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# POLITICAL SCIENCE ISSUES

## Academic journal

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# POLITICAL PROCESS IN RUSSIA

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## TO THE QUESTION OF CONTINUITY OF THE RUSSIAN STATEHOOD

*Based on the historical experience of Russia, the article puts forward and proves the thesis that the Rurikovich period is one continuous process of building the Russian multi-ethnic state: Novgorod - Kiev, Rostov - Suzdal, Vladimir - Moscow. Russians, Belarusians and Ukrainians as branches of one tree are the heirs of Ancient Rus', which obliges them to jointly develop the Russian world.*

**Key words:** continuity, statehood, Ancient Rus', Russian World, Russia, Belarus, Ukraine.

The element of continuity in the history of Russia is not accidental, not ideologically invented, not a propaganda trick. Even the October Revolution of 1917, the centenary of which was marked in 2017 and which is still perceived differently in the society, does not exclude continuity. Actually, the present-day Russia does exist, exists in connection with and due to continuity. By changing forms, it retains her inner self. And the variability of forms is an improvement, so to speak, of the possibilities for the manifestation of the historical essence of Russia. In answering this question, we will use the methodology of two books [1. P. 317; 3. P. 239]. The second of them, as we see, was published back in 1984, when it was not customary to write about the continuity. A more widespread view was that of Soviet Russia (USSR) as a state radically different from the Imperial Russia, as a state that destroyed its former foundations.

The first of these books was also published after the "upheavals," but it was directed against the Revolution of October 1917. Nevertheless, the through thought of both books: Russia was, is and will be one essence in different forms.

The issue identified in the title of the topic arose in connection with the events in Ukraine (2014-2019). Who would have thought ten years ago that the Russian people would have to prove the unity of the destinies of Russia, Belarus and Ukraine, which are, by and large, the successors of Ancient Rus'. That's how his-

tory was perceived, until Ukraine began to prove the opposite, accusing Russia of “stealing” history from Ukraine, appropriating Vladimir the Baptist, Yaroslav the Wise, other prominent Russian princes and then writers. A number of Ukrainian politicians, at the suggestion of some Ukrainian “historians,” believe Russia, to be the Horde, alluding to the Tatar Golden Horde. In Russia, no one denies the influence of the Golden Horde on our History, but we note that the Golden Horde is in the past, and Russia exists today and it has a future, because it does not betray its past, does not renounce it. The Russian people, realizing the multi-ethnic nature of their state, do not renounce their Russian-Slavic roots, do not try to erase from their history the fact of the arrival of the Varangians-Russians, who gave impetus to the development of Slavic, (with their coming) Russian-Slavic history. Russia recognizes the continuity of the development of its history, starting with fixed (hence, provable) facts. And what was or was not before is the subject of scientific hypotheses at best or fabrications, falsifications in the worst case.

So what is the continuity of the history of Russia? It should be said that the questions of continuity in Russian history were more widely studied in the second half of the 20th century abroad than in the USSR. Western Sovietologists were interested in the idea of the existence of the imperial spirit in the USSR, camouflaged as internationalism. The American Sovietologist Toronto Anderson in 1967 published a book “Russian Political Thought,” in which he argued that since Rurik’s time, Russians have been guided by several basic theories. These theories boil down to fencing off from the West and striving for universalism. In this case, the objection is not so much against the thesis as against the “backup” to it: the denial of the processes in the history of Russia that took place in Europe to show that Russia is not Europe. And what Anderson calls the line of continuity “several basic theories from Rurik”, then this, in our opinion, is covered by the concept of “regularity.” There is, as you know, a universal pattern in the development of individual states. Each state arises for some reasons and it faces some tasks. If it copes with its tasks, then it exists. Russia has existed since the 9th century and its tasks are a separate issue. **It seems to us that our Fatherland – Russia has very difficult tasks: to contribute, if not guarantee, and to preserve the diversity of the world, humanism, humanity, and justice.** And at the same time, promote development towards community of peoples: diversity in unity. If Rurik was guided by these ideas, when coming to the Novgorodians at their request, then why not follow his ideas. He really did not limit himself to staying with the Novgorod administration, but appointed his governors to other cities, following the existing opportunities, that is, rooted the Russian element in the new territory. **In other words, he laid the foundations of the Russian world.** The one who follows **these principles does not betray the story, but continues it.** This “one who” is Russia. We have nothing to repent of. This historical stubbornness of Russia causes hatred among its competitors. Moreover, the object of hatred is the Russian people as the core of Russia. It has been so at all times. Only the degree

of hatred grew, depending on the state of affairs in Russia. When Russia is weak, there is less hatred, even love for it appears, and strong Russia gives rise to a burning desire to destroy the Russians. I do not want to, but I have to remember the Pole Brzezinski, Assistant to the President of the United States for National Security (now deceased, but his work lives on) with not a kind word. Nesterov F.F. describes such an episode recorded by the West German magazine *Spiegel*. Listening at a closed meeting on the use of nuclear forces, he suddenly interrupted the speaker and shouted: “No, no, no! I did not mean all Soviet citizens. **I only meant Russians.**” [3. P. 7]. It is interesting how nuclear weapons can be used to destroy only Russians. However, during the time of the USSR, they thought apparently about Russia (the RSFSR). Other republics were allegedly not Russian.

At present, Russia is associated with Russians, therefore all “love” is directed at it (sanctions, NATO’s approach to borders, etc.). This is partly why in a number of former Soviet republics there is a denial of Russianness. The denial of Russianness today is **the denial of its past, which means the law of continuity**. No less strange are the actions in relation to the monuments of the Soviet era, starting with V.I. Lenin, who introduced the principle of self-determination of the peoples of Russia.

It should be noted that Lenin, plunging into the revolution, believed in the strength and energy of the people. And he believed in historical regularity, in the “fate” of Russia. Otherwise, he would not “get involved” in the struggle. It is worth recalling that Soviet Russia, devastated by war and famine, isolated from the sources of raw materials, fuel and bread, “squeezed” to the size of a Great Russian ethnic core, found strength to survive in a civil war and defeat the intervention of 14 world powers. What was it? Mystery? V.I. Lenin said: “Two years ago, when the imperialist war was still in full swing, the uprising of the Russian proletariat, its conquest of state power seemed to all supporters of the bourgeoisie in Russia, to the masses of the people and, perhaps, most of the workers in other countries, a bold but hopeless attempt. It seemed then that the world imperialism was such a huge, invincible force that the workers of a backward country, making an attempt to rebel against it, acted like madmen ...”

“No one two years ago believed that Russia, a country ravaged by a 4-year-old imperialist war, could withstand another two years of civil war. And, probably, if we were asked at the end of October 1917 whether we could withstand two years of civil war against the world bourgeoisie, I don’t know how many of us would answer in the affirmative. But events showed that the energy developed by the working-peasant masses turned out to be greater than expected the people who carried out the October Revolution” [2. P. 118]. One would like to say: here it is, hidden energy! Here it is, the “deep people!” (1).

Let us pay attention to the fact that even the people who headed the revolution, at first, did not assume that a civil war would develop on such a scale, and secondly, they did not realize the presence in the masses of such energy, such a charge that overcame all the obstacles that stood in the way of the revolution.

Only he, who does not understand anything in the laws of History, can lament over the events of October 1917 and, as a result, the birth of relatively independent republics, members of the USSR. But we repeat, the Revolution does not deny continuity. No Soviet historian started the history of the USSR from 1922. Take up any textbook on the History of State and Law of the USSR, it consists of two parts. The first part is the Old Russian State until the Revolution. The second part is the Revolution and the subsequent construction of the state. There was a lot of criticism of the pre-Soviet period, which is natural, since the Revolution changed many principles and forms, but Russian history and Russian statehood were not denied and most importantly the participation in this History of the Russian people: the Great Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians was not denied either. It was proceeded from this when an alliance of equal republics was created. After the collapse of the USSR, the Russian Federation also did not reject either the imperial or the Soviet period. Although there were people among the liberals eager to do it, but the political leadership of Russia took the position of common sense. Russia officially declared itself the successor of the USSR, having assumed all its obligations, including general debts. By the way, let's note that in 2017 Russia paid off its last debt. Meanwhile, expenses were incurred not only in the interests of Russia, but also in the interests of other republics of the Union. There were, of course, among scientists nuances in relation to their History of the Soviet period: ill-conceived criticism bordering lies. Not all are united in the evaluation of the Revolution even 100 years after it. This is natural given the scale of the catastrophe caused by the outside interference in the internal affairs of our country. Many families still have not healed the wounds of losses. Another 200-300 years will pass and the Russians will still have different views about the events of October 2017. As our contemporaries **calmly** discuss the figure of Ivan the Terrible, they will just as calmly view 1917. In this case, it must be emphasized that continuity was not denied when new forms appeared and three branches of the Russian people separated at the level of state policy: Russians (Great Russians), Belarusians, Ukrainians, although much has been done to preserve the existing differences in self-identification according to the features of our common History.

So much has been written that we have common roots that it does not even make sense to list scientific works. The one who does not deny these roots, who preserves and "cherishes" them, is the successor.

A good example of this is the scheme of power transfer "from hand to hand" and the real actions of such power. We verbally show this scheme.

- Gostomyl in Novgorod;
- Rurik in Novgorod;
- Oleg in Novgorod and Kiev;
- Igor Rurikovich – Kiev, the son of Rurik;
- Olga, the wife of Igor in Kiev;
- Svyatoslav Igorevich, their son in Kiev, the grandson of Rurik;

- Yaropolk Svyatoslavich, son of Svyatoslav, great-grandson of Rurik;
- Vladimir Svyatoslavich, the late son of Svyatoslav, the great-great-grandson of Rurik, in Novgorod and Kiev;
- Svyatopolk, as M.V. Lomonosov writes, a dubious son of Vladimir or Yaropolk, in Kiev;
- Yaroslav Vladimirovich, son of Vladimir the Baptist of Russia, Novgorod – Kiev;
  - Izyaslav Yaroslavich, son of Yaroslav the Wise, Kiev;
  - Svyatoslav Yaroslavich, son of Yaroslav the Wise, Kiev;
  - Vsevolod Yaroslavich, son of Yaroslav the Wise, Kiev;
  - Svyatopolk – Mikhail Izyaslavich, son of Izyaslav, grandson of Yaroslav the Wise, seventh degree of kinship with Rurik, Kiev;
- Vladimir Vsevolodovich Monomakh, grandson of Yaroslav the Wise, son of Vsevolod, seventh degree of kinship with Rurik, Chernihiv, Kiev;
- Mstislav Vladimirovich, son of Vladimir Monomakh, the eighth degree of kinship with Rurik, Kiev;
  - Yaropolk Vladimirovich, son of Vladimir Monomakh, Kiev;
  - Vyacheslav Vladimirovich, son of Vladimir Monomakh, Kiev;
  - Vsevolod Olegovich, grandson of Svyatoslav II, son of Yaroslav the Wise, eighth degree of kinship with Rurik, Kiev;
- Izyaslav Mstislavovich, grandson of Vladimir Monomakh, eighth degree of kinship with Rurik, Kiev;
  - Yuri Dolgoruky, son of Vladimir Monomakh, Suzdal – Moscow – Kiev;
  - Andrei Yuryevich Bogolyubsky, son of Yuri Dolgoruky, the ninth degree of kinship with Rurik, the prince of “All Russia” with a center in Vladimir;
  - Vsevolod Yuryevich, son of Yuri Dolgoruky, Vladimir;
  - Konstantin Vsevolodovich, son of Vsevolod, grandson of Yuri Dolgoruky, Vladimir;
- Yuri Vsevolodovich, grandson of Yuri Dolgoruky, tenth degree of kinship with Rurik, Vladimir;
- Yaroslav Vsevolodovich, grandson of Yuri Dolgoruky, Vladimir;
- Alexander Yaroslavich Nevsky, great-grandson of Yuri Dolgoruky, Novgorod, Vladimir;
- Yaroslav Yaroslavich, brother of Alexander Nevsky, eleventh degree of kinship with Rurik, Tver, Novgorod, Vladimir;
- Vasily Yaroslavich, brother of Yaroslav, Novgorod;
- Dmitry Alexandrovich, son of Alexander Nevsky, Vladimir, Novgorod;
- Andrei Alexandrovich, son of Alexander Nevsky, Vladimir;
- Daniil Alexandrovich, the youngest son of Alexander Nevsky, **the first Grand Duke of Moscow**, Moscow, the twelfth degree of kinship with Rurik;
- Mikhail Yaroslavich, nephew of Alexander Nevsky, Novgorod, Moscow, twelfth degree of kinship with Rurik;

- Yuri Daniilovich Moscow, son of Daniel, grandson of Alexander Nevsky, Moscow;
- Alexander Mikhailovich, son of Mikhail Yaroslavich, the thirteenth degree of kinship with Rurik, Tver, Pskov;
- Ivan Daniilovich (Ivan Kalita), son of Daniel, the thirteenth degree of kinship with Rurik, Vladimir, Pskov, Moscow;
- Semen Ivanovich, son of Ivan Kalita, Vladimir, Novgorod;
- Ivan Ivanovich, son of Ivan Kalita, Moscow;
- Dmitry Konstantinovich, uncle of Dmitry Donskoy, fourteenth degree of kinship with Rurik, Suzdal, Vladimir;
- Dmitry Ivanovich Donskoy, fifteenth degree of kinship with Rurik, Vladimir, Moscow;
- Vasily Dmitrievich Donskoy, son of Dmitry Donskoy, Moscow;
- Vasily Vasilievich Donskoy, grandson of Dmitry Donskoy, Moscow;
- Ivan Vasilievich III, son of Vasily, the eighteenth degree of kinship with Rurik, Moscow;
- Vasily Ivanovich, son of Ivan III, Moscow;
- Ivan Vasilyevich IV (Grozny), son of Vasily, twentieth degree of kinship with Rurik, Moscow;
- Fedor Ioannovich, son of Ivan the Terrible, twenty-first degree of kinship with Rurik, Moscow.

This interrupted the Rurik dynasty. In 1598, Boris Godunov came to power in Moscow. Fifteen years have passed and as a result of the Time of Troubles, a new dynasty was established - the Romanovs, who continued to build Russia.

What conclusion follows from the foregoing, especially from the scheme of power transfer “from hand to hand”? The historical period of the Rurikovich is one continuous process of building a Russian multi-ethnic statehood, that **begun in Novgorod, continued in Kiev**, then in Rostov-Suzdal, Vladimir, and Moscow. Moscow is still the center of Russia, the Russian world, but it began and matured in the era of the Rurikovich. For some historical time, part of the Old Russian lands and cities fell out of the general process due to their capture by Lithuania and Poland. But the state, which continued its formation and development in Moscow never abandoned attempts to return the captured lands to the fold of the Fatherland (our fatherland, as the Russian princes and tsars said). This is the natural right of the heirs of their great-great-grandfathers, grandfathers, and fathers. The thought of returning to their way of life did not die out either among those Russians who were in a foreign land. Hence the struggle for independence from the Rzeczpospolita. This struggle would never have been successful without the help of Russia. The Cossack movement understood this. The Cossacks would not be able to live in isolation in the 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> centuries, just as Ukrainians (Malorossy) would not be able to live in isolation in the 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> centuries. By the will of historical destinies, new elements and traits have been interspersed in the

general tree of Russianness, allowing us to talk about the ethnic characteristics of northeastern Russians and southwestern Russians. But this difference, if it is not artificially inflated, is so small that there are still reasons to assert the presence of branches of one tree: Russians, Belarusians, and Ukrainians. All of us are the heirs of Ancient Rus', in fact. Together we need to develop the Russian world.

**NOTES:**

- (1) The term is borrowed from V. Surkov // Vladislav Surkov: Putin's Long State / Ideas and People // Nezavisimaya Gazeta // [http://www.ng.ru/ideas/2019-02-11/5\\_7503\\_surkov.html](http://www.ng.ru/ideas/2019-02-11/5_7503_surkov.html).

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