
POLITICAL ISSUE 3(42-44), 2020
SCIENCE ISSUES
Academic journal

MOSCOW, 2020

POLITICAL SCIENCE ISSUES

Academic journal

Nikolay P. MEDVEDEV,

Chairman of the Editorial Board, Doctor of Political Sciences,
Professor of Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Peoples' Friendship
University of Russia (RUDN University) (Russia, Moscow)

Editorial Board:

BOZHANOV Vladimir A.	Doctor of History Sciences, Professor, Head of the Chair of World and National Literature, Belorussia National Technical University (Belorussia, Minsk)
DONAJ Lukasz	Doctor of Political Sciences, Professor of Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Faculty of Political Science And Journalism, Department of International Relations (Poland, Poznań)
IRKHIN Yuri V.	Doctor of Philosophy Sciences, Professor, Chair of Politology and Political Administration, Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration (Russia, Moscow)
KARAGZE Tatiana V.	Doctor of Philosophy Sciences, Head of the Chair of Politology and Sociology of the Moscow State Pedagogical University (Russia, Moscow)
KOVALENKO Valery I.	Doctor of Philosophy Sciences, Head of the Chair of Russian Politics of the Moscow State Lomonosov University (Russia, Moscow)
KOSIKOV Igor G.	Doctor of History Sciences, Chief Researcher, Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology of the Russian Academy of Sciences (Russia, Moscow)
KRIVOKAPIC Boris	Doctor of Legal Sciences, Professor, Business and Law Faculty, University "Union – Nikola Tesla" (Serbia, Belgrade)
MIKHAILOV Vyacheslav A.	Doctor of History Sciences, Head of the Chair of National and Federative Relations of the Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration (Russia, Moscow)
NASIMOVA Gulnara O.	Doctor of Political Sciences, Professor, Head of the Chair of Politology, School of Philosophy and Politology, Kazakh National University named after El-Farabi (Kazakhstan, Almaty)
NISNEVICH Yuli A.	Doctor of Political Sciences, Professor, National Research University – Higher School of Economics (Russia, Moscow)
PAKHRUTDINOV Shukritdin I.	Doctor of Political Sciences, Professor, Head of Department "National interests and the stability of society" of the Academy of State and Social Construction under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan (Tashkent, Uzbekistan)
PLYAYS Yakov A.	Doctor of History Sciences, Doctor of Political Sciences, Professor, Head of the Chair of Politology of the Finance University under the Government of the Russian Federation (Russia, Moscow)
PRYAKHIN Vladimir F.	Doctor of Political Sciences, Professor, Chair of World Politics and Foreign Relations, Russian State Humanitarian University (Russia, Moscow)
PUSKO Vitaliy S.	Doctor of Philosophy Sciences, Professor of the Chair of Politology, Moscow State Technical University named after N.E. Bauman (Russia, Moscow)
SALKIEWICZ- MUNNERLYN Ewa	Ph.D., MFA, Academy Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski (Poland, Krakow)
Olivier VEDRINE	Chief Editor of the Russian Edition of the French Review "Revue Défense Nationale", Speaker of the European Commission, Editor of the Franco-German Magazine on Foreign Politics "European Union Foreign Affairs Journal" and Rector of the Continental University in Kiev (France, Paris)

Editor-in Chief of the Review – Nikolay P. MEDVEDEV,
Doctor of Political Sciences, Professor of Faculty of Humanities
and Social Sciences, Peoples' Friendship University of Russia
(RUDN University) (Russia, Moscow)

**ESTABLISHED BY LLC
"PUBLISHING HOUSE
"SCIENCE TODAY"**

The Journal is published with
the participation of the Institute
of modern policy of the Peoples'
Friendship University (RUDN)

The Journal is registered
by the Federal Service
for Supervision of Mass Media,
Communications and Protection
of Cultural Heritage

Reg. Number PI No.FS77–46176
of August 12, 2011
The Journal is published quarterly

The journal is included
in the database of the Russian
Science Citation Index

The Five-year Journal's
impact factor is 0,808

The Journal is included
in Ulrich's Periodicals Directory

Academic papers published
in the journal undergo obligatory
editorial checking.

The authors' opinion not always
coincides with the opinion
of the Editorial Board.

At reprint of the article or a part
of it the reference to the Journal
is obligatory.

Address of the editorial office:
10, Zagoryevskaya street, building 4,
office 4, Moscow, Russia, 115598
Tel: (910) 463-53-42
www.voprospolitolog.ru,
www.souzpolitolog.ru
E-mail: voprospolitolog@yandex.ru,
souzpolitolog@yandex.ru

Executive Secretary
Shkurina S.S.

Computer-aided makeup by
Antsiferova A.S.

Translated by
Chernyshova E.V.

Signed for printing on 25.09.2020
Format 60x84/16. Offset paper.
Offset print.
Number of printed sheets.
Circulation 500 copies.
Order 0000.

Printed at the LLC "PrintUP"
Nagorny drive, 12c1,
Moscow, Russia, 117105
Tel.: +7 (495) 925-00-06

ISSN 2225-8922 (print)

12 issues a year plus

4 issues a year of the translated (eng.) version

Languages: Russian and English

<http://voprospolitolog>

Included in the list of peer-reviewed scientific publications of the Higher Attestation Commission of the Russian Federation

Included in the Ulrich's Periodicals Directory

Materials of the journal are placed on the RSCI platform of the Russian scientific electronic library – Electronic Journals Library Cyberleninka

Subscription index of the journal in the Rospechat Agency catalogue is: 70035

Objectives and themes

Academic journal "Political Science Issues" is an international peer-reviewed scientific periodical in the field of political studies. The journal has an international character because of the composition of its Editorial Board, its editors, its contributing authors and topics of its publications.

The scientific journal is published since 2011 at the "Publishing House "Science Today". Translated (eng.) version of the journal is published since 2016. Since its inception, the journal was guided by high scientific and ethical standards and today it is one of the leading political science journals in Russia.

The purpose of the journal is to promote scientific exchange and cooperation between Russian and foreign political scientists.

The journal is intended for the publication of the results of fundamental and applied scientific research. Thematic focus of the journal is reflected in the following permanent headings: "History and philosophy of politics," "Political institutions, processes and technologies," "Political regionalism and ethno-politics," "Political culture and ideologies," "Political problems of international relations and globalization."

Format of publications: scientific articles, reviews, scientific materials, materials of round tables, scientific reviews, scientific reports devoted to research problems in the field of politics and political science.

The Editorial Board and the editors of the journal in their activities are guided by the principles defined by VAK of Russia for scientific journals, including: presence of the institute of peer review for the expert quality assessment of scientific articles; information openness of the publications; availability and compliance with the rules and ethical standards for the submission of manuscripts by the authors.

The target audience of the journal is Russian and foreign specialists-political scientists, as well as graduate students and masters in the fields of political science, state and municipal management and international relations.

The journal strictly adheres to the international publishing standards and publication ethics identified in the COPE (*Committee on Publication Ethics*) document. <http://publicationethics.org>.

Full details of the journal and its editorial policy, requirements to the preparation and publication of articles, archive (issues since 2011) and additional information are available on the website: <http://voprospolitolog.ru>

E-mail address: voprospolitolog@yandex.ru

CONTENTS

THE POLITICAL PROCESS IN RUSSIA

<i>Zaslavsky S. E.</i> Russian Party System: Current State and Dynamics of Development	261
<i>Monahov D. N., Pronchev G. B.</i> From a Digit to the Digital Society	277
<i>Abramova M. A., Goncharova G. S., Kostyuk V. G.</i> Theoretical Models of Ethnopolitics in Modern Russia	285

PROBLEMS OF EURASIAN AND POST-SOVIET COOPERATION

<i>Amiantov A. A., Grachev-Vorontsov A. V.</i> Trends in the Development of Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation (On the Example of the CIS Inter-Parliamentary Assembly)	293
<i>Ivanchenko V. S., Chimiris E. S.</i> Russian Language in the Post-Soviet Space as a Factor of Politics	305

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND WORLD POLITICS

<i>Khoperskaya L. L., Pshenichnaya N. Y.</i> Coronavirus: The Foreign Political Dimension	316
<i>Morozov I. L.</i> Legal Basis of State Management Decisions in the Field of Russia's Information Security: Politological Analysis	331
<i>Primova E. N.</i> On the Peculiarities of German Cooperative Federalism	339
<i>Yan Jie, Czin' Zhu.</i> Economic Interests of Russia and China in the Central Asian Region: Comparative Analysis	347

OUR AUTHORS	352
-------------------	-----

AUTHORS' GUIDELINES	354
---------------------------	-----

DOI 10.35775/PSI.2020.42.3.006

L. L. KHOPERSKAYA

*Doctor of Political Sciences,
Professor of the Department of International Relations
of the Kirghiz-Russian Slavic University,
Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2839-4884>*

N. Y. PSHENICHNAYA

*DSci., Professor, Deputy Director on clinical
and analytical work of the Central research Institute of
Epidemiology of Rosпотребнадзор,
Moscow, Russia
ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-2570-711X>*

CORONAVIRUS: THE FOREIGN POLITICAL DIMENSION

The article substantiates the thesis that the COVID-19 pandemic has set new parameters for building the world order, putting forward life and health as the main values of modern society. If before the outbreak of the epidemic the main criteria for assessing states were economic power, military strength and the level of democracy, today the rating of a state is largely determined by its ability to withstand a pandemic, i. e. have effective control over the spread of COVID-19 in society, provide patients with the appropriate volume and level of medical care.

The dynamics of the pandemic clearly demonstrates the loss of the United States status as a global leader and the formation of a new system that includes four groups of states: the first group includes states that are capable of independently, without external assistance, to ensure the functioning of national health systems; the second group consists of states that recognize the lack of their own resources and openly seek help in the fight against the spread of coronavirus infection to states that have the necessary funds; the third group – states that deny the danger of a pandemic and fundamentally refuse to implement any special measures under the pretext of preserving the economy; the fourth group – the states of the «Western democratic core», declaring self-sufficiency in the fight against coronavirus, but objectively demonstrating the highest rates of morbidity and mortality from coronavirus infection. At the same time, instead of a fundamental reorganization of national health systems, they are focused on finding all sorts of ways to discredit the experience of China and Russia in the fight against COVID-19. The most frequently used instruments of discrediting are the media and NGOs funded by large international financial and industrial corporations.

Key words: *international relations, world order, coronavirus, COVID-19 pandemic, health systems, epidemic control, humanitarian mission, medical assistance, medical diplomacy.*

The coronavirus has set new parameters for building the world order.

After the collapse of the socialist camp and the Soviet Union, the world order was formed, which the staff of The Institute for national strategic studies at the Pentagon described as a global system that includes four groups of countries, identified by the criterion of the level of democracy and the development of a market economy:

- the Western democratic core;
- transition states, including Russia, China and India;
- rogue states, that is, “criminal nations” capable of provoking a conflict with the United States and its allies, including Iraq and North Korea; Serbia and, in the future, Iran were declared part-time pariahs;
- failing states, “failed, problematic and unsuccessful” nations. This group includes the vast majority of countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America [39].

The United States assumed the responsibility to ensure order in this system, declaring its global leadership, which “first of all refers to the undeniable military power and the ability to project it on a global scale, dominance in the financial and economic spheres (especially in the field of innovation), cultural dominance and opportunities in the information sphere that are not comparable with other participants in international relations” [35].

For a long time, despite sharp criticism, this concept remained in force, but in 2016, the American political scientist J. Ikenberry acknowledged that “today, no one questions the fact that wealth and power are shifting from the North and West to the East and South, and the old world order, dominated by the United States and Europe, is being replaced by a new one, where a growing role is played by non-Western states” [16].

Numerous discussions at diplomatic and international expert platforms were devoted to the principles of the new world order. In fact, they were a clash of opinions about what values should underlie modern society – traditional (family and religious) or postmodern liberal-democratic (priority of the rights of minorities, LGBT, transgender people, promotion of same-sex marriage, religious sects and cults).

But in 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic, having had a profound impact on the economic, political and cultural aspects of the world’s population, gave an answer to this question, putting forward the basic values of **life** and **health** and thereby setting new parameters for building the world order.

It should be noted that at the first stage of the pandemic, the vast majority of national health care systems was not ready for the rapid increase in the number of patients with viral pneumonia. Socially vulnerable groups of the population did not apply for medical care in a timely manner, including for material reasons.

By the time who announced the COVID-19 pandemic on March 11, 2020 [43], more than 150,000 cases of COVID-19 had already been reported worldwide in 210 countries.

But at the second stage, different countries showed different attitudes to the epidemic, including the registration of cases, and also applied different approaches to countering COVID-19. Depending on this, today nations can be classified according to the **criterion of their ability to resist a pandemic, i.e. effectively control the spread of infection** and provide their citizens with the appropriate volume and level of medical care.

Control of the epidemic is a priority of the national policy. The first group includes countries that can independently, without external assistance, ensure the functioning of the national health systems. At the same time, practice has shown that neither the level of democracy, nor economic potential or military power are decisive in achieving this goal. At the same time, significant factors are “mutual assistance and deepening cooperation in the field of medicine and development of diagnostic tests and medicines” [36], “coordination in countering the spread of coronavirus infection” [40], “interaction of specialized SCO services responsible for ensuring sanitary and epidemiological well-being” [28]. To characterize the strategy of countering the pandemic by this group of countries, it is advisable to refer to the experience of China and Russia.

In China, at the beginning of January 2020, the epidemic began to rapidly gain momentum, spreading to all provinces of the Republic and beyond, reaching a maximum on February 4, when the diagnosis was confirmed in 3,884 people within just one day. On January 20, the new coronavirus infection was included in the mandatory report on infectious diseases that may constitute an international health emergency and border-level quarantine infectious diseases, as a result of which COVID-19 began to be monitored and quarantined at transport hubs [14]. This marked transition from the initial partial control to the comprehensive adoption of various control measures in accordance with the law. On January 23, 2020, the Chinese government introduced strict social distancing measures and traffic restrictions, first in Wuhan, where the COVID-19 epidemic began, which later turned into a pandemic, and then in other regions. Protocols for diagnosis and treatment, as well as for prevention and control of the epidemic, have been improved, and medical resources, including beds, medicines and personal protective equipment, have been strengthened. The measures taken almost immediately affected the epidemic curve, which has been going down since the beginning of February 2020. At the final stage, the activities focused on reducing the number of infection clusters, achieving a balance between prevention and control of the epidemic, including thorough, digital contact tracking and sustainable economic and social development, with unified command, highly qualified leadership and implementation of policies based on scientific data, as well as strong support from public organizations, including the volunteer movement. The risk-based

approach was adopted with differentiated prevention and control measures for different regions. All the measures taken consistently eventually allowed the PRC to lift the national quarantine on March 25 and eliminate the epidemic in almost 2.5 months.

Russia demonstrated another example of containing the spread of the epidemic by not completely closing the borders with other countries, including China, until March 27. Since the end of January, all arrivals from countries where cases of local transmission of the virus have been reported have been tested and closely monitored during the incubation period. It was made possible through an increase in the capacity of hospitals, including intensive care beds, redesign of hospitals and deployment of COVID-19 hospitals, by building new hospitals from rapidly constructed structures, training medical personnel, development of test systems and an increase in their production volumes, and by the beginning in the development of vaccines. Restrictions were imposed on the movement of older people outside their places of residence and social support was provided for them. After the detection of cases of local transmission of the virus began on March 16, restrictive measures were introduced in all regions of the country, and after registering an increase in such cases, quarantine measures were introduced throughout the country from March 30. It made it possible to prevent a rapid increase in the number of cases and significantly reduce the burden on health care. Only on May 11, 2020, after more than 2.5 incubation periods since the registration of the first thousand patients with COVID-19, the country reached the peak of morbidity, while the mortality rate was 0.9% (1).

Countries, self-sufficient in the fight against COVID-19 (China and Russia), have used and continue to use the following measures:

- creation of operational national and regional headquarters in the first days of the epidemic and coordination of ministries and agencies involved in addressing the pandemic COVID-19. In China, they are: the Ministry of public health, Center for disease control of the Ministry of science and technology, the Ministry of forestry and natural resources, the Ministry of internal affairs, the Ministry of transport and communications and other ministries and departments involved in the work on the elimination of epidemic. **In Russia**, they are: the Ministry of public health, the Federal service for supervision of consumer rights protection and human welfare (Rospotrebnadzor), the Ministry of science and higher education, the Ministry of natural resources and ecology, the Ministry of internal Affairs, the Ministry of civil defense, emergencies and disaster relief (MES), the Ministry of transport and communications, the Ministry of industry and trade;
- introduction of restrictive measures with simultaneous reboot of the entire healthcare system: free medical care for patients with COVID-19 and the strictest infection control measures, multi-level contact tracking using IT technologies, multiple increase in hospital capacity, increased production of diagnostic test systems, development and production of medicines and vaccines;

– unprecedented social mobilization of the population through joint efforts of ministries, mass media, social networks and volunteer movements.

Application for help is a condition for countering pandemics. The second group consists of countries that recognize the lack of their own resources and openly seek help in the fight against the spread of coronavirus from countries that have the necessary funds. Note that in this case, the criteria developed by the United States for evaluating countries as countries with “non-Western strategic identity” did not influence the decision of other nations to ask them for assistance. Thus, when the epidemiological situation in Italy was extremely difficult (on March 8, Italy had the world maximum mortality among those infected with coronavirus), the Italian leadership asked for help the Chinese President XI Jinping on March 11 and on March 21 – Russian President Vladimir Putin. On March 12, China sent a group of nine people, as well as 30 tons of necessary medical and protective materials. On March 22, the Russian aerospace forces delivered to Italy eight mobile teams of Russian military medics and about a hundred disinfectologists, automobile aerosol disinfection systems for disinfecting transport and territory, as well as medical equipment. Similar requests to send humanitarian missions to counter the spread of coronavirus infection were made by the presidents of Serbia, Republika Srpska (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Lebanon, Abkhazia, Tajikistan, and Moldova.

During the pandemic, Russia transferred test systems and reagents for more than a million tests to 33 countries in all regions of the world, including Iran, Turkmenistan, Vietnam, Congo, Guinea, Nepal, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Palestine, Afghanistan, Cuba, Laos, Dominica, Lebanon, Serbia, Venezuela, Egypt, South Africa. But most of them were sent to the EEU and CIS countries free of charge. Devices for testing were sent to the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics [13].

On a paid basis, Russian test systems are delivered to Turkey, Georgia, Ukraine, Austria, Bangladesh, Bulgaria, Brazil, Hungary, Germany, India, Italy and the United Arab Emirates. Applications for support are pending from a number of countries in Africa and the Middle East, including Algeria, Egypt, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Palestine, Syria, Sudan, Tunisia, and Yemen [18].

China has allocated US\$ 2 billion to help countries affected by the coronavirus. Since the beginning of the pandemic, it has provided humanitarian assistance to more than 140 international organizations and countries, sent medical teams to dozens of countries, and held more than 70 expert video-conferences with 150 national and international organizations [1]. The importance of Chinese assistance was emphasized by officials of the countries that appealed to China, among them Serbian President A. Vucic, Czech Prime Minister A. Babis and Italian foreign Minister L. Di Maio.

The second group of countries consider the assistance provided by Russia and China in the form of humanitarian missions, deliveries of test systems and medical equipment, and specialized online consultations as an element of transformation and modernization of national health systems in order to adequately and effectively counter the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Economy first. The third group consists of countries that deny the risk of a pandemic and refuse in principle to implement any special restrictive measures under the pretext of protecting their economy. However, the death rate of their citizens is at a high and average levels. Chief epidemiologist of Sweden A. Tegnell admitted that the chosen strategy has led to a high number of victims [34] (the death rate at the end of April reached 12%). Moreover, Sweden, which did not stop the economy, suffered after the closure of borders due to the dependence of its own economy on the production in other countries.

In Belarus, since the beginning of the spread of coronavirus infection, a state of emergency has not been introduced either. The country continued to live without quarantine, but in compliance with a number of preventive measures. On July 2, President of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko stated that the Republic managed to survive and defeat COVID-19 [20]. However, the number of SARS-CoV2 victims in the Republic continued to grow (by 2.07.2020 – 412 people, by 26.08.2020 – 652 people), and by 26.08.2020 the death rate was 0.93%.

According to the official data from the government of Turkmenistan, there are no confirmed cases of coronavirus infection in the Republic. At the end of March, journalists were banned from using the word “coronavirus” in publications, it was excluded from a special brochure that the Republican Ministry of health sent to educational institutions, hospitals and workplaces [42]. However, in mid-July, the WHO technical Advisory mission expressed concern regarding information about the increase in the number of pneumonia cases in Turkmenistan and recommended “the same key measures that would be taken in the case of COVID-19 circulation: identifying people with acute respiratory infections, isolating and testing them in a timely manner, tracking their contacts and treating patients” [10].

On the eve of the arrival of the WHO mission to Turkmenistan, a mask regime was introduced, bus and rail services were restricted, a nationwide multisectoral working group on COVID-19 was established, a preparedness and response plan for the new coronavirus infection was approved, and guidelines for the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of this virus were prepared.

A summary of the experience of States that implement a strategy based on the fact that “the monstrous economic consequences of quarantine far exceed the conditional gain in medical terms” showed that this strategy did not justify itself. A summary of the experience of states that implement a strategy based on the fact that “the monstrous economic consequences of quarantine far exceed the conditional gain in medical terms” showed that this strategy did not justify itself.

This is particularly true in the context of propagation in some media and social networks information that WHO allegedly “urges governments not to enter quarantine in pandemic coronavirus when the second and subsequent waves of COVID-19 take place” [26]. On the contrary, as the STOPFAKE website notes, “WHO continues to emphasize how important it is to comply with all recommended safety measures for non-proliferation of SARS-CoV-2, including quarantine and self-isolation” [21].

Fight against the epidemic as a political tool. The fourth group includes countries that declare self – sufficiency in the fight against coronavirus, but objectively demonstrate the highest rates of morbidity and mortality from coronavirus infection. It is primarily the United States, the world leader in morbidity with 5,956,036 people infected as of 26.08.2020 and with mortality of 3.07%.

For the US political and business elites, countering the coronavirus pandemic is one of the tools of domestic political struggle, used for the expression of foreign policy ambitions and preservation of the rapidly deteriorating geopolitical status. Researchers from the University of Seattle (Washington) showed that the determining factor in the introduction of restrictive measures for the purpose of non-proliferation or reducing the spread of COVID-19 was the political affiliation of the State Governor: at the initial stage of the epidemic, Republican governors on the average introduced restrictive measures in their States 2.7 days later than necessary, which directly affected the number of infected people [4]. It is obvious that this fact will be actively used as an argument in the election race for the US presidency.

The fact that the country’s top leadership and its opponents are not going to solve the problems of organizing a “comprehensive response and mitigating the influenza-pandemic in order to save American lives” is evidenced by the conclusions and recommendations of the US Department of health, made based on the results of the Crimson Contagion Exercise held in 2019 [8]. The report named the main drawbacks as the legislative uncertainty of roles and responsibilities and poor coordination of actions between the Federal and local authorities, the Department of Health and the Federal Agency for emergency management; problems with the request and allocation of resources; low testing volume and problems with the specificity of test systems in the first month after the beginning of active circulation of the virus in the country; lack of medical and support facilities; varying degrees of development and implementation of anti-crisis standards of assistance, up to the lack of standards [8].

A similar situation – as evidenced by statistics – is observed in other countries of the “Western democratic core,” where the mortality rate as of August 26, 2020 was: in the UK – 14.25%, in Italy – 13.58%, in France – 12.5%, in Belgium – 12.13%, in Hungary – 11.78%, and in the Netherlands – 9.19%. Moreover, attempts by the leadership of countries such as Italy or Hungary to take emergency measures to protect their citizens from the spread of the pandemic

were met with active resistance not only from the internal opposition and some non-governmental organizations (at the same time dependent on large corporations) [15], but also from EU bureaucrats. Thus, the President of the European Parliament, D. Sassoli, stated that “no one should be allowed to use this pandemic to undermine our freedoms” [38].

Why and how the West discredits humanitarian missions. Instead of fundamentally reorganizing national health systems, Western liberal democrats are focused on finding all sorts of ways to discredit the experience of China and Russia in the fight against COVID-19.

The United States set the tone in the propaganda campaign that accuses China of spreading coronavirus infection and use of Chinese aid to other countries during the pandemic as an element of China’s information and political offensive against the West [31]. So, in early May 2020, a bill on sanctions against the PRC called “On responsibility for COVID-19” was submitted to the US Congress. The US has also accused China of trying to steal the US development of a coronavirus vaccine. Every time President Trump mentions the coronavirus, he calls it either “Chinese” or “Wuhan.”

The Operational working group on strategic communications (East Stratcom Task Force), established in 2015, is particularly active in denigrating Russia. The Task Force was established by the European foreign policy service on the basis of the decision taken by the European Union on the need to “resist the ongoing disinformation campaigns on the part of Russia” [11].

East StratCom has created a special website “Eu vs Disinformation, where individual publications published in the international information space are defined as “providing a partial, distorted or false image of reality and spreading key Pro-Kremlin messages” [12]. These include publications that review and positively assess the role of Russia’s assistance, primarily to Italy, as well as to other countries in the fight against coronavirus. In particular, misinformation is considered to be fixing facts, however, summed up in the style of East StratCom: “the EU did not support Italy. In the North of the county, the situation is just terrible, people were dying without getting any help. Here we see the noble actions of the Russian President, who sent military doctors, virologists, a huge amount of medical equipment, ventilators. The global epidemic has shown the need for international cooperation, and Russia has provided humanitarian assistance to the most affected countries” [9]. As a “refutation” the site also presents facts about the European Commission’s assistance program for Italy, the European Union’s investment initiative and the European Central Bank’s asset purchase program, as well as admission of Italian patients by German hospitals. Only here the Russian help arrived on March 22, and the European assistance was delivered much later.

From our point of view, the real disinformation was the campaign launched by the Italian media conglomerate GEDI Gruppo Editoriale SpA in its print and online publications *la Repubblica* and *la Stampa* against the Russian humanitarian action in Northern Italy.

Three days after the arrival of the Russian mission on 25 March 2020, *La Stampa* said that 80% of equipment supplied to Italy from Russia supposedly will not help in fighting the coronavirus, and that Moscow is assisting Italy to “satisfy its political ambitions” [7] and that the quartering of the Russian military in the guest house of the Italian army raises fears of Russian “occupation” of Italy [24].

On April 28, *La Repubblica* noted that “the government does not intend to extend the expedition, which is used by Putin’s propaganda against the EU and NATO. In the regions, they deny that they asked for help from soldiers from Moscow” [33]. On May 6, it was summed up: “...the presence of the Russian brigade, sponsored by Russian propaganda, caused a lot of confusion” [25].

At the same time, other publications reported that the President of the Lombardy region A. Fontana at the farewell ceremony thanked the Russian delegation by saying: “Thank you to the doctors, nurses, disinfectants, and all the people who were part of this team. You have arrived at one of the most difficult moments in the history of our region and the city of Bergamo in particular during the last 80 years” [6]. Italian Defense Minister L. Guerini called Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu to thank him for the timely and effective support provided to Italy from the first weeks of the crisis, in particular, for “the professional work of eight Russian medical teams that worked in the field hospital of Bergamo, one of the places most affected by the pandemic. Thank you for the recovery activities carried out by your team together with our military from the seventh regiment of nuclear, biological and chemical protection “Cremona,” which received the sincere gratitude of the local residents of the provinces of Bergamo and Brescia” [37].

In an interview with BBC News, the head of the Italian government, J. Conte called insulting hints about the political background of Russian aid to Italy, saying: “I am deeply offended by this very real insinuation. This is an insult to the Italian government, as well as to (the President of Russia) Vladimir Putin, who never thought of using this (aid) as a lever” [41]. Journalist K. Meyer was outraged that “Russian soldiers who after 75 years again sacrificed their lives to save us from COVID-19 are attacked with lies” [32].

To understand the reason for such opposite assessments of Russian aid, it should be noted that GEDI Gruppo, which oversees the national Newspapers *la Repubblica* and *la Stampa*, as well as local periodicals in Northern Italy, a number of radio stations and TV channels, are managed by the holding company CIR Group (*Compagnie Industriali Riunite*), which simultaneously controls the company KOS, which works in the field of social health and medical services and is the leading operator of private boarding houses for the elderly in Italy [30].

In Italy, KOS operates 53 nursing homes, 16 rehabilitation centers, 13 psychiatric hospitals and 7 psychiatric clinics, and 2 hospitals with a total of 8,700 beds [19]. It was there that Russian military medics and disinfectologists worked, not only fulfilling their direct duties, but also having a direct impact on the reputation of KOS, and therefore on the reputation of the CIR Group Industrial Holding,

which in the first half of 2020 suffered a “loss of 30.4 million euros after a profit of 1.6 million euros in the first half of 2019” [5].

It would seem that further comments are unnecessary, but the magazine *Strade*, positioning the desire to “contribute to the dissemination of the principles of rationality, common sense and individual freedom, opposing fear, indifference and corporate interests” [3], in the analytical article “From Russia with love. Hybrid war and chaos strategy on COVID-19” claims that Russian medics arrived “to conduct intelligence and propaganda operations disguised as measures to provide medical and/or humanitarian assistance” [22].

Russian humanitarian mission in the Kyrgyz Republic. The desire to discredit Russia is so great that the Western media do not limit themselves to “their” audience, but actively promote anti-Russian attitudes on the territory of post-Soviet states, to which Russia and its allies provide humanitarian assistance. One of the most striking examples is the Kyrgyz Republic. In the summer of 2020, Russia, China, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan came to the aid of that country, which found itself in a difficult situation. They sent specialists, personal protective equipment, medications, ventilators, and diagnostic test systems.

The fact is that Kyrgyzstan announced an emergency situation from March 22 to May 10 and there was a state of emergency from March 25 in connection with COVID-19. The state of emergency in the country was canceled on May 11, which led to a delayed increase in official morbidity after a period of calm amid low testing coverage, which went up sharply after the rally held in Bishkek on June 29.

This prompted President of the Kyrgyz Republic S. Jeenbekov on July 3, 2020 to ask for help from Russian President Vladimir Putin. As part of the humanitarian assistance, a group of doctors from Russia arrived in the Republic on July 23, which included surgeons, cardiologists, internists, pediatricians, anesthesiologists, resuscitators, infectious diseases specialists with experience in the diagnosis and treatment of COVID-19.

A special plane of the Russian Emergencies Ministry delivered: 5 x-ray machines, 65 monitors for anesthesiology and intensive care with an oxometric sensor, 5 monitors for anesthesiology and intensive care without an oxometric sensor, 31 artificial lung ventilation devices, 100 thousand medical masks, enoxaparin sodium and Olokizumab. Kyrgyzstan also received gas masks, protective suits of various modifications, RCB protection equipment and weather kits worth 4.9 million soms as part of military-technical assistance between the two countries. Previously, Russia has repeatedly provided large batches of PCR tests and reagents for diagnosing coronavirus, medical equipment (infrared thermometers, thermal detectors, etc.), and personal protective equipment for free.

Within a month the Russian doctors worked in the “red zones” hospitals in all oblasts, in addition, the program of visit included training of doctors comply with the rules of biological protection and anti-epidemic regime, participation in meet-

ings of stabilizing the epidemiological situation in the country, offer recommendations for changes in clinical treatment protocols of patients. At the same time, the Ministry of Health of Kyrgyz Republic “absolutely independently determined the protocols, clinical recommendations, and everything else” [2].

At the conclusion of the humanitarian mission on 15 August thanks to the Russian doctors was expressed by the President of the KR, deputies Jogorku Kenesh, representatives of the Kyrgyz government and civil society activists.

However, radio Azattyk, the Kyrgyz service of the Radio Free Europe Media Corporation/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), whose mission “is to promote democratic values and institutions, as well as human rights, by covering and distributing news in countries where the free press is banned by the authorities or has not yet taken root” [27], published on its web-site an article whose central idea was: in the context of the coronavirus “citizens are forced to protect the Kyrgyz statehood” [17]. To support his position, the author made references to the already mentioned la Stampa, which, in his opinion, “published impressive facts showing how useful the widely advertised foreign aid to one of the post-Soviet countries was for Italy, what this aid was and what its goals were.”

The author considers the “thoughtless entry of Kyrgyzstan into the Eurasian economic Union in 2015,” the request of the Kyrgyz authorities for assistance, as well as the pressure allegedly exerted by Russia on the Kyrgyz Ministry of Health to purchase unverified drugs, in particular “Avifavir” as a medicine for coronavirus, as an attempt on a sovereign state. It is noteworthy that no other articles of Mr. M. Ismailov could be found, but his link to the group on Facebook, where “the most important principle of any external assistance is to help on the terms of the recipient,” suggests that this author is connected with the expert on evidence-based medicine B. Baryktabasova, on whose Facebook page the same subjects are discussed in a very incorrect form [45]. The terminology it uses indicates the level of discussion and the degree of evidence of its arguments (“fufloferons and fuflomycins of Russian production,” “Arbidol lights,” etc.). The group “For a developed and multinational Kyrgyzstan” on its Facebook page noted that some representatives of the NGO sector have launched a full-scale campaign against Russia’s assistance in the fight against coronavirus infection in the Kyrgyz Republic, with reference to the posts by B. Baryktabasova [46] and G. Jurabayeva [47]. These proponents of evidence-based medicine are making every effort to prevent Russian drugs that they consider useless or, worse, dangerous from entering the pharmaceutical market in Kyrgyzstan. Thus, “evidence-based medicine turns into a marketing tool” [23] and an instrument of anti-Russian propaganda.

Conclusions. The pandemic really showed who is who in the fight against coronavirus. Countries outside the top 50 countries by per capita income, such as Russia and China (according to the World Bank), have not only themselves repelled the pandemic, but also actively assisted other countries, both above and below their income level. This was facilitated by the unprecedented interaction of

all ministries and departments of the state and society. Other higher-income countries have been in distress on their own, ignoring the huge overload of their health systems (USA, Spain). Italy, without paying attention to the “table of ranks,” actively asked for outside help, which may have allowed to avoid additional human casualties and successfully cope with the epidemic.

A number of other countries tried to ignore the epidemic, which again did not prevent the growth of morbidity and human casualties, the economic downturn, and it is not known how many cases of the disease remained unrecognized given this attitude to COVID-19.

A group of countries with obviously lower resources (Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan) openly asked for help from Russia, China and other countries, which made it possible to improve the situation with the incidence of COVID-19, increase the volume and quality of testing and medical care.

The reasons for attempts to discredit Russian doctors by pro-Western media and “public opinion leaders” are clear, especially in the context of the adoption of a new version of the Constitution of the Russian Federation in July 2020, which consolidated traditional for the people of Russia and not liberal values. From our point of view, it pushed the different countries to abandon the explanation of the world order in terms of the concept of “centers of power” and go to the terms of the concept of “centers of gravity” which became states able to independently, without external assistance ensure the functioning of national health systems and more effectively than “power centers” preserve life and health of their citizens.

At the moment, all states must learn from the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic in order to be as prepared as possible for the anticipated second wave, as well as future threats from emerging respiratory infections with pandemic potential.

But it is equally important to take into account the political and foreign policy dimension of the coronavirus, which rebuilds the world order on new values, makes doctors new actors of international relations and makes us think about developing a new scientific and practical discipline- medical diplomacy.

NOTES:

(1) Here and further statistics on cases of coronavirus infection and mortality (world statistics of cases of coronavirus infection) are taken from the site «Coronavirus (COVID-19)» [44].

REFERENCES:

1. Baynazarov E. Sadness of responsibility: China sent anti-virus aid to 140 countries [Sad responsibility: China sent antivirus aid to 140 countries] (May 11, 2020). <https://iz.ru/1009034> (In Russ.).
2. Bengard A. Russian doctors about the heroism of their Kyrgyz colleagues in the fight against coronavirus [Russian doctors on the heroism of Kyrgyz colleagues in the fight against coronavirus] (July 31, 2020). <https://24.kg/obschestvo/161278> (In Russ.).

3. Chi siamo. <https://www.stradeonline.it/chi-siamo#>
4. Christopher A., Kenya A., Bang-Jensen B. Pandemic Politics: Timing State-Level Social Distancing Responses to COVID-19. <https://faculty.washington.edu/cadolph/papers/AABFW2020.pdf>
5. CIR: results for first half 2020 (July 31 2020). <https://www.cirgroup.it/en/press-releases/cir-results-for-first-half-2020/>
6. Coronavirus, Bergamo saluta i medici militari russi: «Grazie per quel che avete fatto» – Cronaca (7 мая 2020). <https://www.ilgiorno.it/bergamo/cronaca/medici-militari-russi-1.5139306>
7. Coronavirus, la telefonata Conte-Putin agita il governo: «Più che aiuti arrivano militari russi in Italia» (25 Marzo 2020). [Lastampa.it/topnews/primopiano/2020/03/25/news/](https://www.lastampa.it/topnews/primopiano/2020/03/25/news/)
8. Crimson Contagion 2019 Functional Exercise Draft. After-Action Report. October 2019. <https://int.nyt.com/data/documenthelper/6824-2019-10-key-findings-and-after/05bd797500ea55be0724/optimized/full.pdf#page=1>
9. Disinfo: the eu did not give any Attention and Support to Italy, where People were dying without any Help (06/07/2020). <https://euvdisinfo.eu/report/>
10. Eksperty VOZ: Turkmenistan dolzhen byt' gotov k COVID-19 [WHO experts: Turkmenistan should be ready for COVID-19] (July 15, 2020). <https://news.un.org/ru/story/2020/07/1382091> (In Russ.).
11. European Council meeting (19 and 20 March 2015) – Conclusions. <https://www.eesc.europa.eu/resources/docs/european-council-conclusions-19-20-march-2015-en.pdf>
12. EUvsDISINFO. https://euvdisinfo.eu/disinformation-cases/?disinfo_keywords%5B%5D=106935&date=
13. Federal'naya sluzhba po nadzoru v sfere zashchity prav potrebiteley i blagopoluchiya cheloveka. Novosti [Federal service for supervision of consumer rights protection and human welfare. News]. <https://www.rosпотреbnadzor.ru/about/info/news/> (In Russ.).
14. Fidler D. P. & Gostin L. O. The new International Health Regulations: an historic development for international law and public health. *The Journal of Law, Medicine & Ethics*. 2006; 34.
15. Hungary's PM wins emergency powers to fight coronavirus (March 30, 2020). <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-hungary-law/>
16. Ikenberry J. Budushcheye liberal'nogo mirovogo poryadka. RSMD [The future of the liberal world order. INF] (August 9, 2016). <http://russiancouncil.ru/analytics-and-comments/analytics/> (In Russ.).
17. Ismailov M. Grazhdane vynuzhdeny zashchishchat' kyrgyzskuyu gosudarstvennost' [Citizens are forced to defend Kyrgyz statehood] (August 7, 2020). <https://rus.azattyk.org/a/30771201.html> (In Russ.).
18. Kak Rossiya pomogayet drugim stranam v bor'be s COVID [How Russia helps other countries in the fight against COVID] (July 16, 2020). <https://www.for.kg/news-658558-ru.html> (In Russ.).

19. KOS in a nutshell. <https://www.kosgroup.com/eng/profile/kos-in-a-nutshell/>
20. Lukashenko ob'yavil o pobede nad koronavirusom v Belorussii [Lukashenko announced victory over coronavirus in Belarus] (July 2, 2020). <https://www.interfax.ru/world/715592> (In Russ.).
21. Manipulyatsiya: VOZ prizvala strany bol'she ne vvodit' karantin [Manipulation: WHO called on countries to no longer impose quarantine] (August 18, 2020). <https://www.stopfake.org/ru/> (In Russ.).
22. Massimiliano Di Pasquale 'Dalla Russia con amore'. Guerra ibrida e strategia del caos sul Covid-19 (18 апреля 2020). <https://www.stradeonline.it/diritto-e-liberta/4181>
23. Mikhantieva M. Kak ustroyena dokazatel'naya meditsina i pochemu ne vsyakoye lekarstvo – blago [How evidence – based medicine works and why not every medicine is good] (July 22, 2019). <https://theoryandpractice.ru/posts/17560> (In Russ.).
24. Militari di Mosca acquistati nella foresta dell'esercito italiano, i timori di un' «occupazione» russa in Italia. <https://www.lastampa.it/topnews/primo-piano/2020/03/25/news/>
25. Ministro russo della Difesa: «I nostri medici militari lasceranno l'Italia domain». https://www.repubblica.it/esteri/2020/05/06/news/medici_russi_italia_domani-2558341
26. Muzychuk A. VOZ prizyvayet bol'she ne vvodit' karantin [WHO calls for no more quarantine] (17.08.2020). <https://www.medikforum.ru/medicine/102964> (In Russ.).
27. O nas [About us]. <https://rus.azattyk.org/p/4375.html> (In Russ.).
28. O soglasovanii plana meropriyatiy po protivodeystviyu ugrozam epidemiy na prostranstve Shankhayskoy organizatsii sotrudnichestva [On approval of the Action plan for countering epidemic threats in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization space] (17.06.2020). https://www.rosпотреbnadzor.ru/about/info/news/news_details.php?ELEMENT_ID=14715 (In Russ.).
29. O sotrudnichestve s Turtsiyey v bor'be s novoy koronavirusnoy infektsiyey [On cooperation with Turkey in the fight against a new coronavirus infection] (22.05.2020). https://www.rosпотреbnadzor.ru/about/info/news/news_details.php?ELEMENT_ID=14520 (In Russ.).
30. Our History. <https://www.cirgroup.it/en/our-history/>
31. Pirozhenko V. Antikitayskaya kampaniya v SSHA priobretayet raznuzdannyy kharakter [The anti-Chinese campaign in the United States is becoming rampant] (22.05.2020). <http://politanalyse.com/2020/05/22/> (In Russ.).
32. Quei militari russi che 75 anni dopo hanno offerto di nuovo la vita per liberarci dal Covid 19. Attaccati con falsità (05/08/2020). <http://www.farodiroma.it/>
33. Russi? No, grazie. La missione militare verso la conclusion (28 Aprile 2020). <https://rep.repubblica.it/pwa/generale/2020/04/28/news/>

34. Shvedskiy sindrom. K chemu privel otkaz Stokgol'ma ot karantina? [The Swedish syndrome. What led to the failure of Stockholm from the quarantine?] (04.06.2020). <https://aif.ru/health/coronavirus/> (In Russ.).

35. Soloviev E. G. Vozvrashcheniye istorii – konets ery liberalizma? [The return of history – the end of the era of liberalism?]. *Mezhdunarodnaya Zhizn*. 2015; 12. <https://interaffairs.ru/jauthor/material/1416> (In Russ.).

36. Sostoyalsya telefonnyy razgovor Vladimira Putina s Predsedatelem Kitayskoy Narodnoy Respubliki Si Tszin'pinom [Vladimir Putin had a telephone conversation with President of the People's Republic of China XI Jinping] (March 19, 2020). <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/63038> (In Russ.).

37. Specialisti militari russi lasciano Bergamo. Il saluto dei medici: «Buona fortuna Italia». Il grazie del Governo e della Regione Lombardia (05/07/2020). <http://www.farodiroma.it/>

38. Statement by European Parliament President David Sassoli on the Hungarian emergency law (31.03.2020). <https://europarl.europa.eu/the-president/en/newsroom/sassoli-on-hungary-parliaments-must-remain-open-and-the-press-must-remain-free-1>

39. Strategic assessment 1999: priorities for a turbulent world. Institute for National Strategic Studies. Washington, DC: National Defense University, Institute for National Strategic Studies, 1999. <https://play.google.com/books/reader?id=TadsikSvbnwC&hl=ru&pg=GBS.PA2-3>

40. Telefonnyy razgovor s Prem'yer-ministrom Izrailiya Bin'yaminom Netan'yakhu [Telephone conversation with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu] (April 6, 2020). <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/63156> (In Russ.).

41. The Coronavirus Pandemic: An Interview with Italy's Prime Minister (9 Apr 2020). <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000hp4v>

42. Turkmeniya zapretila slovo «koronavirus» [Turkmenistan banned the word “coronavirus”] (March 31, 2020). https://lenta.ru/news/2020/03/31/ih_borba/ (In Russ.).

43. WHO Director-General's opening remarks at the media briefing on COVID-19 – 11 March 2020. Geneva, Switzerland. 2020 Mar. <https://www.who.int/dg/speeches/detail/>

44. <https://coronavirus-monitor.ru>

45. <https://www.facebook.com/bermet.baryktabasova>

46. <https://www.facebook.com/bermet.baryktabasova/posts/3401433849887138>

47. https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=3352613781473472&id=100001746489365