

F.M. BURLATSKY ABOUT DEVELOPMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE IN THE USSR

Abstract

The article substantiates the importance of the ideological and political heritage of Fyodor Burlatsky (1927–2014) for the formation and development of political science in Russia. He was the first Soviet scientist who in 1965 publicly declared the need to restore the rights of political science as a scientific and educational discipline. Until its official legalization in 1989, Burlatsky continued to defend the special subject status of political science, doing everything possible to ensure that political science received genuine recognition. In this regard, Burlatsky can rightly be called one of the founders of modern Russian political science.

Key words: Burlatsky, political science in the Soviet Union; history of political science.

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The scientific community often begins to assess the scale of the contribution of the scientist only after a considerable time has passed since the publication of his works. However, there were those whose contribution to political science was noticeable during their lifetime. Fyodor Burlatsky (1927–2014)¹ can be attributed to such people.

F. Burlatsky is an example of how one person could combine several incarnations: a scientist engaged in the development of the methodology of political science; Advisor of N. Khrushchev and Y. Andropov; deputy member of the Supreme Soviet Committee of the USSR on International Affairs, the legislator, under whose guidance the following documents were drafted: *media freedom act*²; *freedom of conscience and religious*

*organizations act*³; *freedom of exit and entry act*⁴ and *“Declaration of human rights and freedoms”*⁵. He also used to be a writer who created plays, which in the period of perestroika in the USSR (1985–1991) gathered full houses in Moscow theaters.

However, it is important for us that F. Burlatsky was the first Soviet scientist who publicly advocated the restoration of political science as a scientific and educational discipline. For this reason, he can “deservedly be called the founder of the Soviet political science” [2. — P. 115]. He was supported by young scientists: G. Shakhnazarov, G. Arbatov, A. Bovin and others, who were part of a group of

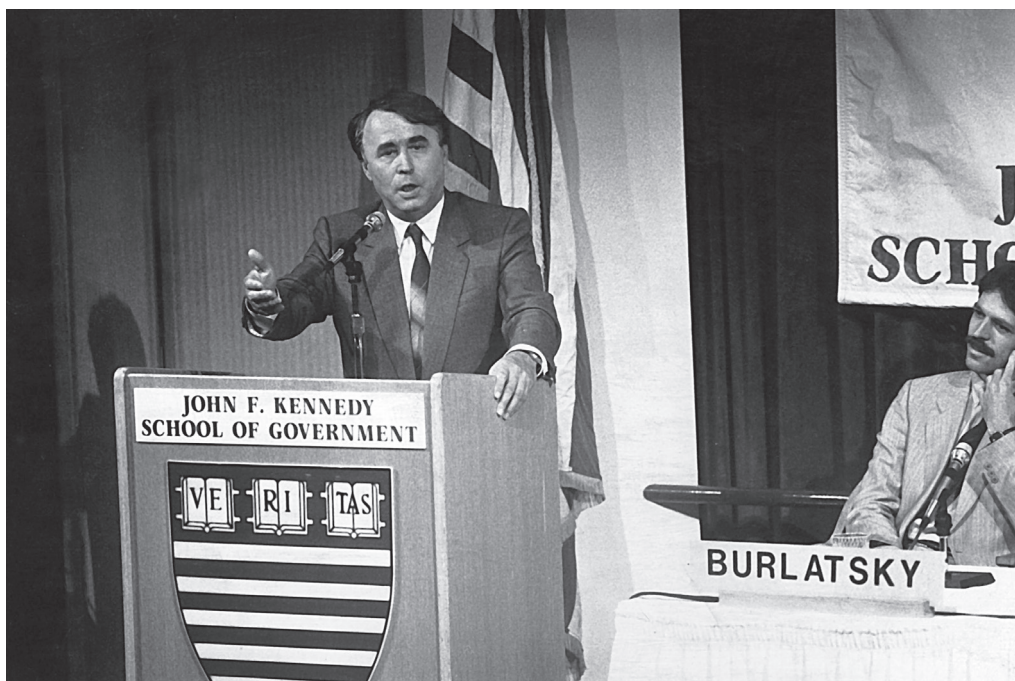
¹ For more information about the personality and work of Fyodor Burlatsky see: [6–13].

² The Law of the USSR of June 12, 1990 № 15520-1 “About the Press and Other Mass Media”.

³ The Law of the USSR of October 1, 1990 № 1689-1 “On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations”.

⁴ The Law of the USSR of May 20, 1991 № 2177-1 “About the Order of Exit from the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics and Entry into the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics”.

⁵ The Law of the USSR of September 5, 1991 № 2393-1 “Declaration of Human Rights and Freedoms”.



Lecture by F. Burlatsky at Harvard University, USA, 1991 (Photo from: [4])

consultants at one of the departments of the CPSU Central Committee, who also advocated the legalization of political science in the USSR [14. — P. 170]. According to A. Galkin, it was in the 1960s that the beginning of political science was laid in the USSR [5. — P. 263].

Much later, recalling these events, F. Burlatsky points out: "At that time we had a clear objective — to change the political system of our country. All we did was generated by this intention. You know that at that time there was a group of advisers-consultants of the CPSU Central Committee, in which I involved Shakh-nazarov, Alexander Abramovich Arbatov, Sasha Bovin, and some others. Exactly there were people who believed in the possibility of replacing the totalitarian government with a democratic one and tried to influence the political practice.

The first step in this direction, the first breakthrough was the thesis of the transition from the dictatorship of the proletariat to the nation-wide state, which was to open the way for the formation of a civilizational democratic society. For

this goal, in fact, we needed political science, which would not just borrow abroad some conceptual apparatus, some ideas, although it was absolutely necessary, but offered a theory and tools for the reconstruction of our state, our political system, the creation of democracy, a multi-party system, Parliament, etc. And here a huge role was played by the textbook edited by Kuusinen, for which I wrote the corresponding Chapter at the suggestion of Otto Wilhelmovich¹. This was the first step, but not the creation of the Association, which was led by Victor Mikhailovich Chhikvadze — ... had nothing to do with this kind of seditious intentions, nor to the formation of science.

And then the idea of formation of domestic political science was born in our circles, of course, it was closely related to the Western, but based on the study of the phenomenon of our country, our people, our political tradition, which absolutely

¹ We are talking about the book: Fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism. Tutorial, ed. by O.V. Kuusinen, A.G. Arbatov, A.S. Belyakov et al. Moscow, Gospolitizdat publ., 1960. 775 p.



F. Burlatsky, L. Tolkunov, E. Kuskov, L. Delyusin, I. Udaltsov — advisers of the International Department of the CPSU Central Committee, 1962 (Photo from: Burlatsky F.M. Yuri Andropov and aristocrats of the spirit. Moscow, Sobranie Publ., 2009. 286 p.)

does not coincide with the Western European one. It was then that I wrote an article on political science, which appeared in "Pravda" in 1965" [1. — P. 143].

F. Burlatsky's article "On political science"¹ was published in the newspaper "Pravda" on January 10, 1965. In this article Burlatsky unfolds the following argument in favor of political science: "We would like to draw attention to the need of developing the problems of political science. It is about the development of the knowledge industry, which is now urgently needed in connection with the important and complex challenges facing the country. Political science is designed to provide answers to the fundamental questions of improving the forms and methods of society management with

¹ However, the article with this title was published only in the issue of the newspaper, which was distributed in the periphery. In the version for Moscow, the editor-in-chief changed the name to "Politics and science".

a clear distribution of functions, rights and responsibilities among all levels of the administrative staff, the problems of personnel extension and training.

This science arises at the junction of a number of sciences, namely scientific communism, theory of state and law, sociology, and economic science. In fact, it is a process of deepening the theory, the increasing penetration of scientific analysis in all cells of social life, the reflection of its diversity.

The investigation does not aim to outline the whole range of issues related to political science. It seems that the main object of study of this science is political relations in both socialist and capitalist society and relations between states in the international arena. More specifically, in our opinion, this science should study issues related to the structure and activities of the state, political parties, public organizations of mass movements, international associations and organizations,

forms and methods of diplomatic activity, public opinion, methods of propaganda, etc. We cannot say that these problems are not being investigated today. They are studied, but mainly within the framework of historical or legal science, and many problems remain out of sight of scientists.

The development of political science as an independent branch of social science will make it possible to study these problems comprehensively, and more importantly, in close connection with the needs of practical policy.

Naturally, political science cannot take over the study of the content of state policy. This is the task of all social sciences in general. The main task of political science is to study the mechanism of society's leadership in dynamics, i.e. the study of how it functions, what is necessary for its improvement and development" [4. — P. 17–18].

One of the participants of the events — A. Bovin describes the situation as follows: "... It is Fedya who has the idea to legalize political science in our country. The situation was paradoxical. Marxist-Leninist ideology was the most politicized ... The first swallow was Burlatsky's article "Politics and science" in "Pravda" of January 10, 1965. I was in the second echelon. My article appeared in "The Red Star" on February 10. There were many opponents. The main argument was that Marxism-Leninism is our political science, our political theory. They resisted for a long time. At the end of 1965 we (that is Fedya and I) decided to make a power knight's move to be published in "Communist". We wrote an article "Actual problems of social and political research". The article was discussed at the editorial board in December. The article failed. Why do we need some "political science" (or "political theory" or "political ideology")? In the end, they realized "why". Burlatsky won..." [2. — P. 125].

After 1965 F. Burlatsky continued to defend the special subject status of political science and offered to significantly expand the range of political research.

In this context, worth mentioning is the analytical note prepared in the late 1970s by Burlatsky to the Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee M. Zimyanin¹, which justified the need to develop the following political and ideological studies:

1) rights, freedoms and duties of the individual in different social systems;

2) problems of direct participation of workers in the management of public and state affairs in various social systems;

3) problems of social and national equality in different social systems;

4) the role of the party, public organizations, labor collectives in the political system of Soviet society;

5) lifestyle and quality of life based on comparative analysis in different social systems;

6) global problems of mankind (environmental protection, poverty reduction and disease control in the modern world, etc.);

7) the study of public opinion in the USSR, as well as the generalization of materials in other countries;

8) criticism of modern political ideologies (imperialism, Maoism, social democracy, left revolutionism, etc.) and the study of the activities of the ideological centers [3].

In his recollections F. Burlatsky writes that at the present stage of primary importance is the development of the theoretical foundations of political doctrines and the formation of a number of scientific disciplines, which will integrate the diversity of political research and introduce them into a more or less general political direction. To them he refers:

- the theory of politics, which includes the study of political power, the goals of politics, the subject and object of politics, socio-political consciousness, methods of studying politics;
- the theory of political systems, which includes the study of elements of po-

¹ At that time Mikhail Zimyanin was responsible for ideological issues (science, education, culture, sports, media, etc.).

litical systems, political norms, political relations, the typology of modern political systems and modes of political management and leadership;

- the theory of international relations and world politics, which includes the study of the problems of war and peace, peaceful coexistence, international conflicts, international cooperation, international solutions, the process of integration of internalization, the development of international communications, the relationship of foreign policy and ideology, and others;
- the theory of socio-political management, which includes the study of forms and methods, subject and object of management, decision-making, organization of their execution, control, etc. [3].

In addition, F. Burlatsky focuses on the following organizational issues that would contribute to the development of political science in the USSR:

- the creation of a special Institute of Political Research at the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, which would take over the development of a significant part of the above scientific areas, primarily on human rights, democracy, public opinion, participation

in management, criticism of the main ideological trends, theory and methodology of political research);

- creation of a Scientific Council on Political Research with the participation of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism of the CPSU Central Committee, the USSR Academy of Sciences, the Academy of Social Sciences, Institute of Social Sciences at the CPSU Central Committee);
- creation of the journal "Political Studies";
- renaming of the Department of Philosophy and Law of the USSR Academy of Sciences in the Department of Philosophical, Political and Legal Sciences of the USSR);
- formation of the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences at Moscow State University [3].

Thus, F. Burlatsky in 1965, first in Soviet times publicly declared the need to restore the rights of political science as a scientific and educational discipline. And until its official legalization in 1989, Burlatsky continued to defend the special substantive status of political science, did everything possible to ensure that political science received genuine recognition. Therefore, Burlatsky may truthfully be called one of the founders of modern Russian political science.

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