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Leokadiya DROBIZHEVA

ALL-RUSSIAN, REGIONAL AND ETHNIC DIMENSIONS OF CONSOLIDATING IDENTITY

Abstract. *The article is devoted to formation of the Russian civil identity, debates over its interpretation and its representation in public consciousness. Using representative all-Russian and regional polls, the author analyses dynamics of the all-Russian identity and its identification basis. These bases are common state and territory, then the historical past, culture and citizens' responsibility for the country's affairs. Civil identity in the Republics of Russia and among people of non-Russian nationality differs from the average. The main difference is higher importance of such consolidating foundations as common state and territory, as well as diversity in ideas about historical past and cultural heritage. According to the author, ways to strengthen the Russian civil identity include increasing inter-ethnic trust and promoting cohesion around common values and development goals.*

Keywords: *All-Russian civil identity, consolidation, regional identity, ethnic identity, identification basis.*

Anatol LIEVEN

THE DANCE OF THE GHOSTS: A NEW COLD WAR WITH RUSSIA WILL NOT SERVE WESTERN INTERESTS

Abstract. *A "new cold war" with Russia has little to do with a reasoned and objective analysis of Russian policy and the Western–Russian relationship. It does not correspond to the West's real interests, the historical context in which Russia's actions have taken place, the extent of the threat Russia poses to the West, or the differences between the vital interests of Russia and leading Western states. Nurturing a fear of Russia does not merely distract attention from the domestic and external problems that are weakening and dividing the West, but by doing so the West, but helps to make them worse. Yet, it is only in the meeting of these challenges, most of which will almost certainly require the abandonment of key Western shibboleths, that the democratic West will stand or fall.*

Keywords: *Cold War, Russian policy, Western–Russian relations, security threats, Western interests.*

Natalia TRAVKINA**NOVEMBER 2018 UNITED STATES ELECTIONS: REFERENDUM ON DONALD TRUMP**

Abstract. *The article analyzes political situation in the US, in the run-up to the midterm congressional elections held under the slogan “referendum on Trump” or, even broader, “referendum on Trumpism”. It is concluded that due to political polarization between Republicans and Democrats, the election outcome is likely to continue a trend of the last 15 years — the governing party, which initially controlled both legislative and executive power, traditionally loses majority in one or both houses of Congress after midterm elections.*

Keywords: *midterm elections, referendum on trumpism, Democrats’ electorate, split of Re-publicans, historical pattern, ideological polarization.*

Tatiana SHAKLEINA**POLITICAL SITUATION IN WASHINGTON. ROLE OF MASS MEDIA AND RUSSIAN-AMERICAN RELATIONS**

Abstract. *Since the end of the Cold War the US — Russia relations have gone through various phases. By 2018, according to many Russian and especially American experts, the two powers have entered a new cold war, which is interpreted in different ways. Was there any chance to avoid such an evolution or was it rather predetermined by historical paradigms? A war can be prevented — much, if not all, hinges on what ruling elites are trying to achieve. However, the American political establishment is already acting in line with traditional foreign policy paradigm, militant and intolerant, supported by a large-scale ideological campaign aimed, inter alia, at distracting the Americans from domestic problems by choosing Russia as an external enemy.*

Keywords: *Russia, USA, media, D. Trump, ruling parties, elections 2016, Cold War, freedom of speech, information leaks.*

Petr YAKOVLEV**NAFTA 2.0: TRADE EQUIVALENT OF GEOPOLITICAL TRANSFORMATIONS**

Abstract. *Negotiations with Canada and Mexico on updating the terms of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) have become one of the top international priorities for Donald Trump. These negotiations should be seen not just in conjunction with other Washington’s trade initiatives, but as part of its wider campaign to promote American positions in the changing geopolitical landscape by weakening other nations. Reforming NAFTA is one of the strategic decisions by Donald Trump seeking to dismantle the international order.*

Keywords: *USA, Canada, Mexico, NAFTA, negotiations, trade wars, geopolitical factors.*

Boris DOLGOV**SYRIA: A NEW PHASE OF THE CONFLICT — INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION**

Abstract. *A new phase of the Syrian conflict has been characterized by the Islamic State's defeat, increased involvement of external actors, and the growing impact of the Kurdish factor. The article analyzes policies and actions by the US, Israel, Turkey, Persian Gulf monarchies and other countries trying to benefit from the Syrian conflict in the pursuit of their foreign policy goals. Attention is given to Russia's role in fighting radical Islamism and resolving crisis in Syria.*

Keywords: *Syrian conflict, Islamic State's defeat, external actors, radical Islamism, Russia's role.*

Vadim TRUKHACHEV**CLEAVAGES OVER RUSSIA IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC**

Abstract. *Relations with Russia have been actively discussed in the Czech Republic, including 2017–2018 parliamentary and presidential elections. Local politicians, even within the same parties, differ in their attitude to Russia ranging from harsh criticism to empathy. In general, skepticism prevails, but it is more like “selective criticism”, as proved by reelection of the President Miloš Zeman known for his relative loyalty to Russia.*

Keywords: *Czech Republic, Russia, European Union, sanctions, Czech parties, M. Zeman, A. Babiš.*

Anton KRUTIKOV**S.D. SAZONOV AND THE POLISH QUESTION IN THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR**

Abstract. *At the time of World War I, the increased importance of the Polish question resulted from the course of military action itself. The Russian Foreign Minister S.D. Sazonov suggested a program of reforms for the Kingdom of Poland, in order to restore its constitutional status and autonomy. The initiative was discussed in the Russian Council of Ministers, but was eventually rejected due to conflicting views and reluctance to debate such a sensitive issue in war-time. That decision, followed by Sazonov's dismissal, left little chance of reconciliation between the two Slavic nations at the end of the First World War.*

Keywords: *S.D.Sazonov, Russian diplomacy, Polish question, Russian-Polish relations, Kingdom of Poland, Congress Poland, Russian Empire, First World War.*