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**MODERN FEATURES OF MEMORY POLICY IN RUSSIA:
PRESERVATION AND PROTECTION OF HISTORICAL MONUMENTS
AND CULTURAL HERITAGE**

To understand the enormous importance of cultural monuments, one does not need to be a political scientist or a worker in the historical and cultural preservation sphere. Anyway, every day any person faces an impressive number of «cultural monuments». However, ordinary citizens often do not realize the full meaning of the above term. Meanwhile, an oversimplified or completely false understanding of this definition can negatively affect the national political process, and sometimes even go further, thereby becoming international by nature.

It should be clear that a cultural monument is, first of all, the key concept of the historical policy of the state, the most complete and accessible definition of which is given by Jörn Rüsen: “Historical policy refers to the uses of the past in the present, especially the use of history for political purposes” [8, p. 52]. It is hard to underestimate the significance of the past and the state policy of memory as a special sphere that is responsible for accumulation, keeping, using and systematization of historical information. It seems to us that in the process of socialization, education, self-development, almost everyone who has a high level of socio-political culture and moral development, realizes that the past events, processes which have already taken place, in many ways predicted the political context of today, as well as gave the vector of development for the future.

Fortunately, Russia is among those states that treat their historical and cultural heritage with care. There are many organizations, agencies, etc., which, in the course of their official duties, supervise issues related to the preservation, use and protection of all things of cultural interest and historical value. However, it should not be forgotten that their work would be largely impossible if there were no state support and legal regulation of this sector.

When talking in detail about the cultural and historical policy of the Russian Federation, it is necessary to say that it is «based on the cultural configuration of society and its cultural achievements, the problem field of the socio-cultural situation in the country and the world, social and economic opportunities of policy subjects and the level of their interaction, is consistent with the movement of global processes, depends on the culture of public administration and many other factors of the internal and external environment of society and the state» [2, p. 33].

We have to pay attention to the fact that at the same time as stated above, cultural policy should also «correlate with the policy to ensure national security of the state, should take into account the negative socio-cultural pressure that unfriendly internal and external political and pseudo-scientific forces exert on the Russian society» [1].

As the example of such «socio-cultural pressure» we can consider the policy of those countries that are mainly members of political associations, such as NATO and the EU, and are also included in the Russian state list of «unfriendly countries» [6]. During the Special Military Operation, the Russian side of the conflict has faced and keeps facing unprecedented confrontation in the historical and cultural sphere. At the moment, many countries of the «Collective West» are actively conducting anti-Russian policy, sometimes taking radical positions on some topics, which allows a lot of scientists, researchers, and people involved in diplomatic work to characterize their political position as «Russophobic». The speech of 13.04.2023 of the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations and the UN Security Council, V.A. Nebenzya [7], in which the word «Russophobia» was used 14 times, can be considered as an illustrative example of the achieved level of tension in the cultural-political confrontation. According to this fact, it can be concluded that the situation in the area of international communication is difficult and that there are challenges in diplomatic-political communication.

Thus, cultural issues are at the center of this article. It is the cultural aspect often the key factor when considering and analyzing the political environment, as many political processes can be explained on the basis of historical cultural background. While paying attention to current and relevant events in the world of politics, we should also analyze the cultural and historical context. For example, Romania, Georgia, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, as well as Poland and Ukraine are strongly involved in the campaign of demolishing Russian / Soviet cultural monuments, in this way realizing a «war against monuments». According to the official data of the Institute of National Remembrance of the country [5], 38 monuments to Soviet soldiers-liberators were demolished in Poland only within a year and a half. The political leadership of Ukraine also shares the same radical position. Only in 2022 the following monuments were destroyed in Ukraine: more than 40 monuments to poets and writers, 4 monuments to A. Suvorov, a monument to Catherine the Great and even the Novgorod knyaz A. Nevsky [3, p. 7]. Currently, the «war with monuments» continues, the Ukrainian side, as well as a number of European states is pursuing a policy of destroying the memory of feats, impressive efforts and contribution to the world history of common historical and cultural actors. Meanwhile, the Russian political leadership and the people of the Russian Federation cherish the memory not only of their ancestors, but in general all those who have made an important positive contribution to the common world culture by their activities. One can see a monument to the Ukrainian writer T. Shevchenko, the Ukrainian poetess

L. Ukrainka, the French military commander and statesman Charles de Gaulle and many other foreign persons in Moscow. And that careful attitude even to the human remains of former military members from Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania [4], the entire Nazi and fascist Europe of the first half of the XX century, contrasts strongly with the memory policy that is carried out abroad in relation to Russian culture. That is why we can say with confidence that non-violent character towards cultural monuments is a specific feature of the memorial policy of the Russian Federation.

In conclusion, it is worth mentioning that the preservation of historical heritage and the protection of cultural monuments seem to us to be the most effective and correct methods in the historical and cultural sphere, because destruction of the memory of forefathers, their merits and feats is harmful to the preservation and continuity of historical heritage, and helps the rise of new political conflicts. Instead, it is necessary to recognize and accept historical patrimony, preserve cultural monuments and provide them with due attention and protection. This step could reduce the level of political tension, as well as stop the destruction of many meaningful cultural objects.

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