOVENKO:** – It’s hard for me to agree that Russia is closing itself down and isolating itself. For example, RT and many other Russian media outlets were closed in Western countries on their initiative. Our journalists are not allowed to attend press conferences in the Élysée Palace, for example, while Western media correspondents continue to work in Russia; no new restrictions have been introduced against them. It is not we who are self-isolating, but it is they who are isolating us. Some things are being done on a bilateral basis.

What is happening in the cultural sphere? For example, our exhibition activities were traditionally focused on Europe; we paid unacceptably little attention to other countries. And how did it end? In Europe they began to close our exhibitions and seize our funds. We all remember how France refused to return our cultural values, how paintings were renamed in Great Britain, and much more.

Europe is trying to reduce contacts with Russia to a minimum. They stopped inviting us to conferences; in fact, all exchanges in the field of book publishing were closed.

Naturally, we try to find new opportunities and new markets in other countries. But such issues cannot be resolved in one day or even in a year – a major exhibition at the museum takes several years to prepare. We are trying to establish interaction with different countries, but the West began to threaten them with new sanctions – not only for economic cooperation, but also for cultural one.

Many of the foreign participants of the Likhachov Conference came, as they say, at their own peril and risk, because currently visiting Russia is often dangerous. Notably, threats arise not here, but in their home countries. We all know the former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Austria, Mrs. Kneissl. I have great respect for this smartest woman, but in her homeland she was literally persecuted, cancelled just like Russian culture.

Contacts with Germany and France virtually ceased. The dialogue between the elites was interrupted, and we are now in a transition period when we need to build relationships with other countries, at least with those that are ready to accept us. This will continue until the West changes its position, and this will only happen when new political leaders and new parties come to power there. Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin directly says that we are open to interaction.

So there is no self-isolation. Another thing is that we are trying to protect our intellectual field from Western influence, which, in principle, works to weaken the country. But let’s recall who was the first to introduce the law on

foreign agents. This was in the 1930s in the USA, but now the West is "incriminating" us with a well-known law that was originally an American invention. What is happening now with the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations? The ambassadors of Western European countries here refused to come to a meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation – is this the new norm? Thus, the entire system of diplomatic contacts may fall apart. And in the UK, when the Skripal incident occurred, we wrote more than a hundred notes that remained unanswered. Such a violation of international obligations and simply political rudeness have never happened throughout the history. Rules and foundations are breaking. The West talks about a world based on rules, but today these rules are interpreted one way and tomorrow another.

I repeat, no one in Russia advocates isolation; we are still open to cooperation. It's just that the period of transformation will take a certain amount of time necessary to build new connections. I think that in a few years we will be able to switch to other forms of cooperation. In this sense, BRICS is a very good form of interaction, because the basis of this association is equality.

In fact, if it had not been for what happened now in Ukraine, then, probably, there would not have been a division of the world into a majority and a minority. Now any business is forced to take into account political pressure, threats of sanctions, etc. And that is why the idea of de-dollarization and the creation of a new international financial system based on the policies of the BRICS countries arose. Russia will not be able to implement this project on its own, but it is becoming an ambassador of the aspirations of many countries around the world. For example, states in the Middle East fear that, just as the gold exchange standard was abolished in 1971 under the Bretton Woods system, the circulation of cash dollars may also be abolished, because the US will never be able to pay off a debt of 34 trillion at current rates.

So Russia today is the most discriminated country in the world, both economically and culturally. But God forbid that we isolate ourselves, and I don't see any signs of self-isolation. Moreover, we are now even more open than before.

**K. F. ZATULIN:** – Indeed, the West is trying to isolate Russia, but we already hear that Russia should isolate itself from the rest of the world. Of course, this is not the policy of the country's leadership, but such ideas are present in the social process.

But I would like to answer Sergey Alekseevich Tsypliyev. I explained in detail what my proposal was and what the result was. In my amendment I did not use the term "state-forming", but this was the wording that was adopted. You, Sergey Alekseevich, are absolutely right when you say that we need to look for the optimum. In my opinion, the optimum is that, on the one hand, we must respect the interests of the state-forming people, on the other hand, we must understand that this does not mean the right to xenophobia.

You say: "We, the Russian people, should not be afraid of anything." However, we are afraid, although we shouldn't be. And if not, then what is migrantophobia? If we follow the path that you propose, we will lose the ability to be a unifier and a "solvent". We lost territory

and people due to the collapse of the USSR, and we will not attract them back if we constantly demonstrate a desire to isolate ourselves. How can you simultaneously create Eurasian unions and say: "We must immediately build a fence on the border?"

The agency responsible for migration policy made a mistake by opening the gates to everyone without proper control. For example, I believe that when citizens of Tajikistan become citizens of Russia, this does not meet the national interests of Tajikistan. But since 2007, we have been implementing a state program to promote the voluntary resettlement of compatriots, and within the framework of this program, citizens of Tajikistan were given the green light. The governor of the Kaluga region terminated this program in the territory he is responsible for. Why? Because it turned out that 63% of those receiving citizenship in the Kaluga region are citizens of Tajikistan. Of course, this is too much – what do they currently have in common with compatriots? However, it would be overkill too to create such harsh conditions for them that they would stop coming to us.

**M. V. ZAKHAROVA:** – Sergey Alekseevich, I have a question for you. Alexander Vladimirovich gave some examples of Russia's isolation from the West, and I could give many more of them – as a person whose visas were closed, accreditation was cancelled, and who now is not even allowed to fly over some countries. Perhaps I misunderstood you in some way?

**A. TSYPLIYAEV:** – Everything that was said by Alexander Vladimirovich is absolutely true, can't argue with that. The point is that we are prone to extremes. Either there is absolute openness – we take everything without reasoning, or on the contrary: "This is offered by the West, which means we don't need it." I call for a reasonable and effective approach. Let's assess ideas and technologies regardless of the source: is it beneficial to us, does it meet our national interests, will it work for us? And not to proceed from the fact that "what is proposed by the West is bad."

**A. V. YAKOVENKO:** – Mr. Okoli, you have the floor.

**M. OKOLI:** – First of all, I would like to thank the organizers of this wonderful forum for the invitation. I am glad to contribute to the work of the Likhachov Conference. In today's world, there is nothing more difficult, but at the same time more joyful, than openly and sincerely exchanging opinions, collaborating and working together to achieve a better life for all humanity. Everywhere and at all times this is the main goal of world politics and international interaction. Truth always triumphs sooner or later. There are very kind people living in Russia who believe in the power of persuasion, in the progress of humanism, in equal rights for everyone. Presently, the path to these worthy goals is especially difficult.

The spiritual values of the Russian people, which today unite them more than ever, are very clear to us, and we share them. Russians can rightfully be proud of their country and the contribution they make to the progress of world civilization and culture.

However, in many African countries a real information war is being waged against Russia. I had the opportunity to

participate in the organization of several BRICS conferences in Nigeria, and they had a powerful resonance. Among the participants there were politicians and scientists, university professors from different countries, including Russia, many took part online. All mass media in Nigeria responded vividly to this event. They wrote about it in newspapers, showed it on television – everything in a positive way.

I have come to the conclusion that often a negative opinion about a particular country is formed simply due to insufficient or distorted information. Even among scientists, many do not understand the essence of what is happening in Russia, because they receive information mostly from Western sources. Something needs to be done about this.

**A. V. YAKOVENKO:** – It's not that simple.

**M. OKOLI:** – When someone wants to force you to believe a lie, this lie is repeated many times. The first reaction of the public is: “this is a lie”, but the “information” is reported on television, heard in interviews, and everyone thinks: “Someone paid these people well to say this.” Well, I must say that I organized and held the BRICS conference at my own expense.

And I would also like to say about the policy pursued by Russia in Africa. We recall with nostalgia the times when the Soviet Union took an active part in the development of the economy and humanitarian sphere of African countries. But Russia is not the Soviet Union; now there is private ownership of the means of production. When an enterprise receives an order from the state, it, as in all other cases, first of all thinks about how much profit it will receive. But in Africa, not everyone understands the difference between the USSR and modern Russia, so it is necessary to conduct explanatory work.

However, Russia has many advantages. For example, one export commodity that is in short supply in Africa and hinders development is electricity. In Russia, as Mikhail Viktorovich said, there is a unique nuclear reactor. If its output is high enough, then why not use it as an export item? I am sure that we could find many more such areas where we can organize successful mutually beneficial cooperation.

**A. V. YAKOVENKO:** – I think it would be very good if as many journalists as possible came from Nigeria to Russia so that they would tell Africans and the whole world the truth about what they see here. We will be very happy to host them.

And now the floor is given to Mr. Bachelet.

**J.-L. BACHELET:** – Since I am a musician, writer and playwright, I am interested in individual destinies, and the world of general ideas is alien to me. Therefore, when I see so many great specialists who know how to formulate their thoughts in terms of abstract concepts, it delights me. And, of course, I try to learn from you.

In France there is a legend about the famous philosopher Gustave Le Bon. When asked by a journalist what ideals he had fought for during the First World War, Le Bon allegedly replied: “What ideals? I joined the partisans when I saw German soldiers cutting roses in my garden.” That is, his own, very specific interests were infringed. Therefore, when I listen to discussions about the prospects of

BRICS, it scares me a little because behind this abbreviation I see something abstract. This is like the notorious American dream, of which, as we know, several million people have become victims. And therefore I am grateful to Mr. Shamakhov for reminding: the goal of BRICS should not be power, but the well-being of people. In my opinion, this is the most important thing – to remember that behind any political decisions and structures there are individual destinies.

When I was a schoolboy, there were many foreigners in our class from Spain, Greece, Argentina, Central African countries, etc. Therefore, since childhood, I have had an idea of what a dialogue of cultures is, and I actively participate in it to the best of my ability. And I can say for sure: no matter how cooperation between the BRICS countries develops, it is necessary to think about the fate of people and undertake all actions with an open heart.

**A. V. YAKOVENKO:** – The next speaker is the writer, winner of the literary prize “For Peace and Tolerance” Mr. Morad.

**M. AL-KHATTAB AL-IDRISSI:** – I listened with great interest to all the speeches, but especially those of Ms. Zakharova and Mr. Zatulín. I must say that I would be very happy if France joined BRICS. The West is very attentive to the development of cooperation among the BRICS countries, and I would like to present to your attention the Western view of this situation. We view BRICS as a geopolitical and economic coalition, but it still remains an informal club without a general secretariat. In an attempt to coordinate the policies and actions of all participants, decisions are made by consensus, but, in our opinion, collective influence should be strengthened.

The BRICS model itself looks like an alternative to the Western liberal model, so I hope that BRICS will find answers to many questions that the West cannot answer. The directions of BRICS development are determined by two groups of countries: Russia, China and Iran, on the one hand, India, Brazil, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia, on the other. The second group retains common strategic interests with the West. The point of convergence is the reformatting or re-creation of international organizations such as the UN and the WTO. But there are still differences in economic interaction strategies, and the economic development of countries varies greatly.

We are very grateful to Russia for the Russia-Africa Economic Forum held in St. Petersburg in July 2023. As a result, a large number of agreements and contracts were signed in various areas – security, infrastructure development, transport, energy. However, we have to admit that, unfortunately, the dynamics of economic interaction have become more restrained due to the slowing economic development of China and South Africa.

I would like to remind you that the Francophone world is made up of just over 370 million people, of which 160 million are the African part: 47% of the Francophone population in the world are Africans.

And most importantly, the world is changing. Major political leaders decide to change the world monetary system.

Yuri Ushakov, diplomatic adviser to Vladimir Putin, said on March 5 this year that BRICS is working to create an independent payment system that is built on digital

currencies and blockchain. BRICS wants to create a single digital currency for the states of the association, which will provide it with a significant increase in trade exchanges and economic autonomy. This will also allow BRICS to avoid US sanctions that are based on the extraterritoriality of the US law. However, this will be very difficult, since there are many contradictions of different levels between the BRICS countries. But what is particularly important is whether independent businesses and local private actors within BRICS itself can be confident that digital payments will work. Today, the world of finance is waiting for the report that Russia will present to BRICS in October, when it will chair the association. And it promised to propose measures aimed at improving the system. A month ago, the Americans also declared a digital war and released a central bank digital currency (CBDC), which is compatible with the SWIFT payment system. The future of international finance is now in Russia's hands, as a digital war has been declared between the US and BRICS.

**A. V. YAKOVENKO:** – There will be no war. We will create an alternative, fair financial system that will stand above any sanctions regimes and give all countries equal opportunities to trade. Because now, unfortunately, the United States, with the help of the financial system, is holding back the development of countries, not only Russia, but also China and others. This is a noose that needs to be gotten rid of.

The floor is given to journalist Dmitry Olegovich Babich.

**D. O. BABICH:** – The terrifying words “war”, “genocide” etc. may seem to be a hyperbole to many. Recently, the Polish newspaper *Rzeczpospolita* published a study entitled “Why are Russian planes still flying?” They were interested in how we get spare parts, because Boeing and Airbus stopped supplying spare parts since the beginning of the special military operation. The newspaper found this out thanks to an investigative group inside Russia. Who supplies us with these parts? I won't name companies or even countries, but it turned out that parts come to us from Muslim countries. And the newspaper called for these suppliers to be put in prison and sanctions imposed on them. And a very important thing – it tried to morally humiliate them by the fact that they receive money for these spare parts. Imagine, there are regions in Russia where food cannot be delivered other than by plane. We save people. And the people who sell us aircraft parts save people, but they are said to be bad, vicious, and subject to freedom deprivation.

It is obvious that here we are dealing with a truly totalitarian ideology. In fact, there are not two kinds of totalitarianism – Nazi and communist ones, there are three. At the beginning of the 20th century there were nationalism, socialism and liberalism – normal post-Christian ideologies, quite successful at the very beginning. The world owes them a lot. But each of them had a bastard, that is, a primitive variant terrible for billions of people. For nationalism it is Nazi Germany, for the wonderful socialist ideas of the late 19th century it is the early Soviet Union and Maoism. And now we have reached the totalitarian version of liberalism, let's call it ultra-liberalism. These totalitarian regimes have one thing in common which was

evident in this story with airplanes. They confuse a person's political beliefs and morality – if you are against our policies, you are not just mistaken, you are immoral. There is a whole campaign going on in the West stating that Ukraine is losing the war, it has few weapons, and the Russians are forcing them back. This implies: Republicans in Congress do not give money, which means they are scoundrels and are to blame for the deaths of these people. They are immoral people. This is exactly what the French, German, English and American press writes. It would seem that we should be happy about this – the victory of the Russian troops, we are advancing, they are retreating, they have few weapons. But in fact, it turns out that we are being drawn into this game.

Now regarding BRICS and anti-colonial discourse – who is bad and who is good. The West also has its own anti-colonial discourse, a whole theory that Beethoven's music is totalitarian and bad because it is not African, etc. We, of course, under no circumstances should get involved in this and repeat their expressions, assimilate vocabulary, even the word “anti-colonialism”. Maybe we should find another word. Their anti-colonialism differs from ours in that it is totalitarian. It is typical for any totalitarian system (we saw this even in the early Soviet Union) that everything is politicized: sports, art, culture, education. You don't just ski, but at one time you did for the Soviet Union and socialism, now you do for the victory of liberalism throughout the world. Or they won't let you go skiing because you will be promoting the wrong political theory.

We differ from them in this. And thanks to this, countries that are geopolitical opponents, such as Saudi Arabia and Iran, which has applied for membership, can coexist in BRICS. We need to keep this spirit alive. We will be more attractive because our culture of interaction within BRICS is as depoliticized as possible for everyone.

In pitting one people against another, the West uses a very simple trick. Everyone wants to protect the little one from the big one. This is little one, that is big one, David and Goliath. In 1967, when there was the Arab-Israeli war, the West said: “Israel is David. Look how small he is. The Arab armies are tens of times stronger against him. This is Goliath.” Now on the contrary, Israel is armed, it is Goliath. The population of Gaza is David. We need to move away from this principle: if it is small, it is not necessarily right. There are a lot of little ones who are wrong and cruel. For example, we saw this during the war in Chechnya. We must proceed from fairness and loss minimization. And culture is a very important point, it is a trump card in our hands.

**A. V. YAKOVENKO:** – I ask our guest from France, writer Galina Valeryevna Naumova, to speak.

**G. V. NAUMOVA:** – Yesterday and today, the name of Francis Fukuyama was mentioned several times. Both here and in the West they criticized his idea of the end of the world, the end of history. Their world and their history. I would say that this is indeed the end, but perhaps not of history, but of the Western dominance. Nowadays, everyone in the world is gradually realizing that the dominance of the West is coming to an end. And, no doubt, all the problems are related to this, including the current military operations in Ukraine. F. Fukuyama was a student of

Samuel Huntington, who in the 1990s gave the classification of civilizations in his book "The Clash of Civilizations". Therefore, the idea of our Russian civilization is not new. The West has long known that, according to Huntington's classification, the Orthodox civilization, along with the West, the Islamic world, China and Latin American civilization, is one of the leading in the world. This explains why for so many centuries a war has been waged against our values, in which the human factor is ultimately decisive. And we, Russia, as always, are called upon to save this world.

I have been working on the image of Russia abroad and in large international projects for 30 years. Latin America, Africa, Asia, China are those countries and cultures in which the enormous potential of spirituality and metaphysics, wasted by the Western world, has been preserved. The European Union will undoubtedly fall apart because it was founded on European values and on Christianity. None of them left. But for us, here in Russia, taking into account our generosity, incredible kindness and forgiveness, the view of a Russian person from there, from another world, is important. We need to learn to value ourselves, our culture, and have our own dignity.

According to Nikolai Mikhailovich Karamzin, our happy destiny lies in the incredible speed of development; we mature not in centuries, but in decades. We have many problems, not everything works out right away, especially in the field of education, which absolutely needs to start from a very young age and continue at universities. And it is necessary to gradually overcome secret and obvious love for the West, learning from our history. Love for Russia and the upbringing of the younger generation, humanity, justice and truth – these are the foundations that attract great attention and respect to us all over the world.

**A. V. YAKOVENKO:** – The floor is given to the representative of India Anil Trigunayat.

**A. TRIGUNAYAT:** – BRICS is a formation that is open to everyone. There is a place for everyone in BRICS, and India is a part of it. We are talking about cultural integration, civilizational and universal human values. We are not against the West, but today we see that there is much we cannot control. Geopolitical, georeligious, geotechnological competitions are now taking place all over the world. We don't know where this will lead us.

The creation of a new currency is truly real growth, because if financial instruments are used as weapons, then fertilizers, food, fuel can also be used as weapons. But there are countries that are trying to find an alternative. India is also trying to use unified systems for payments. Such payments are made with France and many countries around the world.

We also pay more attention to the East. This is where the main economic growth is expected in the near future. Before India became independent, it was under British rule. And today, more than 3% of world GDP comes from India; in terms of this indicator, only China is close to us.

Every culture has its own value system, but at the heart of any religion, any culture is an individual. However, I often hear ambassadors and high-ranking conference participants talk about this, but after these words are spoken, nothing actually happens.

In BRICS we are trying to create a certain model. This is not a Western model, but it will allow others to come to us and communicate, and this is very important from our point of view. It is also needed to create a tool for interactive activities. BRICS needs its own secretariat, which will speed up the work process.

We need to learn to think. Everything we are talking about BRICS now was said back in 2010. The cooperation of the BRICS countries proves that different state development systems can coexist, and this is its strength. But we live in the real world, we first need to pay attention to our own behavior, and then look at things outside. Global security, global development and global cultural civilization. Without a transparent system, BRICS will lack the support that is necessary.

**A. V. YAKOVENKO:** – The floor is given to Vladimir Konstantinovich Mamontov, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the "Komsomolskaya Pravda" newspaper.

**V. K. MAMONTOV:** – If I were asked to formulate what BRICS is, I would answer the following. First of all, it includes the oldest, established world civilizations, or those that would like to become one and are rapidly developing, I mean Russia. The wonderful people who invented gunpowder, invented porcelain and did everything they could, have now united in BRICS. At one time they were called third world and developing countries, but these are states with enormous civilizational wealth. For them, unification is an opportunity for peaceful coexistence and the sovereignty of each of them. And also a certain revenge that BRICS gives to Western civilization, which has ineptly failed to lead the world. The main question is: what should we take with us from the old world, and what should we mercilessly throw away? Throw away the mediocrity that is being shown to us. And the gigantic knowledge that the Western world, including Europe, carries – in no case.

**A. V. YAKOVENKO:** – Maria Vladimirovna Zakharova, you have the floor.

**M. V. ZAKHAROVA:** – Firstly, our colleague from France accurately noted the uniqueness of Russia as a platform for discussing all aspects of the today's problems. We hear people from those countries regimes of which, unfortunately, have declared a hybrid war on us, but we invite representatives of these states to discuss the full range of current issues. Hardly anyone can afford this, and it's hard to imagine when such a thing ever happened. This is a historical moment.

Our Italian colleague spoke interestingly about the upcoming elections in the so-called developed democracies. The uniqueness of the situation lies in the fact that we are also talking about the United States of America, a nuclear power with a huge military potential of all kinds of means of destruction that are out of international control, and at the same time no one knows who will come to the office in the White House. They have been saying for many years that this is the advantage of democracy, when it is not known how everything will end. And this is the beginning of chaos – the possibility of bringing to power any person in whom they invest money. This is a pig in a poke, a person who can be thrown away a month before



the elections or brought into the leadership of the country that is already creating problems in the world. And no one even knows what challenges it will create for itself and how they will later affect international relations. Therefore, I believe that this is not a plus for Western democracy, but a disaster.

Our guest from Serbia noted that everyone looks at values differently. I will offer the following option. How can those who want to defend values, but at the same time have different views on them, avoid quarreling? Firstly, it were values that Dmitry Likhachov dedicated his activities. Secondly, perhaps these are the very values that distinguish a person from an animal and are aimed at freedom of creation, that is, not at self-destruction.

And one last thing. Of course, not all Western initiatives should be rejected. But we must remember that historically many Western initiatives were free cheese in a mouse-trap, and we must not repeat these mistakes. There have been so many experiments on the African continent with such initiatives, which later turned out to be neocolonialism or new enslavement of people. How many similar American initiatives have there been in the European Union that

turned it into a hostage to Washington and London? Therefore, each initiative needs to be studied in detail and seen whether it poses a hidden threat to today's world. A hybrid war has been declared on us. What kind of wonderful initiatives are these that go in parallel with the increase in arms supplies and billion tranches to destroy us as a people, a nation, a civilization? I have never seen that, on the one hand, a country was fought with monstrous cruelty and ruthlessness, and on the other hand, useful initiatives were proposed to it. One can't believe this.

**A. V. YAKOVENKO:** – The cultural and civilizational component of BRICS today is perhaps more important than both the political and economic aspects. Because it unites a large number of states that would like the world to develop differently. The experience of the 20th century, unfortunately, was in many ways not very successful in terms of peace and development. Therefore, BRICS is an alliance of like-minded countries that are ready to unite their efforts for the purpose of development. We believe that the cultural component, together with the civilizational one, will prevail in the coming years.

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The 22nd International Likhachov Scientific Conference

April 12–13, 2024

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## ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL LIKHACHOV SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE

The annual International Scientific Conference covering the humanitarian problems of modern times has been held in St. Petersburg University of the Humanities and Social Sciences since 1993. One of the initiators of holding the conference was Dmitry Sergeyevich Likhachov, an outstanding Russian scientist and a public figure, an internationally acclaimed humanist, an expert in the field of study of culture and records of the Old Russian literature, academician of the Russian Academy of Sciences, and a foreign member of academies of many countries of the world, Honorary Doctor of St. Petersburg University of the Humanities and Social Sciences.

Since 2001, in recognition of Dmitry Likhachov's outstanding contribution to science and culture and as an acknowledgement of the scientific significance of the Conference, the state status of International Likhachov Scientific Conference has been granted to this scholarly forum by a special decree of Vladimir Putin, then President of the Russian Federation.

Along with the University, the cofounders of the Conference are the Russian Academy of Sciences and St. Petersburg intelligentsia Congress. Since 2007 the Conference has been held under the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia, in 2013 had the support of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts (Salzburg).

The agenda of the Conference traditionally includes the most universal debatable contemporary issues related to the controversial tendencies in the development of the human society, to the processes of globalization, to the role of the humanitarian culture and education in the modern world, to the vital problems of inter-confessional communication, tolerance, morality, etc.

At present, within the framework of International Likhachov Scientific Conference, contests of creative projects are held for senior high-school students entitled "Dmitry Likhachov's Ideas and Modernity".

The topic of the 22nd International Likhachov Scientific Conference is "BRICS as the New Space for Dialogue among Cultures and Civilizations".

Prominent Russian and foreign scientists participate annually in the Conference, among them are political and public figures, church hierarchs, philosophers, sociologists, lawyers, economists, pedagogues, renowned figures of culture and arts, writers, journalists.

Since 2008 SPbUHSS together with Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation have been engaged in the Diplomatic project of the International Likhachov Scientific Conference "The International Dialogue of Cultures".

To summarize the results of each International Likhachov Scientific Conference the Proceedings of the Conference are published which include collections of the participants' reports and speeches, transcripts of workshop discussions and round tables. The Proceedings of conferences are stored in major libraries of Russia and countries of the CIS, in scientific and educational centres of many states of the world. Working materials of the Conference can be found on the "Likhachov Square" special scientific site ([www.lihachev.ru](http://www.lihachev.ru)).

In 2001, 2004, 2006, 2009–2012, 2016, 2017, 2019, 2022, 2024 the hosts and participants were greeted by Presidents of the Russian Federation V. V. Putin and D. A. Medvedev, in 2008, 2010–2019 by Chairmen of the Government of the Russian Federation.

# About the University

St. Petersburg University of the Humanities and Social Sciences was established by the Trade Unions of Russia on October 9th, 1926. Its first task originally was to educate trade unions' leaders for socialist countries and institutions of culture and tourism. Since 1992 this institution of higher education has been working in the status of university educating specialists for a market system that has grown in our country. For the last 25 years SPbUHSS has become one of the leaders of higher education in Russia. Today there are more than 8000 students here. The University has 5 branches in Russia: Kirov, Krasnoyarsk, Moskovsky region — “Institution of Arts and IT” (Zelenograd), Samara and one abroad — in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The University works with programmes of higher professional education (Bachelor, Specialist, Master), graduating professionals of higher qualification in the spheres of Law, Economics, Management, Conflict Studies, Journalism, Advertising and PR, Psychology, Linguistics, Art Management, Applied Informatics, Social Work, Stage Direction in Theatre, Cinema and Television, Audio Engineering, Acting Techniques, Choreography and others and has also a supplementary educational programme “Interpreter in the sphere of professional communication”. There are two forms — full-time and part-time education. There is also postgraduate and doctorate education.

More than 45 000 different specialists have received their degrees of higher education since the time SPbUHSS became a university.

The University collaborates with the Russian Academy of Sciences, the State Duma, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Russian Academy of Education, creative unions of Russia, regional administrations, scientific journals, and academies of science in different countries. Our partners are universities of Russia, Western Europe, the USA, Asia we have student and professor exchanges and joint researches. Among the most famous scientific researches of the University there is “the Declaration of the Rights of Culture” developed under the direction of academician D. Likhachov. The culture-centred model of university was recognized by the Russian Academy of Sciences as the most innovative and perspective for Russia in the 21st century.

20 scientific conferences take place in SPbUHSS annually, including the International Likhachov Scientific Conference — the largest forum of humanitarian knowledge in Russia. In 2001, by a special decree of the President of Russia, the Conference became the state conference. Since 2007 the Conference has been organized with the help of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia.



The Proceedings of the 22nd International Likhachov Scientific Conference held on April 12–13, 2024 in St. Petersburg University of the Humanities and Social Sciences were published in the present collection in accordance with the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation V. V. Putin No. 587, May 23, 2001 “On perpetuating the memory of Dmitry Sergeyevich Likhachov”. Representatives of 18 countries took part in the 22nd Conference.

The 63 authors of the collection include prominent national scientists, members of the Russian Academy of Sciences and Russian Academy of Education (RAE): President of the RAE, Academician of the RAE O. Yu. Vasilyeva; A. A. Akayev, Al. A. Gromyko, A. A. Guseynov, A. S. Zapesotsky, V. A. Lektorsky, A. G. Lisitsyn-Svetlanov, V. V. Naumkin, A. D. Nekipelov, R. I. Nigmatulin, Zh. T. Toshchenko, T. Ya. Khabrieva, V. A. Chereshev and others; the heads of academic institutions and research centres, university professors, well-known state and public figures, representatives of mass media: Member of the State Council of the Russian Federation, Chairman of the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia M. V. Shmakov; Chairman of the Committee on Science and Higher Education of the State Duma of the Russian Federation S. V. Kabyshev; First Deputy Chairman of the State Duma Committee on Culture Ye. G. Drapeko; First Deputy Chairman of the State Duma Committee of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation on CIS Affairs K. F. Zatulin; Deputy Head of the “United Russia” party faction in the State Duma A. K. Isaev; Director of the Information and Press Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation M. V. Zakharova; Rector of the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation A. V. Yakovenko; Director of the Higher School of Translation and Interpreting at Lomonosov Moscow State University N. K. Garbovsky; First Deputy Director General of the Russian News Agency TASS M. S. Gusman; Chairman of the board of directors of the newspaper “Komsomolskaya Pravda” V. K. Mamontov; Chairman of the Committee on Science and Higher Education of the Government of St. Petersburg A. S. Maksimov and others.

Foreign authors of the collection include Deputy Minister of Information of Belarus I. I. Buzovsky, Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Russian Federation P. Bülbüloğlu, Director of the Analytical center Conflicts Forum A. Crooke (United Kingdom), Dean of School of International Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Iran M.-R. Dehshiri, Director of Information Technology of the Sing Alliance B. Desgardins (Switzerland), Director of Centre for Central Eurasian Studies of the Russian University of Mumbai S. Deshpande (India), Vice President of the Marmara Group Strategic and Social Research Foundation C. Okray (Turkey); professors: S. Atlagić (Serbia), N. El-Sheikh Egypti Ch. Goddard (United Kingdom), O. Roqueplo (France), J. Sapir (France), T. Türker (Turkey), C. Varga (Hungary) and others.

President of Russia Vladimir Putin highly appreciates the role of the Likhachov Conference: “This scientific forum, dedicated to the most pressing topic – the place and role of BRICS on the world stage, provides a good opportunity for meaningful and constructive discussions at a high expert level, and the ideas and initiatives expressed will allow us to outline new areas of multilateral cooperation in the interests of building a more just, secure and prosperous world order.”