
CONTENTS

RISS reports

The Arctic in the contemporary system of international relations and Russian national interests

In recent years, the Arctic is of increasing interest to the international community. Amid new geopolitical conditions, Russia should take an active role in the formation and optimization of the entire Arctic system of international relations using its own historical experience, credibility, potential and competitive advantages as a leading Arctic power.

Keywords: Arctic – natural resources – development – policy – Russia’s interests – Northern Sea Route – environment – international relations **9**

International Policy

Dzhurkovich M. Balkan States disintegrating in the process of European integration

The author examines the geopolitical motives for each stage of the EU expansion, identifying the parties whose real political interests are served in the process. The adverse effects of EU expansion in the Balkans are demonstrated. The economic collapses of Greece and Slovenia are profiled. Nonetheless, the author emphasizes that financial problems are but one aspect of overall decline, which manifests itself in a crisis of institutions, education and, most importantly, traditional family relationships.

Keywords: expansion – European Union – European unity – Geopolitics – Balkan countries **44**

Svistunova I. A. Middle Eastern vector of Turkish-American relations

For a long time the mutual perception of threats and security challenges created a solid basis for cooperation between Ankara and Washington. However, in the past decade, the situation in the Middle East has repeatedly tested relations between Turkey and the United States.

Keywords: Turkey – USA – Middle East – U.S.-Turkey relations – Iraq crisis – "Turkish model" – "Arab Spring" **56**

Shishkov A. S. Cuba under the leadership of Raul Castro: features of political and economic development

The article discusses the political and economic changes in Cuba since Raul Castro came to power, assesses the role of the dissident movement and the Catholic Church in the political life of the country, and analyses the relationship of Cuba, the United States and the Cuban diaspora.

Keywords: Cuba – Latin America – R. Castro – socialism **74**

New Eurasia

Kretinin G. V. Baltic nuclear power plant: A dynamic issue

Created during Soviet period, the development of the Baltic’s nuclear power was stopped by resolution of the EU. Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia are striving for independence from their main supplier of energy: Russia. According to the leaders of those republics, the construction of a new nuclear power plant can be the main means for achieving that independence, however major questions remain.

Keywords: The Baltic region – energy – safety – nuclear power plant – Baltic – Lithuania – energy supply **88**

Krishtapovich L. E. Our Russian belief

In the fate of each nation there arise key challenges, the resolution of which determines the meaning of their own history. Today the key challenge for all of us – Russians, Belarusians and Ukrainians – is to preserve and strengthen our historical traditions and national values.

Keywords: Old Russian state – Old Russian nation – Orthodoxy – Russian civilization – Polish szlachta (nobles) – All-Russian history – integration 104

Defense and Security*Abaev L. Ch.* Global military-political situation and Russia's national security: Expert views

The article presents the results of an analysis of expert interviews conducted by the Russian Institute for Strategic Studies between 2010 and 2014. Focuses on an overall analysis of the global military-political situation, its significant components, the nature of challenges and threats to Russia's national security, and the direction of Russia's increasing defence capabilities.

Keywords: military-political situation – Russian national security of Russia – expert assessments - Asia-Pacific region-NATO – Russia's defence potential 121

Kryachkina Y. A. New trends in Japan's defence policy

The article discusses the new policy documents adopted by the Japanese government in December 2013 which inform the substance of Tokyo's security policy for the next decade, as well as accompanying measures supporting the content of those documents.

Keywords: proactive pacifism – dynamic joint defence force – freedom of navigation – Self-Defence Forces of Japan – National Security Strategy – National Security Council – Senkaku – Japan-U.S. alliance 136

Economy*Karataev S. V.* National tax policy as the basis of forming a favourable investment climate in the Russian Federation

The insufficiency of investments is one of the primary threats to Russian economic growth. In the circumstances, the formation of a favourable business environment necessary to increase the competitiveness of the Russian economy and its investment appeal becomes an important State policy direction. The deep interrelation of these phenomena with the national tax system defines potential fiscal initiatives directed at improving the investment climate, strengthening entrepreneurial initiative and activating business processes.

Keywords: investments – investment climate – small and medium business – tax policy – entrepreneurship 152

Kholodkov V. M. The impact of WTO membership on the Russian economy and the adaptation of domestic enterprises to new competitive conditions

Russia's performance of its obligations vis-a-vis the WTO in reviewing customs duties did not, despite expert forecasts, meaningfully impact domestic foreign trade. The reduction of import and export tariffs did not always lead to an increase in the imports or export of affected goods. The increase of import deliveries was frequently accompanied by decreases in the output volume of domestic production, whilst in other cases it resulted in increased production. Factors such as the state of competition in foreign markets for raw materials, domestic demand and the value of the rouble had a greater effect on the dynamics of foreign trade and production.

Keywords: WTO – Russian foreign trade – adaptation of Russian enterprises 169

- Zakharov P. V.* Medical insurance reform in the USA: Problems and prospects
The reform of the public health system has become one of the most ambitious undertakings of the Obama administration. It involves the expansion of state medical programmes, the optimization of their financing, and a change in the principles of private health insurance. The reform has provoked fierce debate in American society, but its effectiveness to date remains open to question.
Keywords: USA – health care reform – Barack Obama – health insurance **189**
- History**
- Galushchenko O. S.* The formation of the Moldavian ASSR:
A modern historical view
Drawing upon a wide range of sources, the article explores the process by which the Moldavian ASSR was created in 1924 as well as describing the various approaches to and controversy surrounding this issue.
Keywords: statehood – Moldova – Ukraine – Transnistria **202**
- Religion and Politics**
- Velichko A. M., father Timothy (Fetisov).* Sacral basis of law
The article is devoted to the study of the sacred foundations of law, the organic connection of law and morality, politico- legal ideals and so-called "natural law" from the viewpoint of Orthodox theology.
Keywords: "right" – "law" – "law of nature" – politics – moral ideal – politico-legal ideal **219**
- Khizriev A. Y.* The "Muslim Brotherhood" in the West: Organization and dissemination of ideology (UK, Germany, France)
The article deals with the phenomenon of the spread of Islamist ideology of the Egyptian "Muslim Brotherhood" movement in Western Europe in the second half of the 20th and beginning of the 21st centuries. Reveals the links between the Brotherhood and other directly or indirectly associated organizations, and describes the branching system of internal financing and integration in different ethnic and religious communities in Europe.
Keywords: "Muslim Brotherhood" – Egypt – Syria – Euro-Islam – Islamism – Europe **236**
- Reviews**
- Opilkin A. S.* Man at war: Revelations of Wehrmacht soldiers
Book review: *Neitzel S., Welzer H.* Soldiers: Diaries of fighting, killing and dying / Soenke Neitzel, Harald Welzer ; [transl. from English by S. A. Lipatova]. Moscow : Eksmo, 2013. 368 p. **251**
- Lubotskaya A. S.* The Greek crisis: National singularity or European mistake?
Book review: The Greek crisis and European modernity / ed. by Anna Triandafyllidou, Ruby Gropas, Hara Kouki. London : Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. 256 p. **256**
- Karyakin V. V.* Anatomy and physiology of American military power
Book review: *Sidorin A. N., Prishpov V. M., Akulenko V. P.* The Armed Forces of the USA in the Twenty-First Century. Military-theoretical study / A. N. Sidorin, V. M. Prishpov, V. P. Akulenko. Moscow : Kulikovo Pole : Military Book, 2013. 800 p. **259**