RUSSIAN DEBATES ON RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES

By the end of the Bush administration relations between Russia and the United States were often defined as unsatisfactory and disappointing for both sides, as being in a stalemate, or even in a serious crisis. Mass media and scholarly papers were full of mutual criticism, however interaction at different levels was going on. There were objective and subjective reasons for such situation. Objective factors that led to misunderstanding and deterioration, were serious changes in international system after bipolar order ended, and in status and policies of both countries. Subjective reasons are related to differences in political thinking, in ideas that determined new political courses, first of all, foreign policies.

In the paper we are not analyzing all the reasons that prevented Russia and the United States to formulate clear and close to reality view of each other’s plans and policies. We shall concentrate on one very important reason of complexities of Russian-American interaction – debates in Russian academic community on issues of world order and role of Russia in its formation, American foreign policy, and Russian-American relations. The hypothesis is that American scholars’ and politicians’ operational code is different from one used by Russian scholars (by the majority): notions and criteria used to describe and analyze Russian foreign policy thinking, interpretations of Russian views on international relations, do not take into account Russia’s certain intellectual autonomy determined by history, tradition, and very complex contemporary stage of development.¹

One can say that visible difference in organizational resources between the United States and other great powers, unilateralism and domination of the United States which affected and changed policies of many countries, gave rise to expectations of intellectual subordination (partial or complete) of other countries and their elites to Western (American) theories of contemporary international order. Partially these expectations (or plans) realized but in Russia and many other countries only small section of intellectual elite took American view of world development and accepted subordinated, reactive position in the 21st century. The majority accepted only some ideas and estimations, kept adherence to national political culture, traditions,

¹ Russian IR school of thought to a very great extent developed under the influence of Western theories and is very young as compared to British and American schools. We never deny that. However, Russian IR scholars try to say their own word in analyzing and describing contemporary world and world history. Some of them, for instance, A. Bogaturov, M. Khrustalev, N. Kosolapov, and A. Voskressenski developed their own analytical apparatus and suggest their own conceptions and views of international relations and foreign policies of various countries, first of all, Russia, the United States, China and other states. They assume that their may be different approaches to world order structure and ways of its construction, and the result should be the product of collective interaction.
and produced their own conceptions. This is the case with Russian analysts who study international relations and the United States.

Among reasons why American analysts often fail to give more realistic picture of Russia’s policy and Russian view of the United States and the West, there are the following: 1) Russian “liberals” and “conservatives”, having a number of common general characteristics, however differ in many ways from American “liberals” and “conservatives” due to historic tradition and peculiarities of contemporary stage in the development of the Russian state; 2) Russian political science and international relations studies developed under very strong Western (British and American) influence, are very young and accept a lot of ideas from Western theories, but Russian IR scholars try to develop Russian school of thought that does not necessarily fully reflect or coincide with foreign (American) theories.

**Russian international and American studies scholars: classification**

One of the mistakes made by Russian studies specialists in the United States, is that they still often divide analysts and politicians using the categories of “Slavophils” and “Westernizers”. This division is obsolete and leads to confusion when we characterize contemporary Russian intellectual and political community. The dominating majority should be analyzed with the categories: “liberal – conservative, and/or “idealist – realist”2. Russian political elite, especially, during late Soviet and post-Soviet years, was formed under the strong influence of foreign thought, as we mentioned above, and analyzes Russia and the rest of the world in generally accepted categories. However, Western theories in Russian practice differ from their practical application in the United States.

We can classify Russian political scientists by analyzing their views on a number of foreign policy issues: world order and world leadership; role of nation state; institutions and norms vs. national sovereignty; global, regional, national in world politics; foreign vs. domestic policy.

In real politics and political discourse we can hardly find “pure” types. Among Russian liberals we can distinguish “liberals-internationalists” (idealists) and “liberals-realists”. Among Russian conservatives, who generally think in realist terms, we can identify “liberal conservatives” or “conservative internationalists” and “traditional conservatives”. The number of “liberals-internationalists” and “traditional conservatives” is not large, and their influence on formation of Russia’s international course is close to zero in 2000s. “Liberals-realists” also do not have decisive influence in foreign policy decision making though they represent quite visible and strong opinion group in Russian expert community, business community and domestic policy structures.

The most numerous group in international and American studies are “liberal conservatives” or “conservative internationalists” who have decisive influence on foreign policy decision making. “Traditional conservatives” are not numerous, can be found mostly among politicians, and are not popular or influential in politics and society3.

**Russian liberals**

As we mentioned above, “Russian liberals” are not homogeneous, and there are very few of explicit type. Russian liberals as well as their American colleagues consider values and a human being to be the greatest priority, and while speaking of contemporary Russian

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2 Those who “dream” of monarchist empire or “new USSR” are very few, do not make any practical steps and have no support in the society.

3 Among “traditional conservatives” we can mention G. Zyuganov, A. Dugin, S. Kurginian, M. Delyagin; V. Zhirinovski and A. Prokhanov are “hawks” in this group, and often are not characterized as “traditional conservatives”.
development operate within the following paradigm: “values – human being – institutions – state”.

There are not any “crusaders” among Russian liberals because Russia does not have any messianic component in its international policy (like the USSR), does not plan any “crusade” (as compared to views and plans of certain liberal and neoconservative politicians and scholars in the United States who are part of policy planning and ruling elite).

Russian liberals:
* acknowledge unipolar world order as established one, American unchallenged leadership, universality of Western norms and institutions, necessity for Russia to become part of community of “civilized” countries;
* state that in contemporary international system nation states have ceased to be principal actors, and decisive role belongs to non-state actors;
* agree that national sovereignty is not an absolute category in globalizing world;
* consider domestic development the highest priority, and foreign policy as subordinate to domestic demands;
* deny Russia’s great power status and are very critical of Russian foreign and domestic policy in general, and especially after 1999. They claim that Russia, having scarce resources and lagging behind highly developed countries, must give up any grand or great power strategy and conduct modest policy aimed at seeking cooperation with the United States and other Western countries. They hope that some day Russia will be part of Western structures (NATO, EU).

Difference between two groups – “liberals-internationalists” and “liberals-realists” is very small. “Liberals-internationalists” - A. Melville, M. Lebedeva, V. Kulagin, V. Baranovski, D. Furman, A. Zagorski and others, concentrate on values (Western values and institutions) and political system that provides democratic development and economic growth, satisfaction of human needs and rights. “Liberals-realists” – V. Kremenyuk, D. Trenin, S. Karaganov, V. Inozemtsev, V. Nikonov and others, agree with their liberal colleagues on the issues of values and orientation to the West but often use geopolitical categories and realpolitik notions while describing the world and relations between countries. They also pay more attention to foreign policy per se, and not necessarily diminish its role as compared to domestic affairs.

A. Melville, Professor of High School of Economics, is one of the most value oriented scholars (being a philosopher as well as a political scientist). He stated: “Priorities of real but not transcendental Russia are quite simple but important for its citizens: medical care, education, science. They can be fully solved only after Russia gets rid of its imperial burden and concentrate on its internal problems. It has a historic chance to solve problems that were “postponed” because Russia was pursuing a global strategy demanding all resources and lives of its citizens. It needs to finish building its democratic system, restructuring its economic system. The challenge to contemporary Russia they see not in possible loss of its geopolitical status but in failure to build a democratic and prosperous society that will allow finding a new place in the world”.

V. Kulagin, Professor of MGIMO, is also adherent of Russia’s political and economic westernization, critic of Russian foreign policy, especially its policy towards the United States, Russia’s obsession by great power strategy. He stresses the point that Russia should not oppose dominant international trends of globalization and democratization, Western norms and institutions, should accept them and become part of globalizing majority. He agrees with D. Trenin who wrote in 2000 that if Russia continues putting its stake on greatness of the state

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derzhavnost), it will follow its traditional way leading to destruction and degradation. D. Trenin wrote about “unreliable foreign policy of Russia” at the time when Russia started to pursue policy visibly different from 1990s. He warned that to achieve success of reformation of the country, Russia had to give up great part of its political baggage, integrate into Big Europe, learn to play by the rules suggested (or dictated) by stronger players, to become part of international community where the United States play central role, however leaving enough space for maneuver. Speaking about Russian-American relations he defined them as “constructive asymmetry”: “Refusal to be part of the process of globalization – spread of Western norms of political, economic and societal organization, will lead to marginalization of the country, its turning … into Euro-China”.

These words were the answer to debates on Russia’s identity (East or West), on democracy in Russia (“sovereign democracy” and “real sovereignty” vs. Western democracy and “divided or restricted” sovereignty), and relations with the West, in particular with the United States. D. Trenin thinks that to achieve real positive “breakthrough” in relations with the United States, “Russia needs to move forward energetically on the way of domestic reforms and modernization” (rule of law, judicial reform to safeguard private property and to curb bureaucracy), to improve its image in the United States, to become attractive not only for big but also for small foreign business. He stated that only modernization will open doors for Russia into the community of countries who share common values.

V. Kremenyuk, Deputy Director of the Institute of the USA and Canada Studies, warns that if Russia continues playing a dangerous game of balancing between West and East, opposing the United States who try to organize the international system and solve global problems, it may lose and become part of weak or failed states (marginalized). He stated: “Formation of world society will not stop if Russia continues to hesitate making its choice between West and East. … there are three huge “craters” around Russia: the West, China and Moslem world. The West is drawing into its orbit Western part of the CIS, and we cannot exclude a possibility that Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, Azerbaijan, like the Baltic States, will become part of Western security and economic systems. Moslem world does not have similar attractiveness, but already looks with special interest at Moslem regions of Russia (Northern Caucasus, Tatarstan, and Bashkortostan) as strategically important territories together with Middle Asia and Transcaucasia. Needs of modernization of “Chinese billion” demand access to Russia’s energy and other resources of demographically weak Siberia …”. His conclusion is: if Russia hesitates and continues to play anti-Western or uncertain “unique” and great power politics, its might lose any opportunity to fulfill modernization and become one of the actors of Western world.

“Liberals-internationalists” and “liberals-realists” agree that Russia is only “geographical East” and civilizationally is the West (though “the Western civilization” rejects Russia as its integral part, and this is quite correct from historic and scientific point of view). Through 1990s and in 2000s they have been supporting this assumption, and are sure that Russia can survive only as part of the West in the long perspective after successful modernization.

So, the message of liberals was and is: to give up some of Russia’s political culture, old great power identity, accept Western rules and values (at least some of them that will make Russia more understandable, predictable and similar to Europe and the U.S.), and new rules of

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8 On this topic, see, for instance, the author’s paper presented at the 47th ISA Annual Convention, San Diego, 2006: T. Shakleina. Russia Between East and West / http://www.isanet.org
the game in post-modern world. They think that in case Russia accommodates itself with a diminished status in world politics, it will be acknowledged in a very long perspective, together with Europe and America as the third, independent bearing of the enlarged West.\textsuperscript{11}

This idea is very strong, and in 2009, after the Obama administration came to power and there appeared hopes that the United States will change neoconservative course, Russian liberals put forward the idea of “enlarged West” with Russia as the third component of Western system. V. Inozemtsev, Editor-in-Chief of the Journal “Svobodnaya Misl”, wrote that not only Russia should be blamed for remaining an outsider for democratic world, the United States and the West could also be blamed for that, because they could be more decisive and persistent in their efforts and initiatives to incorporate Russia into Western community.\textsuperscript{12}

V. Inozemtsev thinks that establishment of stable world order is possible only on the basis of “enlarged West” which includes Northern America, Australia, New Zealand, European Union, Russia, former Soviet republics (not members of EU) and Latin American countries. He is sure that such unification will be advantageous for all the countries. His opinion is that Western countries might hesitate to create new Pan-American organization as a substitute for NATO, and a new economic organization similar to EU with Russia, Argentina, Mexico, Ukraine and other countries included because of China factor. He puts forward the idea that apprehension that “enlarged West” might cause strong rejection and opposition from China, and it might lead to complexities in international relations. However, V. Inozemtsev and D. Trenin do not think that it is possible, since new Western community will not be seeking any conflict, and any real opposition will be useless.

In 2009 the idea of “constructive asymmetry” got new interpretation in the report prepared by the Council on Foreign and Defense Policy (SVOP). It was said that in new global context Russia and the United States cannot solve key problems of their national strategies without mutual support. This unique situation they defined as “cross” symmetry (“perekrestnaya symmetria”): though there remains general asymmetry in Russian-American relations and power potentials in many spheres, countries can be very useful to each other. The authors think that this mutual need dictates possibility of establishing “big bargain” format of Russian-American relations when agenda should be much bigger than suggested by the Obama administration “resetting” program, which covers only one sphere of coordination and interaction – arms control.\textsuperscript{13}

Russian liberals have always considered Russia as part of the West, and they are trying to persuade Americans and Europeans to accept this axiom, and more actively help Russian liberals to strengthen movement towards the United States and European Union by developing real cooperation in economic, security, political, and ideological spheres. V. Nikonov wrote: “… «resetting» button brings program back to some previous condition, to status quo. Were there any status quo in Russian-American relations which we would like to bring back? I doubt that there was one. Computer needs to be seriously upgraded by changing its operational memory. Resetting is not enough.”\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{12} Inozemtsev V. Konturi Postkrizisnogo Mira (Contour of the World after the Crisis) // Russia in Global Politics. No 3 (May-June 2009) / http://www.globalaffairs.ru/numbers/38/11949.html/ последнее посещение 27.08.2009


\textsuperscript{14} Nikonov V. Obama Udivil (Obama surprised) // Russia in Global Affairs. No. 4 (July-August 2009) / http://www.globalaffairs.ru/articles/12021.html
Though liberals’ views have been changing, and they more often spoke of foreign policy and importance of Russia’s international initiatives, they did not become a prevailing group in decision making and influence on public opinion.

Russia’s policy was becoming more pragmatic and decisive, and there were a number of factors that determined such shift: strengthening of criticism of Russia already in the middle of 1990s, bringing back negative image of Russia (already during presidential campaign of 1996), enlargement of NATO and disagreements between countries on security issues, revolutions in CIS countries to a great extent inspired and sponsored by the U.S., accusations of Russia of new imperial plans, big energy very politicized game around and against Russia while it was experiencing economic and social hardships, keeping Russia out of WTO while other very economically weak countries had been accepted, etc.\(^{15}\)

Such policy not only spoiled the image of the United States among Russians. It also once more showed that Russia is not viewed in the United States and Europe as a “Western country”, as part of the West, and Russia will have to solve the problem of economic, political and geopolitical recovery relying mostly on its own resources. Russia very reluctantly gave up one-dimensional policy – United States oriented policy – and slowly developed multi-dimensional strategy that was formulated by E. Primakov in 1996, and A. Torkunov and A. Bogaturov in 2009: Russia will work with those countries that are really seeking mutually favorable cooperation. In 2000s Russia started active policy in the East: initiated new agreements, contracts, organizations actions with China, India, Mongolia, Central-Asian countries, Turkey, Iran, Brasilia and other Latin American countries; began new Far-Eastern policy; took steps to be included into Asian-Pacific economic subsystem. The United States were characterized as very important but not the only country that has great importance for Russia.

As Academician A. Torkunov stated, Russia was seeking for stable and friendly relations with the United States, but Russia considers bilateral relations to be important for building up more secure and prosperous world order. Russia will follow this path (of world order construction – T. Sh.) with the United States when and if possible to cooperate, and when impossible – on its own\(^{16}\).

**Russian conservatives**

Russian liberals and conservatives share many ideas, for instance, necessity of modernization, improvement of political and judicial systems; importance of relations with leading industrial countries of the West, membership in international organizations, and some other. However, there are differences that allow to analyze them as separate groups. All conservatives operate with realist categories, and pay much attention to international context of Russia’s existence. We do not analyze a small group of “traditional conservatives” who are not very much represented in expert community and do not have influence, some of them are still in politics (for instance, A. Dugin, A. Rogozin, G. Zyuganov, L. Ivashev). The majority are “conservative internationalists” or “liberal conservatives” who acknowledge liberal paradigm “values – individual – institutions – state”, but have different from liberal views on how it should be realized. This group is numerous because from the end of 1990s it unites some of former “liberals-internationalists”, who were disappointed by domestic and foreign policy, and by the course of Russian-American interaction, and those experts who from the very beginning stated that Russia will not be accepted into Western organizations, will not easily get any financial and economic assistance (new Marshall Plan), and will have to solve tasks of national recovery and reformation and modernization in very complex and competitive regional and international environment. This group includes: E. Primakov, E. Batalov, A. Bogaturov, A. Voskressenski, A.


\(^{16}\) Torkunov A. Slovo i Delo v Otneniyakh SSHA s Rossiey (Word and Deed in Relations Between the U.S. and Russia) // Izvestia. 31 March, 2009 / [http://www.izvestia.ru/comment/article3126869/index.html](http://www.izvestia.ru/comment/article3126869/index.html)

“Conservative internationalists” express the following ideas.

* On the issue of world order their views differ. Some of them acknowledge that in the 1990s it was unipolar or with “plural unipolarity” (S. Rogov, A. Bogaturov), others always acknowledged only polycentric character of the world (E. Primakov, A. Torkunov, A. Kokoshin, T. Shakleina), E. Batalov wrote about “the world without poles”17. By 2010 practically all of them have stated that the world is multipolar or polycentric, and this structure will be characteristic for the 21st century.

By this time some American and European scholars also acknowledged multipolarity (for instance, R. Haass, R. Kagan, I. Wallerstein, Z. Brzezinski, Ch. Kupchan, P. Khanna)18, though their interpretation of multipolarity is different. According to Russian view, contemporary world structure has more than three centers of power – the United States, European Union, China, or three new empires which will determine world development.

Both Russian and American scholars acknowledge that the United States is the superpower, dominant center in world structure. They differ in the description of centers of power: number, hierarchy, interaction between various centers, perspectives of inter-center relations. Russian scholars think that new world order construction is not America’s prerogative, and Russia, Brazil, India and some other big countries cannot be excluded from the group of countries-participants of world order formation.

* Special attention is paid to the problem or global leadership. One of the issues is weather the United States is a global leader, and Russia must accept this and follow the leader on its terms. As we mentioned above, Russian liberals recognize the United States as unchallengeable global leader, and denying Russia a great power status, consider it vital for Russia to follow the U.S. Even during the Bush administration second term, when American world regulation policy acquired hegemonic form, they criticized the hegemon but did not doubt the necessity to follow America after change of administration.

The majority of “liberal conservatives” also recognize that the United States is the global leader, and do not accept the idea of obligatory following the superpower on any terms. They attract attention to a new nature of American leadership. A. Bogaturov, Vice-Rector of MGIMO-University, one of principle authors of Russian theory of world order, states that in the middle of the 20th century a serious shift took place: the leader did not try any more to destroy opponents (though traditional forms of defeating opponents – wars, interventions, covert operations, sanctions, etc. were in the arsenal of great powers), but planned its strategy the way that development of a certain country could be slowed down, and growth of its might and potential (economic, military) was under control and restriction. Such policy was “managing” and “manipulating” country’s development in the leader’s interests. This type of leadership,

17 The debates on the issue of world order are described in the monograph: Shakleina T. Russia and the United States in New World Order. M., 2002 / http://www.obraforum.ru
according to Bogaturov’s view, was used by the United States already during the cold war, but more vividly and resolutely after its end19. 

In the framework of this concept of “manipulating leadership” American policy toward Russia is seen as very controversial. Declarations made by some American politicians and experts about Russia’s too big and rich territory with very scarce population, its “interference” into life and policy of countries on Russia’s borders; American policy in post-Soviet countries (“orange revolutions), elimination of security agreements, politicized energy policy, etc. are viewed by “liberal conservatives” as actions aimed at reducing opportunities for Russia’s recovery and reinforcement of its regional and global influence.

Another point of view is that one cannot speak about acknowledged American leadership in the world where we have a number of centers of power, and there are countries which do not recognize American absolute authority in shaping new world order and development of other countries. Factor of legitimacy is very important, and not only in rhetoric or emergence of new “precedence norms” initiated by the United States and European Union. The new order needs legalization either in the form of modified old order with changed old norms and institutions (what happened with NATO and OSCE) and added new ones, or as absolutely new order with norms and institutions different from the UN Charter and all other existing principles, agreements and organizations. Various countries express different views on how the order should be constructed and function20. There is no consensus on American global leadership being vital to present and future world development. Besides, the borderline between leadership, hegemony and empire is very thin, and all these types of regulation policy have been most vividly revealed in American policy.

Russia does not only stress multipolar character of the world system, but also necessity of collective regulation when the U.S. will have a superpower and very influential status, but other countries will not be obliged to obey everything America suggests, and their opinions and interests will be taken into consideration.

* “Conservative internationalists” do not think that new world order should be built on Western norms and institutions, stress the importance of regional organizations which can fulfill very important security and economic tasks.

*”Liberal conservatives” do not deny globalization, openness, interdependency, certain restriction (or division) of sovereignty, but still consider that nation-state and national sovereignty are very important, and in many cases decisive elements and actors in world politics. They point out that non-state and state actors play together, and the outcome of their coexistence in world politics is not absolutely clear (liberals consider that non-state actors already dominate in world politics).

Russian “liberal conservatives” point out that though we cannot deny important role of non-government organizations, strong influence of transnational structures (however not always visible and hard to estimate), and even so called network organizations, these actors are still very dependent on nation states. They need their political and economic structures, territory and people, they often merge with government structures, and often it is hardly possible to distinguish who is influencing and using whom. Most influential international organizations are still based on state representation, on member-states money. We cannot exclude that in the future


balance between state and non-state actors will be changing, but at present we are watching
tendency toward strengthening nation-state. European Union model with divided sovereignty is
not considered in Russia as an ideal model for other countries21, especially with the example of
the United States taking unprecedented steps for safeguarding its national security and rejecting
any possibility or attempt to disregard or intrude into its national territory or national interests.

Academician A. Kokoshin wrote: “The main battles in the world are not only for political
control over this or that territory, but for “strategic positions” in controlling international
financial and informational flows. Principal actors on this field are big banks and financial
corporations which often act with open or secret support of nation states”. The message is that
we cannot deny nation-states the right to safeguard its sovereignty, however it does not mean
that nation states will not be influenced by processes of globalization, interaction, and certain
restriction of sovereignty in the system of international and regional organizations22.

Russian “liberal conservatives” attract attention to the fact that tendency toward
strengthening national identity is growing due to the United States policy of democratization
with forceful methods. E. Batalov, a well-known Russian philosopher and political scientist,
thinks that it is happening because highly developed countries advance and speed up integration
at different levels forgetting about human factor in these processes. According to his view, such
policy might produce an opposite effect: instead of community of prosperous states we can get
an explosive mix23.

**"Liberal conservatives” do not consider so called “humanitarian intervention” a
legitimate action in its military form, because humanitarian consequences (gumanitarnyiye
posledstviya) are not taken into account and are often ignored. E. Batalov wrote: “If the
institution of sanctioned collective humanitarian intervention becomes international norm of the
21st century, it is necessary to think better of its form. Otherwise, certain groups of people will
improve their life by making life of other groups worse”. E. Batalov attracted attention to the fact
that while the Iraq operation was being planned, all its military, technical and even economic
aspects were analyzed. What was left outside of “the plan of attack” was humanitarian problem
which became very serious not only for Iraqi people but also for American people24.

Russian scholars address American colleagues in order to start a serious discussion on
issues of great importance for the construction of world order where Russia, the United States
and other countries will feel safe and comfortable.

N. Kosolapov, Head of Foreign Policy Department of the Institute of World Economy
and International Relations, doubtful of effectiveness and legitimacy of American policy of
democratization, attracted attention to the fact that “any imposition (even of something positive)
is not a democratic act”, which in a long perspective can strengthen (but not weaken)
antidemocratic tendencies on a new and more substantial basis: “Democratic missionary” –
verbal (propaganda) and practical (military force, intelligence, economic sanctions) advancement
of democracy – is a process that can hardly be evaluated. … In case of success it should be

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21 Baykov A. “Integratsionnyye Marshruti” Zapadno-Tsentralnoy Evropi i Vostochnoy Azii (“Integrationist Trends”
in Western-Central Europe and Eastern Asia) // International Trends. Vol. 5. No.3 (September-December 2007). P.
4-17 / http://www.intertrends.ru

12 / http://www.intertrends.ru

24 Batalov E. Anthropology of international Relations // International Trends. Vol. 3. No.2 (May-August 2005). P. 4-
16 / http://www.intertrends.ru
praised, but any final estimation of real results can be made not very soon. While “line of verification” has not been reached, democratic missionary policy remains risky.\(^\text{25}\)

**“Conservative internationalists”** state that Russia’s great power status is a reality, and the country should continue international strategy in accordance with its historic traditions, political culture and attributes of a great power. Great power is defined as a state with independent foreign and domestic policy, traditional attributes – territory, population, natural resources, economic and military potential, intellectual, scientific and informational potential, culture, and organizational resource to exert visible (or domineering) influence on world politics or on politics of certain countries.\(^\text{26}\)

They stress that Russia has complex civilizational nature, and will have relations with different countries in the West and in the East, using pragmatic approach.

This civilizational nature of the Russian state has nothing to do with the issue of “Russia’s special way” or “unique role”. The point is that we cannot ignore the fact that countries are different, and “common nature” of Western countries cannot be the model for the rest of the world, consisting of countries with different cultures, social and political systems, ideologies, and socio-anthropological characteristics of people (“chelovecheskiye kachestva” or so called “national character”). It is a very serious theoretical question, and its ignorance will not permit Russia and the United States to become real complimenting partners in world politics. The same is true of other countries, China in particular, which is very distinguished from other nation states.

One of the points of disagreement is Russia’s political system, and according to American estimations, Russia is departing from democracy of the 1990s (while China is going closer to Western type of democracy). “Liberal conservatives” state that in discussions on democracy and political systems not similar to Western type there is seen strong influence of ideology and history. In the West authoritarian system in contemporary international situation is still defined as an equivalent either to monarchy of past centuries or dictatorships of the 20th century. It is not correct from scholarly point of view, and in the age of globalization, world regulation and management, autocracy can be analyzed as a “form of management” – “hierarchy with determined functions”, combination of centralism of management and decision making and democracy. Only in this combination it gives positive results.\(^\text{27}\)

*Liberal conservatives*” come to the conclusion that present world is field of competition for resources and influence, so the task is to ensure favorable surroundings and conditions for Russia’s economic development and security.

*Russian-American relations are viewed as very important, but opinions of America’s international policy and policy toward Russia are rather critical. Russian criticism of the United States at the academic level should be analyzed with the following idea in mind: the majority of Russian scholars (both classic academics and ones involved at various consulting levels into decision making - direct and indirect) do consider positive interaction with the U.S. as important and very desirable. The difference between liberals and conservatives concerns conditions of Russia’s interaction with the United States and European Union who have common policy for new world order construction. Russian “liberals” do not make difference between 1990s and 2000s when they speak about trends in international development and Russia’s status in world politics, identity, interests, opportunities, etc. “Liberal conservatives” (at least the majority) do pay attention to different

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situation in international relations in 1990s and 2000s, and to changes of Russia’s status, identity, interests.

Some of them have always acknowledged Russia’s great power status (A. Bogaturov, E. Batalov, A. Kokoshin, N. Kosolapov, V. Krivokhizha, T. Shakleina), others started to write using this category in 2000s (A. Torkunov, S. Rogov, A. Voskressenski, A. Fenenko). Great power status was recognized at the government level as well, and this acknowledgement together with changes in international relations demanded new conceptions of Russia’s foreign policy and terms of Russian-American interaction.

A. Bogaturov wrote that in 1986-1991 relations between the USSR and the U.S. were of “non-confrontational equal partnership” type, in 1992-1999 Russia was put into position of “junior partner”. In 2000s though the Bush administration declared Russia to be a partner in anti-terrorist campaign, this cooperative potential had not been realized, and Russia did not get an important status in relations with the United States. However, during 2000s Russia was dramatically changing inside, was also changing estimations of its status in contemporary world and of challenges to its development. “Russia rejected the role of «a weak country», and this is a new factor in international system at the beginning of the 21st century. This new Russia’s attitude is the source of misunderstanding between Russia and its foreign partners, or even crisis”, - stated A. Bogaturov. Growth of criticism was caused by this change in Russian political mentality and foreign policy, while European Union and the United States continued to keep Russia in the status of junior and dependant player who is constantly blamed for something.

Changes in experts’ views had impact at the government level. In 2006-2007 there were changes in a number of doctrinal documents. It was declared that “Russia must take the responsibility for global and social-economic development according to its status and potential”. Russian analysts concluded that Russia got “the first global doctrine of the Russian Federation”. They paid attention to five main points of the new doctrine that manifested dramatic shift in Russia’s estimation of its role in world politics:

* Russia is against any kind of confrontation, and will not participate in any kind of “Holy alliances”. Russia is for civilizational dialogues without any ideology.
* Russia will conduct policy of diversification that will allow using most favorable methods, mechanisms, trends, actors, campaigns, markets, etc. to achieve success and economic profit for the country.
* Russia acknowledges globalization in its positive and negative dimensions. It understands that globalization accelerates more even distribution of resources in the world, and formation of a multipolar order.
* Russia admits that nature and sources of threats to Russia’s security changed since 1990s, when the main threat was of internal character (stability of the federation and economics). In 2000s threats are of external character caused by growth of conflicts, proliferation, proliferation, 28 This new “factor” was noticed by American scholars as well. See, for instance: Kuchins A. Russia Is Back in the Game // The Wall Street Journal. May 2006.
uncontrolled arms race, interference into internal affairs of countries, imposition of political systems and culture, ignorance of international norms, etc.

*Russia will be more active in formulating global agenda and in its implementation. It can be achieved only by collective leadership of leading world powers (multilateral diplomacy).

A. Torkunov wrote: “In the process of globalization tendency toward achieving certain similarity must be reasonably balanced by tendency toward mutual tolerance – first of all, in understanding freedom of an individual or a nation. In foreign policy Russia tries to have constructive relations with highly developed Western countries, but it is free to maneuver and establish relations with other countries as well. This freedom of choice is determined by Russia’s identity of a democratic country with deep historic traditions of strong state sovereignty, and by objective drive for regional leadership.”

The new Obama administration declared “reset” approach to bilateral relations, but it is still not quite clear what are the contents of relations between the countries. In Russia debates continue, and “liberal conservatives” express their dissatisfaction with the agenda. They say that Russia is not interested in any new confrontation with the West, but it cannot stand systematic attempts of the U.S. and NATO to establish absolute superiority over Russia, to deprive it of having independent policy not only in the military sphere, but also in economic sphere. Some analysts attract attention to the fact that many regional powers are already trying to keep out non-regional players from settlement of regional problems and conflicts. The United States is a non-regional actor for Eurasia, but they try to interfere everywhere and make NATO a global security organization. S. Rogov, Director of the Institute of the USA and Canada Studies, also mentions that it is not in Obama’s interests to antagonize Russia because the United States are interested in Russia’s support to solve a number of international security problems. He states that the United States cannot ignore Russian interests because it will not make one-sided concessions. Improvement of bilateral relations is street with two-way movement.

Present stage of relations is defined as “peaceful separation”, as compared to “opposition on the verge of conflict” during the Bush administration. N. Kosolapov writes that very often American policy toward Russia gives the impression that there is systemic and civilizational incompatibility between Russian and American cultures and mentality, and the Russian state is not accepted by America in any form. He wrote that by 2008 Russia and the United States came very close to the possibility of serious conflict (even military). He refers to the events of August 2008 in the Caucasus when American military forces were indirectly used against Russia (in the form of assistance to Georgia), and there were no similar situations during the cold war between the U.S. and the USSR.

Some “liberals-realists” agree with “liberal conservatives” that dilemmas of Russian-American relations cannot be solved with the old approach: “Russia must change radically to correspond to American standards and demands, and only then it will be suitable for cooperation to solve international problems”. V. Kremenyuk states that differences between the countries are not incompatible: both countries believe that democratic system is the optimal political system (there is no dictatorship in Russia), and market economy is an appropriate economic system. He believes that in contemporary world Russia and the United States depend on each other and can


33 Bogaturov A. Khochesh Otkrityo Systemi – Stroy Zakritiy Blok? (In Case One Wants an Open System – Build up a Closed Bloc?) // Nezavisimaya Gazeta – Dipcourier. 15.06.09 / http://www.ng.ru


cooperate in many spheres of world politics. However they cannot realize their plans and safeguard their interests only in bilateral format, they will act in multilateral context. For Russia relations with the European Union, China, India, will be of great importance\textsuperscript{36}.

\textbf{Conclusion}

Analysis shows that both liberal and conservative political scientists agree that Russian-American relations cannot continue on the basis of principles either of “junior partner” or “world without Russia”. Russia is ready for serious dialogue on world and bilateral issues, it does not conceal that its economic development depends very much on cooperation with most developed countries, it does not deny that security dilemmas in Eurasia can be solved collectively with the U.S. participation. However Russia views present situation of “peaceful separation” with the United States as a transition period, period of mutual adaptation to each other and to new international situation which requires strong and unprejudiced relations\textsuperscript{37}.
