

Abstract Ph.D. thesis

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Eurasianism: An ideology for the multipolar world

The research focuses on the study of Eurasianism, a political doctrine primarily developed in Russia, which finds its principles on classical geopolitics (Mackinder, Spykman, Haushofer, Schmitt) and on the ideology of conservatism. From a geopolitical point of view, following Mackinder scheme, Eurasianism claims that the international power that controls the Eurasian landmass can obtain global hegemony. It also believes in the dichotomy between thalassocratic power (represented today by Atlanticism) and telluric power (exemplified by Russia and China): this irreconcilable dualism is perceived as a strategic, cultural, and philosophical clash between two opposite worldviews, namely globalism and unipolarity on one hand and traditionalism and multipolarity on the other. Specifically, the research investigates Aleksandr Dugin's neo-Eurasianist thought and its implications for the international system. After employing the analytical study of ideologies as a methodological tool, the research acknowledges Eurasianism as a full-fledged ideology and collocates it within the spectrum of conservative theories. It then analyzes the historical evolution of Eurasianism, from the early 20th century to its contemporary manifestations, paying specific attention to the works of early Eurasianists and of Lev N. Gumilëv. Afterwards, it describes the liaison between Eurasianism and geopolitics, offering a quick overview – both historical and theoretical – on the nature of geopolitics, unfolding the foundations of geopolitical analysis according to Dugin. Consequently, the research portrays the main geopolitical theories that highlight the strategic role of the Eurasian landmass and of its core, namely Mackinder's "Heartland theory", Spykman's "Rimland theory", and Haushofer's *Kontinentalblock* project. After these premises, the study concentrates on the central elements of the neo-Eurasianist ideology, including the chief features of Dugin's so-called "Fourth Political Theory" and of his "Eurasian Manifesto". It also scrutinizes what Eurasianism considers to be its natural foes, namely post-liberalism, subjectivist individualism, unipolarity, Atlanticism, and globalism, in the attempt to understand why it is so. Moreover, specific attention is given to the Eurasianist vision of global order, focused on the quest for developing a multipolar world order which would be based on the overcoming of unipolarity, on Russia's specific geopolitical mission, and on the subdivision of the world in geo-economic zones and great spaces. Finally, the research explores in more empirical terms three contemporary Eurasian initiatives aimed at integrating the Eurasian space, namely the Eurasian Economic Union, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and the Belt and Road Initiative.

The main hypotheses that the research assesses are the following. First, whether the Eurasianist ideology – and specifically Dugin’s neo-Eurasianism – would represent a theoretical contribution for the description of the advent of a multipolar international order or would it embody an inefficient, normatively biased, and often naïve hermeneutic instrument. Second, whether geopolitical theories could still offer a valid tool for interpreting international relations and global power. Third, whether Eurasia could be considered a truly strategic continent for global hegemony.