

On the Anniversary of V.A. Ilyin



Victor A. VOLKONSKY

Doctor of Sciences (Economics), Professor, Chief Researcher at the Institute of Economic Forecasting of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Laureate of the N.P. Fedorenko International Scientific Foundation for Economic Research Prize (2003) in the nomination “For Outstanding Contribution to the Development of Economic Science in Russia”.

Author of the monograph “The Drama of Spiritual History: Non-Economic Foundations of the Economic Crisis” (2002). The scholar’s publication record (according to RSCI data as of February 2026): 135 publications, of which 60 are in the RSCI core; approx. 2,500 citations; h-index – 24. He is among the top 2% of most cited Russian economists.

I am delighted to congratulate Vladimir Aleksandrovich on his anniversary. I believe all Russian economists are ready to wish him many more years of equally fruitful life and work – not formally, but from the heart. His works and the journal he heads, “Economic and Social Changes: Facts, Trends, Forecast”, truly advance science, and not only its economic and sociological branches but the entire science of society, expanding its horizons. For the past several years, I have published most of my articles precisely in this journal. Russian economic journals typically limit their subject matter to purely economic and political issues. Lately, however, I have been interested in factors that, while related to economics, belong to other humanities fields – history, psychology, philosophy. And it turns out that finding a scientific journal willing to publish such articles is no easy task. The journal “Economic and Social Changes” is a wonderful example of combining depth and breadth in the issues it covers. Within it, you will find both a deep and detailed exposition of specific pressing problems requiring urgent solutions, and a discussion of humanity’s eternal questions. In my opinion, this is one of the best economic journals in the country.

A number of articles and the book “On the Difficult Path to Healing from the ‘Trauma’... 25 Years of V.V. Putin’s Implementation of the National Development Course of the Russian Federation” (V.A. Ilyin, M.V. Morev) are devoted to assessing and interpreting the current stage of Russian history. I think these works will be

perceived by our descendants as a chronicle of our very challenging period. About how V.V. Putin increasingly grasped the situation and, stage by stage, pulled Russia out of its semi-colonial state. It is these works that will most often be cited, if only because the authors have gathered a vast amount of primary data to describe each event and substantiate each thesis. This material includes both statistical data and quotes from legislative documents and statements by authoritative politicians, scientists, and publicists. This material shows how certain events and ideas are perceived by society (we ourselves, those currently living, do not always know this!). In addition to this material, Vologda Research Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences (of which V.A. Ilyin is also the Scientific Director) regularly conducts social surveys.

But more importantly, of course, is that V.A. Ilyin's works identify and explore the main problems and tasks facing society, and their recognition by the elite, the president, and the people. The most important of these problems is the ideological unity of society, eliminating the lingering dangers of schisms remaining from the 1990s: between the wealthiest oligarchs and the majority of the population, between the bureaucracy and the people, between a part of the pro-Western elite and the patriotic core of the nation.

The works of V.A. Ilyin and his journal provide a vivid and detailed account of the struggle waged by the President and patriots for the revitalization of society. The results of this struggle are the slow but steady strengthening of public consciousness,

grounded in the traditional supreme value – the sovereignty of society and the state.

Another issue that is comprehensively illuminated in V.A. Ilyin's portrayal of Russian society is the question of trust, of Russians' agreement with the policy and ideology of the Putin path. He shows that many authoritative thinkers and public figures in Russia criticize the authorities for being overly cautious in international policy, for hindering high rates of economic growth, for the detrimental activities of the Central Bank – in other words, they insist on a radicalization of the political course. V.A. Ilyin does not express an unequivocal position on this matter. I interpret Vladimir Aleksandrovich's position as follows.

At present, historical processes (primarily spiritual and ideological) are moving toward a change in the world order, toward something better. The leadership of the Russian state must very carefully assess which radical changes in the political course might lead to an undesirable acceleration of these processes. The role of Russian experts (even opponents) should be limited to assisting the President in choosing the timing and direction of such radical changes.

I recently learned that Vologda Research Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences was established by V.A. Ilyin during the most challenging time for the country – in the 1990s, and by 2008 the journal had already begun publication. It is thanks to people like Vladimir Aleksandrovich that Russia stands as a model of steady progress along the difficult path of culture and civilization.

Once again, my heartfelt congratulations.