

Original article

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Since the times of the lord Palmerston to the president B. Obama: the revival of the Crimean quasi-subsystem of international relations in the XXI century

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Abstract. In the article, an issue of keeping Russia distant on the world arena in the historical context and preventing the development of Russian foreign policy by Western countries in the context of international relations in the 21st century is considered. The authors pay attention and point out historical parallels of such deterrence in the past. Based on this point, the article is divided into three parts, which demonstrate the analogy of the approach of the great powers in the XIX century and modern Western countries to restrict Russian foreign policy, by creating a special Crimean subsystem of international relations.

Keywords: Lord Palmerston, President B. Obama, the Russian Empire, the Crimean subsystem of international relations, political isolation, economic sanctions, the Eastern question, the Ukrainian question

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Научная статья

Со времен лорда Пальмерстона до президента Б. Обамы: возрождение крымской квази-подсистемы международных отношений в XXI в.

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Аннотация. В историческом контексте рассматривается вопрос сдерживания России на мировой арене и препятствования развитию российской внешней политики западными странами в условиях международных отношений в XXI в. Авторы указывают на исторические параллели подобного сдерживания в прошлом. Исходя из этого, статья разделена на три части, которые демонстрируют аналогию подхода великих держав в XIX в. и современных западных стран по ограничению российской внешней политики путем создания специальной Крымской подсистемы международных отношений.

В первой части кратко описывается создание в XIX в. европейскими державами во главе с Великобританией Крымской подсистемы международных отношений, которая породила ряд кровопролитных войн как в Европе, так и на Ближнем Востоке. Но, задержав на короткое время внешнеполитическое развитие России, Крымская подсистема в целом не решила проблему сдерживания России.

Во второй части рассматриваются и анализируются международные события XXI в. и делается вывод, что западные страны, но уже во главе с США, вновь пытаются создать подобие прошлой Крымской подсистемы международных отношений с теми же целями и задачами. Авторы указывают, что если в прошлом поводом для этого служил «восточный вопрос», то в новых исторических условиях – «украинский вопрос». Если в XIX в. западные страны могли развязать Крымскую войну, то в нынешних условиях война не может дать результаты по «унижению» России. Поэтому западными странами выбран путь поддержания военной напряженности на границах России и военного конфликта на территориях Украины, граничащих с Россией, и «замораживания» этого конфликта, а также введения экономических санкций против России с целью ее ослабления и задержки ее экономического развития.

В третьей части авторы высказывают свое мнение, что в обоих случаях западные страны решали и решают одну из главных для себя задач – ослабление возрождения Российского государства как конкурента не только в Европе, но и в целом в мире путем создания условий по его международной политической, финансовой и экономической изоляции. Однако принимаемые западными странами меры по отношению к России не дают в полной мере тех результатов, на которые они рассчитывают.

Ключевые слова: лорд Пальмерстон, президент Б. Обама, Российская империя, Крымская подсистема международных отношений, политическая изоляция, экономические санкции, Восточный вопрос, Украинский вопрос

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To understand the current international processes, it is sometimes useful to look at the history of international relations and find possible analogues of the events, the causes and reasons for the conduct of states on the international arena, the use of principles, concepts and theories, historical characters that have made a crucial importance for entire nations and changed the borderlines of their countries.

From the given title of the article, one can understand that the authors view a similar analogy that happened for more than 150 years – which were the times of the crisis of the Vienna subsystem of international relations and the creation of the Crimean subsystem of international relations at the present period in the 21st century.

Basing on the systemic understanding of the history of international relations, it can be considered that the "Concert of Europe" was the first attempt of systematic regulation of post-war international relations after the last Napoleonic wars. However, as we are aware, this attempt of creating an international organization to maintain European status quo, as well using the principle of "legitimism", failed. Already after the 1820's the interests of the participating countries (Russia - on the one hand, and Prussia, Austria, France, England - on the other) dispersed so much that led to the Crimean War (1853-1856). Moreover, it should be noted that it was the United Kingdom which turned out to be the initiator of that disintegration, which was not content with the strengthening of Russia after the defeat of Napoleon - in the Balkans, the Black Sea and the Caucasus.

Lord Palmerston, defending trade routes of the British colony in India, as well as the trade interests of the British bourgeoisie in the Ottoman Empire [1. P. 830-833] elaborated the foreign policy of Great Britain scrupulously, methodically and in detail [2. P. 224] and aimed at creating within the framework of the Paris sub-system of international relations (1856-1918), a regional or quasi-system of international relations in the east of Europe, which later became known as the Crimean, and in the western literature - Palmerston one [3. P. 25]. The main goal of creating such a subsystem of international relations for British diplomacy was the political isolation of the Russian Empire preventing it from the interaction with European states and the weakening of its positions in relations with peripheral European countries and the Middle East. As S.S. Tatishchev remarked: "In all political issues in the East and in the West, Russia has always met the vicious and stubborn resistance and opposition of the English" [4. C. 98].

Therefore, after 1856, the characteristic features of the created Crimean subsystem turned out to be:

- political humiliation of Russia and limitation of its' authorities as a great power [5. P. 67-74];
- despite the fact that Russia was able to preserve its' domains in the Black Sea area, its political influence in Europe became much weaker than before [6. P. 390-391];
- the hope for the liberation of Orthodox peoples under the rule of Ottoman Turkey was undermined [6. Ch. 4-10];

– Russia lost its fleet on the Black Sea and control over the Black Sea straits [5. P. 292];

– warships of European countries began to regularly be present in the Black Sea.

Even though the influence of Russia as a great power on European politics has significantly lowered, and its political isolation was artificially supported by European powers, in their circle, the contradictions among them only grew.

Concerning the definition of the boundaries of the period of the Crimean (Palmerston) subsystem of international relations existence, experts differ in the evaluation of both its beginning and its endings.

Some suppose the beginning of the formation of the Crimean subsystem of international relations in the 1830s [7. P. 222], others - the end of the Crimean War and the signing of the Paris Agreement [8. P. 674-692], and Henry Kissinger thinks that its formation began immediately after the collapse of the Congress of Vienna in 1822 [9].

The end of the existence of the Crimean subsystem of international relations also has no unequivocal recognition, and that is why various dates for the termination of the Crimean subsystem of international relations functioning are called. Among them:

– 1871 - as the year of the fall of the French Empire under Napoleon III and the beginning of the Third French Republic. Thanks to French non-interference, Russia succeeded in restoring its' fleet on the Black Sea territories. Since that year the forty-year peace period and the isolation policy of Great Britain had begun. The London Agreement of 1871 cancelled the basic elements of the Paris Agreement of 1856 formally [10. P. 3-4];

– 1876 - the year of Russia's victory in the Russian-Turkish war and the solution to the Eastern question in favor of Russia [11, 12];

– 1882 - the year of the British conquest of Egypt, which not only gave Britain security for their trade routes to India, but also made them the owners of the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East, which in turn made it unnecessary to keep a confrontation with Russia relating the question of the straits [7. P. 554];

– 1907 - as the year in which all the contradictions between Russia and Great Britain were eliminated and the Allied agreement was signed (Antanta);

– 1918 - as the year of the end of the existence of the Paris subsystem of international relations.

It should be underlined, that the main conditions under which the Crimean subsystem of international relations was created and existed, were, on the one hand, the growing power and international influence of Russia, and on the other - the fear of the Western countries over this growth of Russia's power and the collective desire to make it weaker. It is evident why the United Kingdom became the leader in creating the Crimean subsystem of international relations, at that time, which was sure to be the world leader. One must say that at the beginning of the XXI cen-

tury there were similar conditions when, after a decade of "coming to life" from the collapse of the USSR, modern Russia started building up its' economic and military power, and international influence among the countries of the non-Western world.

The United States, as a world leader, uniting the countries of Europe in the military bloc of NATO, back in the second half of the 20th century insulated themselves from the USSR and its eastern allies with the Iron Curtain and declared the Cold War, and having won it, contributed to the collapse of the USSR.

On emerging after the collapse of the USSR, the new state - Russia, within a short period of time by historical criteria, began to grow fast, which was certain to cause worries among Western countries. The United States, along with the EU, began to pursue a policy of political and economic restriction of Russia on the international arena. NATO's advance to the East and long-term agreements with Western countries on the issue of Russia's accession to the WTO should be recalled. Like in the nineteenth century, multilateral pressure was sure to be coordinated by one country - now the United States.

Like in the past, the conditions for international political and economic isolation were created methodically and scrupulously. For this purpose, several steps were taken to make military and political tensions on the western (with the Baltic countries, Poland and Moldova) and southern (Georgia and Azerbaijan) borders of Russia and the organization of "velvet" or "color revolutions" (in Ukraine and Georgia).

If in the past, British diplomacy made use of the Ottoman Empire as an irritant to Russia, then in the 21st century, the American diplomacy, having at the borders of Russia, small in its international significance states, used them to achieve their goals.

According to their instructions, in August 2008, Georgia provoked a military conflict with Russia, on their orders in Ukraine, the issue of its phased accession to the EU (and, accordingly, accession to NATO) was raised, which directly created new threats to Russia's security.

If in the past, one of the humanitarian questions affecting Russia's interests in the Ottoman Empire was the issue of oppression of Orthodox Christians, then in the 21st century, in Ukraine the question of the position of the Russian-speaking population and the use of the Russian language was raised.

After the western special services of the Maidan organization in 2013, Ukraine split over the language issue. And the Russian-speaking Crimea, having conducted a referendum and using the help of Russia, joined it, the Donetsk and Lugansk regions, demanding autonomy within Ukraine, received a full-scale civil war afterwards.

The historical analogy is viewed relating Ukraine. As during the rebellion in Poland in 1862-1863, when Western countries demanded from Russia to restore the Polish kingdom, they were not willing to fight with Russia because of it, in the 21st century also Western countries will not start a fight with Russia because of Ukraine. The events in Ukraine for them are sure to be an opportunity for political and economic humiliation of Russia (and the Ukrainians need to understand that).

Thereby, Western strategists created, in their view, sound conditions for the political and economic isolation of Russia, aiming at undermining the growth of its power or, possibly, delaying that development. All above mentioned grounds state that the West had made a new quasi-subsystem of international relations, similar to the Crimean one.

The characteristic features of the new Crimean subsystem of international relations in the XXI century have become:

- political humiliation of Russia and restriction of its powers as a great country (termination of cooperation with it within the framework of the G8 and within the framework of Russia-NATO) [6];

- weakening of its influence in the Western world, due to the introduction of political, financial and economic sanctions, termination or limitation of humanitarian cooperation;

- collapse of the global gas and oil market aiming at derogation of the Russian raw materials' economy;

- creation the whole arsenal of measures of military tension on the periphery of Russia: "color revolutions" in neighboring countries (Georgia and Ukraine); military provocations (in Georgia), deployment of American air defense systems (in Poland and Romania); deployment of the NATO military contingent (in the Baltic countries, Ukraine); unleashing a civil war with the Russian-speaking population in Ukraine (in Donetsk and Lugansk regions);

- counterstanding Russia's international economic cooperation with Western countries in the construction of oil pipelines to Western countries (South Stream, Turkish Stream, North Stream-2), in numerous restrictions on international trade with Russia, contrary to the provisions of the WTO;

- the presence of NATO ships on a permanent basis and the conduct of NATO exercises ("Breeze" and "Sea Breeze"), which possess a "military-demonstration character" [13. C. 52];

- tacit support the Turkey's policy on the issue of "neo-Ottomanism" in the Mediterranean-Caspian region (in questions on Cyprus, Ukraine, the Tatar community in Crimea, Syria) by the US and EU [14. C. 90-96].

Like in the past, in the created quasi-subsystem of international relations, the Eastern question has played and is playing a certain role. The Eastern question has always been of primary importance for Great Britain, and the question on Russia also emerged afterwards, then it became of secondary importance for many European states, including Germany. While the national interests of Great Britain and Russia were the opposite, the European countries sought to resolve the Eastern question without Russian participation.

In the new, XXI century the Eastern issue for the US matters significantly for the foreign policy and to solve it on American terms is their primary goal. If for Great Britain the main aspect in the Eastern question was preserving trade routes to India and the promotion of own goods to the countries of the East, for the United States the goal is their strategic influence in the region on the basis of a constant presence in the countries of the East, setting

loyal regimes for them and "pumping" various resources for itself from the region, chiefly, oil and gas [15. C. 20].

Russia, like in the past, has been participating in the resolution of the Eastern question through its own military and political participation in Syria, political participation in resolving the nuclear issue in Iran, political partking in settling the Palestinian-Arab conflict, close multilateral cooperation with Turkey and other Arab countries, which annoys the United States and they understand that it is easier to achieve their goals in the Eastern question by isolating Russia politically and weakening economically. That is why, the American goal in achieving its geopolitical interests is to isolate Russia politically, economically and financially isolation from the Western world. By and large, the Americans do not care about the fate of the Iraqi, Afghan, Syrian, Ukrainian and other peoples, they are concerned about maintaining their own world hegemony, the stability of their own economy, the provision of the Americans with jobs, the financial strengthening of their own state.

The whole arsenal of various means is used, and the revival of the quasi-subsystem of international relations in the south of Russia has become one of the most important goals of the President Barack Obama's two governments.

Like in the past, when the founder of the Crimean subsystem, Lord Palmerston handed over his offspring to the new British Prime Minister, Lord J. Russell, B. Obama handed over the United States-created "Crimean subsystem" to the Republican government's President Donald Trump.

To hope that D. Trump will manage to change something in the political and economic isolation of Russia would be the height of naivety. The United States need Russia weak enough, like it was, for instance, in the 1990s.

Russian military participation in Syria, and even a complete victory over IGIL there will not change the American attitude towards it but will only add more exasperation.

What did the Russian Empire do in isolation in the past?

First of all, it was looking for an opportunity to break through international isolation, and chiefly strengthening the relations with Germany and France, of course, through certain concessions. The same thing is happening nowadays: Russia is attempting to break through the political and economic blockade in the Western direction, in making

relations with Germany, France and other European countries better.

It is not by chance that these countries are members of the Minsk Group for the settlement of the situation in Ukraine.

Secondly, it could be recalled that excluding Russia from the "European concert" Western countries in the past have increased contradictions among themselves, which eventually led to the creation of international coalitions that later led to the First World War.

At present, one can observe the increasing contradictions within the EU. The United Kingdom is already in the process of withdrawing the European Union, and European countries are controversial about the issue of mass immigration from the Arab countries. The point of Brexit is urgent not only in the UK, but in other European countries. In a word, the contradictions within the EU are only growing.

But is it possible to get a breakthrough by cooperating with European countries to break out of own political isolation? It is doubtful.

First, as the history shows, in the past, Russia received the first political breakthrough with France, and only because some of its ' rise occurred during Napoleon III's period among European states. Using the influence of France, Russia succeeded in resolving the contradictions with England in Asia and going on to create a union (Antanta, 1907). At present, it is unlikely to be that any of the European states will be significantly elevated to pursue a different policy from Brussels.

Secondly, the political and economic influence of the United States on the European Union in the nearest future will only increase, and only Americans are able under certain circumstances to break through the political isolation of contemporary Russia with the West.

Third, there must be relevant conditions under which the United States will surely have to turn to Russia for help in resolving some global world problem.

Certainly, it is neither a North Korean problem nor a UN reform. What could it be is now difficult to say. Possibly such a situation will arise during D. Trump's ruling in the White House or the subsequent US President who will bury the Crimean quasi-subsystem of international relations, becoming the second President after F.D. Roosevelt who could improve relations with Russia radically.

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