

## ALEKSANDER DUGIN ABOUT THE FOURTH WAY OF EURASIANISM

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**Abstract:** Aleksander Dugin has been the most influential Russian philosopher of the last 20 years. His influence is due to the fact that it is widely read by the Russian political and military elites. After the collapse of communism in 1989, the Russian state needed a new worldview! And the new ideology will be Eurasianism, in fact the older ideology of Pan-Slavism dressed in new clothes.

Aleksander Dugin taught geopolitics at Moscow University. His course was also translated into Romanian, on which occasion Dugin added a special chapter addressed to Romanians. He proposes the union of the Republic of Moldova with Romania on the condition of Romania's integration into the economic community and the military alliance controlled by Russia.

Several personalities of Romanian culture were seduced by Dugin's ideas. And this seduction was based for some of them on a religious affinity. The idea is simple. What does it mean to be Russian? It means being orthodox. What does it mean to be a Serbian? It means being orthodox. What does it mean to be Bulgarian? It means being orthodox. What does it mean to be Romanian? It means to be orthodox. Aleksander Dugin asks: If we all have the same Orthodox soul, why do not we live together in the same economic, political and military community?

**Key words:** conceptual analysis, political philosophy, history of ideas

### INTRODUCTION

Starting from the 17<sup>th</sup> century, modernity has brought along with it a process of secularisation in Europe. People begin to lose faith in God, but still feel the need to believe in something. Ideologies are the creation of philosophers. Ideologies pretend to be scientific worldviews and want to replace Christianity. Liberalism is the creation of two English philosophers: Thomas Hobbes and John Locke. Socialism is created by French philosophers: J.J. Rousseau, Saint Simon, Proudhon. Nationalism is the creation of a German philosopher: J.G. Herder. Communism is created by another German philosopher: Karl Marx. While liberalism allows religious freedom, socialism and communism aim to destroy Christian churches in Europe. This is what the French Revolution and the Communist regime in Russia set out to do and partially succeeded.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

Eurasianism is a complex topic that can only be understood from an interdisciplinary perspective: philosophical, historical and theological, from a hermeneutic analytical point of view. Of course, we do not claim an exhaustive approach of the subject in this article, but only to review the main ideas of this ideology.

### RESEARCH RESULTS

Eurasianism is the new face of Slavophilism, which is, in turn, a mixture of nationalism and religion. We have talked about the origins of nationalist ideology in a previous article. [7] In fact, the Orthodox religion has been taken captive by Russian nationalism. With the reign of Peter the Great (1682-1725), a process of modernisation and westernisation began in Russia. One may mention one of Peter the Great's measures. State officials were forced to cut off their beards and wear Western clothes. From then the Russian elites were divided between Westernists and Slavophiles.

But Slavophilism had an imperial side, which pleased the Russian tsars. Slavophiles believed that after the fall of Constantinople in 1453, Moscow became the *third Rome* and took over the role of defender of the Balkan Orthodox from the Byzantine Empire, after it had been conquered by the Turks.

The concept of Eurasianism originated in the 1920s with four Russian thinkers who had fled to the West because of the Russian revolution from 1917. These were the philosopher Trubetskoy, the economic geographer Savitsky, the theologian Florovsky and the musicologist Suvchinsky. They wrote a book together entitled: *Exodus to the East. Affirmation of the Eurasians*.

Paradoxically, many of those Russian exiles and fugitives, exceptional intellectuals, who had escaped impoverished from the communist disaster, had a solid anti-Western streak and viewed the "decadent West" with great severity. [1].

Trubetskoy views Russians as a rather Asian people, although they share Christianity with the West. "In the veins of Russians, Turkic blood mixes with Finno-Ugric and Slavic blood, and it is often forgotten that our brothers (if we are not brothers in language or faith, we are brothers in blood, character and culture) are not only Slavs, but also Turks." [3]

Trubetskoy also takes up the Slavophile idea, considering that Russians are the only keepers of the true Christian faith, Orthodoxy. "We Russians are no less different from Europe than Iranians or Indians are. Of course, we share Greco-Roman roots, but this heritage went through a schism that began in the 6th century, when the Western Empire turned away from Byzantium and then disappeared under the attacks of Germanic tribes. We Russians adopted Christianity after Byzantium and have kept this tradition of Eastern Christianity pure to this day" [7].

Unlike Dugin, for the Eurasianist thinkers of the 1920s, Western Europe was still the centre of the world and they did not consider the United States the absolute evil. On the contrary, they predicted that the United States and Russia would be the nations of the future. [10].

In the first decade after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Alexander Dugin (born 1962) tried to replace the old Leninist ideology with something new, discovering the so-called National Bolshevism, a concept propagated after World War I by the German Ernst Niekisch (1889-1967).

Dugin's eclectic theory is a mixture of Slavic nationalism with Orthodox religion, the exaltation of Tsarism and imperialist Stalinism, wrapped in the concepts borrowed from the writings of René Guénon, Julius Evola, Mircea Eliade, Carl Schmitt, Arthur Moeller van den Bruck (*The Third Reich*, 1923), Oswald Spengler (*The Decline of the West*, 1918), Alain de Benoist or Armin Mohler (*The Conservative Revolution in Germany*, 1918-1932).[13]

Here are some of the main ideas of Dugin's book, *The Basics of Geopolitics*. Aleksander Dugin is "devoted to the imperial project of the new Russia; Russia has an universal historical vocation. The Russian people are inclined to assimilate all Eurasian spaces; Russia's interests are bound up with Eurasian expanses; the Russian people are bearers of a special type of religiosity, different from the Catholic-Protestant and post-Christian civilization; Russia's cultural antithesis is the West as a whole; Russia did not see itself as a mono-ethnic state, but has striven and continues to strive towards a universal mission, an Empire that would encompass a conglomerate of peoples, cultures, religions, regimes; the Russian people has at the basis of its existence a *soteriological* perspective, on a planetary scale, consisting not in the tendency towards the enlargement of the Russians' living space, but in the orientation towards the consolidation of a Russian-type world view, which claims the last word in world history." [5]

The Slavophile idea is very important for Dugin. "The establishment of the Patriarchate in Russia and the proclamation of Moscow as the *Third Rome* is directly related to the mystical destiny of Orthodoxy as such, Dugin says. Dugin's argument for his idea is that, after the fall of Constantinople, Russia was the only major geopolitical area where Orthodox politics and the Orthodox Church existed. Russia, he also argues, became the successor to Byzantium for both theological and geopolitical reasons." [5]

The Russian philosopher takes up the old slogan of Tsarist Russia: *Orthodoxy, autocracy, narodnost*. "Dugin has defined traditional Russian values as Orthodoxy – the domination of the basic religion; monarchy – the most characteristic form of organisation of a socio-political traditional society, and not only in Russia, but in European countries as well; and *narodnost* (nationalism) – the approval of traditional cultural forms of life." [2]

According to Marlene Laurelle, the characteristics of euroasianism are as follows:

(1) "a rejection of Europe, the West, and capitalism through criticism of "Atlanticist" domination, considered disastrous for the rest of mankind;

(2) an assertion of the cultural unity and common historical destiny of Russians and non-Russian peoples of Russia, the former Soviet Union, and parts of Asia;

(3) the idea that the central geographical position of this Eurasian space naturally and inevitably entails an imperial form of political organization, and that any secession is destined to fail, leaving newly independent states no choice but to revert to a unified political entity; and

(4) a belief in the existence of cultural constants that explain the deeper meaning of contemporary political events." [6]

At the proposal of Alexander Dugin, Vladimir Putin established the *Eurasian Economic Union* in 2015, which included Russia, Belarus, Armenia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. Another of Dugin's ideas implemented was the *Shanghai Cooperation Organization* (abbreviated to SCO) is an organization that includes Russia, China and four former Soviet republics in Central Asia: Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan.

## CONCLUSIONS

Aleksander Dugin has been to Romania several times and was welcomed with open arms by several Romanian sociologists, political scientists and theologians. Even the *Eurasian Movement in Romania* and the Eurasian Publishing House were founded to promote Dugin's books.

How did Dugin's ideology seduce these intellectuals? Because he declared himself orthodox? Because he declared himself an admirer of the philosophers Lucian Blaga and Mircea Eliade? Are they forgetting that Blaga and Eliade suffered because of the Communist regime imposed by Moscow in Romania?

Because Dugin declares himself a conservative thinker and admirer of Rene Guenon, Julius Evola, Oswald Spengler, Carl Schmitt? Is there only one kind of conservatism? Have they not heard of English and American conservatism? Can a Romanian conservative only be a Russophile?

Alexander Dugin basically asserts that there are four great political doctrines, four great paths. The first way is liberalism, the second is communism, the third is fascism and Nazism, and the fourth way is the one he proposes: Eurasianism. Dugin also calls his ideology National-Bolshevism because, he says, it takes the best from fascism and communism.

According to Dugin, National-Bolshevism "represents socialism without materialism, atheism, progressivism and modernism, as well as the third way, Fascism-

Nazism, which is devoid of racism or nationalism". From communism, according to Dughin, which is "the second way", we must take out what is bad, atheism, materialism and cosmopolitanism, and keep everything else that is good, social solidarity, social justice and general holistic attitude, the pre-eminence of society over the individual. [10]

For Dugin, the West, and especially the United States, represents absolute evil because it is based on capitalist economics and political liberalism: "All those who have a negative analysis of globalization, Westernization and postmodernization should coordinate their efforts to create a strategy of resistance to the omnipresent evil. The American empire must be destroyed! My goal is to recruit soldiers for the fight against the West and the establishment of the universal Eurasian empire!" [5]

Shortly before the start of the war in Ukraine, 15% of Romanians declared themselves Russophiles, and 27% of them considered Romania's integration into NATO and European Union a mistake, reveals a study carried out by the Center for the Promotion of Participation and Democracy (CPD) within the National School of Political and Administrative Studies (SNSPA). [14]

The first percentage seems surprising, given that Romania was under Soviet occupation from 23 August 1944 until 1958, when the Russian tanks left. Romania's interwar elites were eliminated by the Communists on Moscow's orders. One might mention the name of Iuliu Maniu, among many others, one of the founders of the Great Union of 1918. Romania's wealth was exploited by the Russians through enterprises called SOVROMs for the payment of war reparations.

The second percentage also seems inexplicable. Romania gets back at least triple its contribution to the EU budget. Romania received, in the last 14 years, from the European Union, 42 billion euros more than it contributed. [8] The amount obtained is 63 billion euros, and the contributions amount to 21 billion euros. At least 5 million Romanians work in the European Union. Romanians' standard of living has risen significantly since we have become part of the European Union. The European Union's investments in Romania can be seen by anyone. Romania's GDP has surpassed that of Greece and has caught up with that of Portugal. [10]

According to an IRES opinion poll from August 2022, 30% of Romanians considered Russia's war in Ukraine is justified. [15] The explanation can be that some Romanians are vulnerable to Russian propaganda. A propaganda that is less present on Romanian TV, but very present on the internet, especially on Facebook and on the blogs of Romanian political analysts on YouTube. If Romanians are divided on the war in Ukraine, their choice on foreign defence policy is very clear. Poles and Romanians are the biggest supporters of the United States in Europe.

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