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Doctor of Political Sciences, Professor of Faculty of Humanities
and Social Sciences, Peoples' Friendship University of Russia
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souzpolitolog@yandex.ru

Executive Secretary
Shkurina S.S.

Computer-aided makeup by
Antsiferova A.S.

Translated by
Chernyshova E.V.

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CONTENTS

THEORY, HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF POLITICS

- Boltenkova L.F., Ryabova E.I.** Territory of the Russian Principalities
in the IX-XII Centuries and the Today Importance of this Issue 4
- Goncharova L.N.** Analysis of Geopolitical
and Geo-Economic Interaction of Regional Systems 13
- Morozov I.L.** Left-Wing Extremism in Modern Russia:
Definition, Classification, Trends 19

POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS, PROCESSES AND TECHNOLOGY

- Glebov V.A., Grossman O.D., Grishin V.O.** Methods of Countering
the Spread of Radical Ideas in Russia: Current Perspective 26
- Grishaeva O.N., Nesterchuk O.A., Belyaeva V.P.** Scenarios of Stability
and Variability of the Russian Institute of Presidency in the Context of Social
and Political Transformations 33
- Avtsinova G.I., Burda M.A.** Youth Policy in Modern Russia.
Absenteeism and Political Protest..... 40
- Tatarov R.A., Franz A.S.** The Contours of the Political Regime
of the Transnistrian Moldavian Republic in the Context of the State-Building 46

PROCESS POLITICAL PROBLEMS

OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND GLOBALIZATION

- Mikhailenko A.N.** Modern Stage in the Formation of Polycentric World 53
- Lebedeva M.L.** Power Technologies of the Organizational Model
of French Regional Policy 62
- Rodionova M.E.** Image Forming Technologies
of the European Politicians (before and after the Election Campaigns)..... 73
- Kurbonova Z.M., Ikromova M.N.** The Role of Russian Federation
in the Preventing of Inter-Tajik Conflict 79

REVIEWS

- Kozmenko V.M., Beresnev R.A.** Review of the article
by Grishaeva O.N., Popova S.I., Belyaeva V.P., Grishina V.O.
“The Fourth Presidential Term of V.V. Putin: New Challenges” 83

- OUR AUTHORS 89

PROCESS POLITICAL PROBLEMS OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND GLOBALIZATION

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A.N. MIKHAILENKO

*Doctor of Sciences (political sciences),
Professor, Department of International security
and foreign policy of Russia,
Faculty of national security,
Institute of law and national security,
Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and
Public Administration,
Moscow, Russia*

MODERN STAGE IN THE FORMATION OF POLYCENTRIC WORLD

The world is in a state of profound changes. One of the most likely forms of the future world pattern is polycentrism. At the stage of the formation of a new world order, it is very important to identify its key properties, identify the challenges associated with them and offer the public possible answers to them. It is proposed to consider conflictness, uncertainty and other features as properties of polycentrism. These properties entail certain challenges, the answers to them could be flexibility of diplomacy, development of international leadership and others.

Key words: *polycentric world, uncertainty, conflictness, diversity, theory of resolving foreign policy problems, flexibility, creative diplomacy, leadership.*

Many researchers have pointed out to the crisis of the existing world order, the reasons for which are obvious [2]. It is based on a kind of club of Western countries, access to which is offered to other states under the fulfillment of obligatory conditions and is relying on coercion, not consent. It became especially noticeable when competitors of the West from among the developing countries, primarily China began to grow. If previously the slogan of the world order was “The West and the Rest,” today it has lost its significance. The West is more and more often associated with a pensioner, still active, but living out. A landmark in this sense was D. Trump’s rise to power in the USA, although this world order began to decompose long before it. Trump questions the relationships not only with rivals, but also with allies, which finally drew a line under the old world order. A prototype of a new world order is sprouting on its soil.

The United States, the former hegemon, cannot fail to notice changes occurring in the world order. Secretary of State M. Pompeo is trying to refute the

widespread view that the administration of D. Trump is seeking to destroy the existing “liberal” world order. Washington’s goal, he said, is not to destroy, but only to rebuild it in accordance with the realities of the 21st century. Many of the outdated economic and diplomatic structures were formed after the Second World War and today no longer meet the interests of the United States. Pompeo believes that in recent years, American foreign policy “was focused on combating terrorism and much less on confronting major powers ... Today, although the fight against terrorism remains a priority, conflicts with powerful states such as China and Russia increasingly determine geopolitics [19].” The Secretary of State concludes that we need new rules of the world order that are fairer and more in line with the US interests.

The well-known Russian politician and political scientist A. Pushkov also expressed several thoughts on the formation of a new world order [1]. In his opinion, that order will be multipolar. He considers Russia, China, the USA, Japan, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Turkey, Israel, Egypt, Mexico, Brazil and some other countries to be such poles. Historical experience suggests that transitions from one world order to another are accompanied by wars. However, the presence of nuclear weapons turns a full-scale war today into a mutual destruction. Therefore, according to A. Pushkov, the new world order will be established through rivalry in several directions. They include regional wars, intensification of economic rivalry and unleashing of information wars. The transition to a new world order will be chaotic not orderly.

Thus, the understanding of the need for fundamental changes in the world order is reflected in the politics and political assessments of the major world countries. There are various scenarios for a future world pattern, such as multipolarity, polycentricity, versatility and other [21]. In our opinion, the most likely of them is a polycentric world. The process of its formation is already underway, and we, in our previous works, considered its various aspects, noting the insufficient theoretical development of this concept [12. P. 89-101]. Obviously, we are in the period of formation, i.e. the beginning of the formation of such new world system. It’s common knowledge that the initial stage is the most difficult one from the point of view of determining the future rules of the game. S.V. Lavrov in this regard believes that “the configuration of the international system is determined by objective factors [10].” In our opinion, these objective factors should be supplemented with subjective ones, such as awareness of the essence of the ongoing processes and accompanying political actions. It will help to avoid, or at least reduce, the chaotic nature of the stage of the formation of the polycentric world, mentioned by A. Pushkov: the higher is the awareness, the less chaotic it will be.

At this stage, in order to understand the essence of polycentricity, it is necessary and possible to identify the newly emerging, already existing properties of this new world order and try to offer answers to the associated challenges of our time. Let us consider these properties and the answers to the resulting challenges.

Properties of the emerging polycentric world

The study of literature and international practice allows to single out the following properties of the emerging polycentric world: the speed and depth of the changes, the uncertainty of the international environment, the growing conflict-ness of the situation and the increasing diversity of the world. Below is a brief review of these properties.

The speed and depth of the changes.

Acceleration of the world events has always been taking place, but the current degree of acceleration gives our time a new quality [26. P. 19-32]. This is especially noticeable in the global economy. As we already wrote in one of the previous works, only 12% of the companies included in the Fortune 500 List 1955 remained in the 2016 List of America's largest transnational companies [13. P. 177-197]. The updating of the world economic actors is going at an unprecedented speed. The winners are those companies that seek to accelerate decision-making processes and find breakthrough proposals in the conduct of their business. Closely related to the world politics, the world economy provides in this regard a useful recipe for the domestic and world diplomacy.

An increase in the speed of the changes taking place in the world is noted by many politicians and researchers. Different opinions are expressed about the depth of these changes, which, together with the speed, creates a new quality of the current era. Former German Foreign Minister Z. Gabriel calls the changes taking place in the world dramatic [8]. Drama is understood as "a state associated with intense experience of some contradictions, with emotions and anxiety; acute struggle of opposing forces and tense intrigue [7]." This definition largely reflects the current state of international relations. It is also important that this state has been preserved for quite a long time, so it can be concluded that it has been transformed from a state into a property of the modern world.

Uncertainty.

Plenty of publications address global uncertainty [22]. Suffice it to recall that D. Trump is reputed to be the most unpredictable politician in the world and he is president of the world's largest power. In turn, the West accuses Russia of violating the existing rules of international law and presents Moscow as the most unpredictable partner on the world stage.

Uncertainty is increasing today, also in view of the sharp decline in lines of communication between the main players. Particularly disturbing is the destruction of contacts between the world's leading security actors. The situation in the field of Russia-NATO contacts, frozen in 2014 at the initiative of the Alliance, is well known. Contacts are frozen not only between Russia and its Western partners. In September 2018, it was announced that the representatives of China would not come to the United States to a symposium on maintaining international security at sea, the visit of the head of the PRC naval forces was canceled.

At the beginning of October 2018, Chief of Pentagon J. Mattis also cancelled a planned visit to China due to strained relations between Washington and Beijing. The weaker the communication channels between actors, the more uncertain the situation becomes.

Conflictness.

The above idea of the US Secretary of State about conflicts between world powers speaks about the importance of that feature in modern politics and in the near future. A similar idea was expressed by the head of the Policy Planning Unit of the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs T. Bagger, who believed that the crisis has become a “new normality [3. P. 25-35].”

Russian researchers I.V. Ilyin and O.G. Leonova noted that “a higher conflictness is a tendency that has already begun to vividly declare itself [9. P. 21-35].” They recalled a number of conflicts on the African continent, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and conflicts in Iraq, Libya, Syria and Ukraine. Unfortunately, the list goes on. According to these researchers, most of the current conflicts are connected with the struggle for the distribution of limited resources, be it oil or shale gas. They predict that in the future conflict interaction will take the form of “clearing territories” and stripping “extra human balance”.

Diversity.

In the bipolar world there were only two positions: the Western and the Soviet. The countries of the world were grouped around them without any initiative. In the unipolar world, the USA was the hegemon, no opinion on the international situation different from the American could exist. Today, it is impossible to mow all countries with the same comb. Not only Moscow or Beijing disagree with Washington on important issues of the world agenda, but also Berlin and Paris, and it was clearly shown at the G-20 summit in Argentina in early December 2018. India refused to submit to the powerful US pressure that in the fall of 2018 tried to prevent India's purchase of Russian anti-aircraft missile systems S-400. It is becoming more and more difficult, if not impossible, to integrate different positions on complex issues of the international agenda.

There are many different manifestations of diversity in the modern world. One of them is the increasingly frequent accusations of different countries of each other in double standards. In the era of unipolarity, this could not happen by definition. However, gradually as the polycentric world becomes more developed and its diversity grows, such cases increase in number. At the beginning of December 2018, a search for “double standards” on the website of the Russian Foreign Ministry gave 1.463 answers. For example, Russia is ready for international cooperation in countering terrorism without double standards [18]. At a recent press briefing, US Department of State Deputy Spokesperson Robert Palladino repeatedly returned to the topic of double standards [20]. In one of the previous works, the author of this article noted the tendency of an increasing use of dou-

ble standards metaphors in the international discussions by different countries and suggested removing this problem from the Russian foreign policy agenda by taking into account the formation of a polycentric world [14. P. 26-35]. It can be assumed that the number of double standards will continue to grow.

The considered properties of the emerging new world order concern not only our country, they are the same for everyone. The entire world will develop during the foreseeable period, namely the period of the emergence of a new world pattern under these conditions. Accordingly, if used correctly, it is possible to more effectively implement Russian national interests. All these properties should not be viewed as threats, but as challenges that need to be answered adequately.

Answers to the challenges of the emerging polycentric world

Theory of solving foreign policy problems.

The answer to the rapid variability in world politics could be a qualitative theory of solving foreign policy problems, on the basis of which one could develop forecasts of the world development and promptly resolve emerging problems. Without this, the country's foreign policy will be carried out on the principle of "stimulus-reaction", i.e. mired in routine. There is a possibility for developing a theory in such a complex area as foreign policy. A good example in this regard is the Theory of Inventive Problem Solving (TRIZ). It would seem impossible to shackle in the narrow framework of the laws of invention and creativity. But G. Altshuler and his followers managed to generalize the methods of many thousands of technical inventions and on this basis to create their own theory, which is developing today. TRIZ extends not only to technical problems, but also to other areas of activity [23. P. 214-217]. A similar theory could be developed for resolving foreign policy problems.

The issues of digital diplomacy should take a special place in this work. Processing large data on international relations and the use of artificial intelligence in foreign policy will provide an opportunity to quickly and more reasonably take the most important decisions for the world system. Studies show that today digital diplomacy allows us to more accurately calculate the probability of the most important aspect of the modern world order – armed clashes. In the course of resolution of these issues, such diverse information as food prices, the state of the environment, moods in social networks, lack of resources, unrest and other seemingly unrelated indicators of the state of society are being analyzed [25].

The development of a theory of foreign policy should concern also other aspects of political science. For some of them, there is currently a stagnation in domestic science, to put it mildly. For example, from January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2018, only four Ph.D. theses in Conflictology were defended in Russia. But the need for such specialists of the highest category will increase, given the projected dynamics of the development of that feature in the emerging polycentric world.

Flexibility.

The answer to the uncertainty of international relations could be flexibility in world politics. Sometimes the modern age is called the Age of Flexibility [5]. The author considers the following features to be characteristic features for this century: the speed of developments, innovation, unpredictability, complexity of the situation and the difficulty in identifying the actors. It is necessary to react flexibly to all specified sides of reality. In this regard, we can take the example of Western countries, in which the private military and security business has gained tremendous development. It is much more flexible and maneuverable than regular armed forces providing military operations in difficult conditions. Flexibility in acute uncertain situations is a litmus test that shows the degree of international flexibility of the countries as a whole.

Russia also finds decent flexible responses to complex uncertain situations in the world politics. A case in point in this regard: as a result of compromises with Turkey, Russia took a rather unexpected decision to abandon military actions in the area of the Syrian city of Idlib in September 2018. A flexible approach to foreign policy is demonstrated by diplomatic services of other countries. It would be advisable to systematize and summarize such experience for its more effective use in the foreign policy activities of our country.

Flexibility should compensate for the lack of stability familiar in the former world order. Almost all world leaders in their foreign policy speeches talk about instability, turbulence, etc. They call for maintaining stability in the world, but it can be assumed that there is no return to the era of stability in its previous form, the above-mentioned new properties of the international relations will determine the conditions of functioning of the world system for quite a long time. Countries need to develop institutional, operational and other flexibilities. Flexibility largely depends on the quality of information support for the foreign policy decisions. As we have already noted, in this respect the role of intelligence activities is extremely important [15. P. 61-74]. Currently, judging by the information in the foreign media, there is a boom of intelligence actions as a response to uncertainty and unpredictability in the world politics [4].

Creative Diplomacy.

Social studies, in particular, in the fields of psychology and pedagogy, show that it is much easier to find a way out of a conflict situation not from the stereotypical, conservative position but thorough creativity [11; 6. P. 48-50]. Transferring this conclusion to the international sphere, it can be assumed that the development of creative diplomacy could be a response to the growing conflictness in the world. There are many examples of successful creative diplomacy, one of them is an active use of social networks, Twitter in particular, by the Russian Embassy in the UK.

It can also be assumed that when a polycentric system is established, international law will continue to lose its significance: the old will no longer meet new

needs, and the new will not keep pace with the rapid changes. The United States is already withdrawing from a number of international organizations and fundamental treaties in order not to comply with their norms. China does not recognize the 2017 decision of the Philippines-initiated international arbitration of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in the Hague on the South China Sea. Examples can be continued. In this regard, the importance of the so-called “soft power”, the ability to attract, not to force, will only grow. In this direction, the role of creative diplomacy is crucial. The task of Russia is to direct additional efforts to the development of this area of foreign policy activity.

Leadership.

The answer to global diversity could be international leadership. Leadership at the moment is clearly a missing feature for both countries and international organizations. For the time being, all of us still hope that someone else will resolve the acute problems of our time. For example, the Deputy Head of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine A. Hug stated: “I would like to stress that the task of the OSCE mission is not to end the conflict. The parties must do it. We, as well as other entities involved in the settlement process, contribute to the fulfillment of the promises by the parties [24].” Such a position was acceptable for the bipolar and unipolar worlds, when the hegemon or dominants took crucial decisions. At present, we need leadership solutions that we have already mentioned above [16. P. 72-87; 17. P. 39-52].

This need is already present in the world political discourse. This is what French political analyst, professor of international relations at the Paris Institute for Political Studies Z. Laidi [27] asks the European Union to do. In his opinion, the Europeans need to get stronger in order to resist the US initiatives, the will of Russia and the maneuvers of China. How to gain the necessary strength, not being a state or knowing that they will never become a state? Not by building a European superpower comparable to other powers, but by creating fragments of power that should be strengthened and made to resonate with each other, Laidi reasons. The first such fragment is the so-called normative force, that is, the ability to create norms and standards that will eventually be introduced on a global scale. This means leadership. The French political analyst considers the feeling of danger to be the second forming factor of power. And finally, the third parameter of strength consists in the development of a truly leadership quality – the ability to take the lead.

Thus, we have come to the conclusion that the emerging polycentric world is characterized by such properties as the speed and depth of global changes, the uncertainty of the world situation, the conflict nature of the today international relations and the diversity of the current universe. These properties, more and more revealing themselves every day, create challenges for the politicians on all continents. Answers to these challenges could be the development of a theory of

solving international problems, higher flexibility of domestic and world diplomacy, the development of creative principles in the resolution of conflicts and leadership in the modern variegated world.

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