EURASIANISM: RUSSIA’S PURSUIT OF TRANSNATIONAL NATIONALISM

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EURASIANISM: RUSSIA’S PURSUIT OF TRANSNATIONAL NATIONALISM

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“Russocentric” Eurasianism in its basic sense is the idea that Russia and the countries on its periphery inhabit the central point bridging Europe and Asia and that their role as the occupiers of this pivotal geographic region is a success generated by a culture born of an ancient synthesis of Slavic and Asian peoples.\(^1\) Those who propagate the theories supportive of this overarching concept do so for a variety of reasons, but they agree that Russia is the center of this “heartland” and is not just an inconsequential country bordering Europe.\(^2\) With some intentional ambiguity, these theorists use a unique collection of historical and anthropological justifications to define Eurasia’s broad swath of cultures and religions as Russian. Hence, Eurasianism has gained a significant following in academia, the church, and politics, due in large part to the fact that it satisfies an appetite for nationalism that Russians have been denied for generations.

This study seeks to ascertain the degree of influence that Eurasianism has had on Russian national security policy. Though there are known Eurasianist theorists, from both the “first

\(^2\) Ibid.
wave” (1917 timeframe) and the “second wave” (1991 and beyond), there are few theorists who have impacted the contemporary movement as much as Alexander Dugin. The study references works by Eurasia experts, whose definitions of Eurasianism and analysis of Dugin’s works help to develop an understanding of the philosophical underpinnings of his theories. With Eurasianism defined externally (by Eurasia researchers) and internally (by Eurasianists), the study identifies what constitutes influence, who has been influenced by the ideology, how the influence has been pursued and finally, to what end has the influence been achieved.

Using a research method that categorizes data according to four “streams” (religion, economics, political, and military) the study seeks to identify evidence of both overt and surreptitious Eurasianist influence upon the people and institutions that fall within those categories. The study reveals that Eurasianism has had a significant impact upon the Russian military establishment and a peripheral yet pronounced effect upon the political and policy mechanisms, and concludes that Eurasianism has indeed influenced Russian policy. Though Vladimir Putin’s regime does not publicize an open adherence to Eurasianist theory, it has revealed a distinct similarity to the style of governance that Dugin puts forward as his “Fourth Political Theory.”
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Introduction and Topic

Introduction

Eurasianism, a century old theory, has been resurrected and adapted to counter Western values. The movement’s principals, seeking to legitimize its ideals, portray their pursuit of Eurasianist ideology as humanitarian advocacy, ostensibly to aid the 330 million people who speak the Russian language. Presented as a Christian, traditional, conservative alternative to liberalism, Neo-Eurasianists promote and embrace Kremlin interventions among the nations they consider uniquely Russian.

This thesis seeks to determine the level of influence that the philosophy known as Eurasianism has on Russian national security decision making. It will analyze four subject “streams”—religion, economics, political, and military—that contextualize the discussion of Russia’s contemporary strategic objectives exploring Eurasianism’s influence on those “streams.” The focus of this analysis is to search for indications of where those Eurasianism-related “streams” converge and determine the influence of that nexus upon Russia’s national security.

Understanding the Eurasianist philosophy and its philosophers is foundational to understanding Russia. Defining terms like “influence,” “Eurasianism,” ”Neo-Eurasianism,” and the “Third Rome Theory” further contextualize this qualitative case.

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study. Investigating their impact on Russia’s body politic, its military, and its prevailing economic factors, will reveal the extent to which Russia has been influenced by Eurasianism.

Neo-Eurasianist ideology contends that Russia and its contiguous periphery occupy a key central position between Europe and Asia – “The Heartland.” Invoking this geo-strategic “prophecy” as the impetus for pursuing a cultural unification that transcends political boundaries, Eurasianists espouse views intended to appeal to the broad ethnic expanse they maintain is “Russian,” endorsing a “transnational nationalism.” Though deviating from original Eurasianist doctrine, these Neo-Eurasianists envision Novorossiya [New Russia – equating with southern and eastern Ukraine] as the justifiable center of a transnational empire. This empire, they believe, must be ruled in a manner deferential to Russian history and values. Holding divergent views on the exact composition of this government, original émigré Eurasianists (exiles in the early 1920s) tended to espouse a modification to fascism. Neo-Eurasianists (1991 and beyond) however, advocate for a completely new form of government that incorporates aspects from several other models.

Justification

Given the fundamental tenets of Neo-Eurasianist theory, geographic expansion is necessary to achieve the ascendancy Neo-Eurasianists believe Russia deserves. The

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Russian Ministry of Defense has conducted objective assessments of its military doctrine, counter-balancing U.S. doctrine with a “New-Type Warfare.” Russia believes that the “Color Revolutions” of the last two decades are strategic fomentations of Russia’s adversaries, and it recognizes U.S. foreign policy and Department of Defense (DoD) doctrine as a justification to implement reciprocal national security doctrine. Proponents of Neo-Eurasianism seek to offset U.S. foreign and defense policies to the benefit of Russia, and this study examines how they have been instrumental in this effort.

Russia is aware of the challenges the United States is facing on the international stage. Believing the United States to be distracted with addressing a multitude of security threats in Asia, the Middle East, and Europe, Russia recognizes an opportunity for pursuing Eurasian hegemony. This study offers an enhanced understanding of the Eurasianist ideology through which Russia may view its opportunities in relation to U.S. challenges. In addition, it will serve to discover key details about the Eurasianist network and its resources, contrasting that information against Russia’s current activities in order to determine the degree that Eurasianism is influencing its policy makers. If Russia is intent upon acting in the Eurasian region, it is likely that it would do so once the United States has become entangled in multiple theaters and operationally over-extended to the degree that its ability to respond adequately to a NATO distress call is marginalized.

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Research Question

This study will answer the research question, “What influence does Eurasianism have on current Russian national security policy?” This research is designed to establish coherent linkages between Russia’s low-level tactics/tacticians and its overarching strategies, in essence, identifying and studying the operational or mid-tier organizations whose activities will reveal strategic methods and indicators that identify the influence that Eurasianism has had on them.

Key Questions

The following key questions will be used to help answer the research question:

• **What is Eurasianism** (Both contemporary and historical explanations)?

  This research will evaluate Eurasianism first as it was conceived a century ago, and then as it has been adapted by “neo-Eurasianists,” comparing the changes in how Eurasianism is defined, as well as its affect upon Russian policy. The definition of Eurasianism and Neo-Eurasianism will clarify their similarities and differences providing context to the study by establishing the degree of influence that original Eurasianist thinkers have on the Neo-Eurasianists today. Neo-Eurasianism encompasses a much larger ideological footprint. The ideology does seek a wider following and as such has made a deliberate effort to be inclusive. This question will help clarify what principles the Neo-Eurasianists are not willing to compromise while building a broader following.

• **Who are the primary Russian proponents of Eurasianism?**

  This question will support the research question by identifying those Russians who are influencing Eurasianism and its objectives in a positive manner. Because the ideology’s tenets
touch all the streams, this particular question provides a look at how each of these people influences a specific stream. The question also begins to highlight those who have impacts across multiple streams.

- **What current Russian political and national security leaders subscribe to the Eurasianist philosophy?**

  This question will determine Eurasianism’s influence on senior government officials and whether those impacts are overt or covert in nature. Referencing the findings from the preceding question will enable the research to examine the peripheral impacts that Eurasianist influencers from a non-governmental stream may have on government officials. If a senior leader does appear to support Eurasianism this question will be foundational to analyzing their motivations for doing so.

- **What constitutes influence?** (contextualize the effects)

  In modernity the word Influence refers to the power to change or affect someone or something - especially the power to cause changes without coersion. In centuries past Influence almost universally meant to affect outcomes in an important way. This thesis will apply this definition to an analysis of Eurasianism in Russia.

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Research Design/Methodology:

The research will use a qualitative historical case study to investigate Eurasianism broadly, parsing data into the aforementioned “streams.” That data, categorized and distributed into these “streams” of related information, will facilitate the interpretation and analysis required to answer the research question. Given the fact that a large collection of primary and secondary data is available, data collection will focus on document reviews, Russian and American military and foreign policy journals, think tank studies, news articles, and documents from original 1900s era Russian Eurasianist theorists.

This research will examine Eurasianism as an ideology using the four “streams,” which represent categories of decision making that affect foreign and domestic affairs, to determine how Eurasianism is affecting them. The analysis of these streams (religion, economics, political, and military) will then be used to determine the degree of influence Eurasianist ideology is having upon Russian policy overall. The religion stream contains data on contemporary and ancient Orthodox thought and doctrine. Information from the political stream incorporates analysis on how Eurasianists believe the theories of government (fascism, communism, and liberalism) could be adapted and merged to create a new type of government, that can achieve what previous governments failed to do. The military stream evaluates contemporary Russian military doctrine and contrasts it with that of its adversaries. An economic or financial stream analyzes how the movement is being funded, who its primary financiers are, and how Russia’s economic policies are related to information in the other streams. The purpose of this study is to collate information related to these streams and evaluate each one according to its subject, focus, and impacts upon Russian policy. Once each of the streams has been
analyzed singularly, similarities can be identified and further analysis will determine links between them. These established links should allow conclusions that reveal the sources of this “Neo-Eurasianist” philosophy and assess the degree of influence it has on Russian policymakers.

Recent Russian adventurism has morphed into blatant interventionism that extends beyond the bounds of the old Soviet Union. These actions are in line with Neo-Eurasianist objectives. This research will focus on analyzing these overt and covert interactions, uncover affiliations, and reveal the methods being employed to foster international acceptance of Eurasianist objectives. The figure below depicts the broad promulgation of Eurasianist ideology across Russian society, and then shows how the research data will be categorized according to the stream it affects.

![Figure 1-1. “Stream” Analysis](image)

**Evaluation outputs:**
1) Analysis of influence Eurasianism has upon each individual stream
2) Identify when multiple streams exhibit effects originating from the same source
Data will then be analyzed for impacts to that particular stream and further investigated for effects on multiple streams. While confirmed effects on a singular stream are important, it is the nexus, multi-stream relationships, that may prove most significant with regard to defining the degree of Eurasianist influence.

**Thesis/Chapter Organization**

**Chapter 1: Introduction**

The opening chapter’s focus is to explain the vision of the thesis design and to summarize both the importance of the study and the inherent information gaps that it is designed to address, as identified in a thorough review of current literature. It will also explain the context of the research question and key questions. Defining “influence” as well as “Eurasianism” itself, the first chapter provides an understanding of the terminology and the strategy for the project.

**Chapter 2: Ideology – Origins of Eurasianism**

The second chapter will explain the origins of Eurasianism. This chapter will also address Neo-Eurasianism and how it differs from its predecessor. Within the ideology, there are elements of the key questions that will begin to be addressed. “Influencers” will emerge and their individual theories will be articulated. This chapter will close with an examination of what contemporary Neo-Eurasianism is, and how it could affect the national security policy mechanism in Russia.
Chapter 3: Actors and Allies

Within the context of the religious, economic, military, and political “streams,” this chapter focuses on identifying the figures who have emerged as key “actors” or influencers within Russian society, academia, government, and the military. This chapter provides the historical context by explaining how each of the “actors” are significant within the government or society, and it will define degrees of influence and determine what cross-section of society they tend to be focused on.

Chapter 4: Strategies

The military and political “streams” are critical to the pursuit of Eurasianist ideology. Military and political leaders who are proponents of the ideology could be “reforming” the military and implementing doctrine designed to support the political objectives that Eurasianism mandates. Chapter Four will describe the impacts that Russian “Think Tanks,” charities, and “New Type Warfare” (use of covert Special Operations Forces and militias, information operations, computer-network and kinetic operations) doctrine is having on Russia and how that could confirm Eurasianist influence.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

The final chapter will describe the elements of Neo-Eurasianist ideology that have proven to have strategic implications as a result of the influence it has gained within a particular “stream.” It will also highlight those situations where multiple “streams” have proven connections, explaining their impacts on Russian decision making with regard to national security and foreign affairs.
Classification

Given the fact that there are ample unclassified primary and secondary sources, and that most Eurasianist publications are available in the public domain, this case study will be UNCLASSIFIED.

Literature Review

There has been a great deal of analysis done on Russia’s strategic objectives and much has been written on the tactical methods employed in the regions where Russia has recently involved itself. However, this thesis will address the “why” more so than the “what” or “how.” Eurasianist influence could be the answer to this question, but determining an ideology’s level of influence is challenging, due in part to the subjectivity inherent to quantifying influence itself. Though the “five W’s” (who, what, why, when, and where) can help to address some of the ambiguities, it is arguably more effective to apply a thematic structure to problems like this. Should analysis of several Russian instruments of national power reveal recurrent Eurasianist themes it would illustrate Eurasianism’s influence upon current Russian policy.

In this context these subjects will be referred to as “streams.” These “streams,” narrowed to religion, economy, politics, and the military, become the funnels into which data relating to both Eurasianism and Russia is poured. Their confluence allows identification of the collaboration intended to produce “influence” within specific Russian institutions. Each source was selected with this “influence” paradigm in mind, and each source addresses the question of how Eurasianism has shaped the activities taking place within a particular “stream.”
In this study, there are five main works referenced, not only for their specific subject matter, but for the multiple perspectives each provides. With regard to addressing Eurasianism’s influence on Russian policy it became necessary to first define Eurasism. Marlene Laurelle’s *Russian Eurasianism* provides definitions for Eurasianism and Neo-Eurasianism and delves into the geographical concepts and cultural comparisons. Her work also details the philosophical underpinnings of the political theories and concepts that preceded Eurasianism and lends detail to research on the early émigré community that defined and promoted Eurasianism in exile. Laruelle’s research on the early Eurasianists enables an understanding of the five émigré writers considered to be the most influential during the movement’s inception. Her definition of Eurasianism, used in this study, is a result of her understanding of each of their backgrounds, theoretical nuances, and personal biases. *Russian Eurasianism* also bridges the old to the new. Explaining the transition to Neo-Eurasianism, Laruelle identifies Alexander Dugin as its contemporary voice, and details his interactions with a variety of influential Russians across the streams.

With Dugin identified as the key Neo-Eurasianist, it becomes necessary to research his views on its theories and foundations. His book, *The Fourth Political Theory*, provides further context to the study by revealing that, though Dugin attempts to portray his political philosophies as the result of objective metaphysical toil, they are infected by the passions of irrational religious and mystical beliefs. This study analyzes his interpretations of the three primary forms of government he refers to as

“Political Theories,” and works to explain his pursuit of the “Fourth Political Theory” as the replacement for them. Dugin’s book, *The Fourth Political Theory* displays his ideological commitment to Eurasianism, yet the book also exposes a pragmatism in his theories that suggest his focus is on a Russian political transformation.

While *The Fourth Political Theory* shows that Dugin is pursuing a political transformation, James Heiser’s book clarifies Dugin’s real motivation. Heiser’s book, *The American Empire Should Be Destroyed: Alexander Dugin and the Perils of Immanentized Eschatology*, explains that Dugin’s ideological pursuits are centered on the belief that, in order for Russia to rise, the United States must be unseated as the imperial hegemon. This study juxtaposes Heiser’s interpretation of Dugin’s theories with *The Fourth Political Theory* to develop an understanding of what Dugin may be doing to influence Russian policies and who he may be using to do so.11

It is at this point that an understanding of Russian politics, government, and society becomes important. Mikhail Zygar’s book, *All the Kremlin’s Men*,12 is a journalist’s exposition on the inner workings of Russian government and society since Vladimir Putin took power. The author provides a detailed account of Putin’s rise to power, describing his relationships with the influential people who got him there. Zygar provides personal details on a multitude of people that Putin has worked with in government, business, and the church. He also provides depth with regard to character detail, describing both the personal backgrounds of Putin’s associates and their

relationship to Putin. His explanations are useful in that they revealed circumstances that can be cross-referenced with Fiona Hill and Clifford Gaddy’s book *Mr. Putin*.

Hill and Gaddy’s book provides an analysis of Putin from essentially the same time period as Zygar’s book but from a different perspective. Their volume describes Putin’s evolution as a leader, highlighting distinguishing characteristics over six different time periods. Depicting him first, as the “Statist” they explain how Putin sought to publicize himself as the leader who would restore the Russian state. He was quick to declare that to do so would require the people to recognize and embrace a collection of distinctly Russian values or principles, an ideal common to Eurasianism as well.\(^\text{13}\)

The book shows how Putin, a self-professed student of history, then employed Russian history to develop a collection of “useful history” to aid him in the production of his new policies. Hill and Gaddy illustrate how his knowledge of history allowed him to construct elaborate justifications for his policies pertaining to foreign affairs and domestic governance.\(^\text{14}\) They show how, like the “History Man,” the “Survivalist” Putin portrayed Russians as survivors to help them recognize the national strength achieved through their decades of hardships. During this period the book explains how Putin used the trials of the World Wars and the privations of communism to unify Russians despite their cultural incongruences, also a pillar of Eurasianism.\(^\text{15}\) Finally, Hill and Gaddy show that as the “Outsider,” Putin developed his “Good Czar” qualities and depicted himself as the resolute authoritarian who will


\(^{14}\) Hill and Gaddy, *Mr. Putin*, 64-70.

\(^{15}\) Hill and Gaddy, *Mr. Putin*, 76-105.
do what the Russian people need, pursuing the “greater good.” This too is an attribute that could further Eurasianism by coalescing Russians around a leader who is not seen as a corrupt Kremlin “insider.”

Although these works touch on topics related to Eurasianism, none explicitly describes or analyzes the influence that Eurasianism has on Putin’s or other Russian leaders’ decisionmaking. This thesis will use these seminal works to gain a fundamental understanding of Eurasianism, the Russian national security apparatus, and the contemporary political strata. On that foundation the study will further examine those relationships to determine the impact Eurasianism is having upon Russian national security decision making.

Eurasianism as a theory has existed for nearly a century. Matthew Baker’s article on Orthodoxy explains how Eurasian philosophy emerged in the early 1920s as an ideology antithetical to a metastasizing communist influence. Its authors, Russian expatriates, believed that “cultural autonomy and anti-Europeanization” were critical components for maintaining the integrity of Russia’s identity. Baker explains how the first Eurasianist thinkers argued that both Orthodox Christians and non-Christians could peacefully occupy central Asia, because of their congruent cultures; not because of the cultural relativism that communism or European values espoused. Baker, a religious researcher, explains that according to Lev Karsavin (one of the early Eurasianists), each

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16 Hill and Gaddy, Mr. Putin, 106-131.
18 Ibid.
culture developed into an anthropological “individual” that matured according to its own laws.

Further, Karsavin argued that cross-pollination between these civilized cultures would produce catastrophic results. He attributes the 1917 Communist Revolution to the addled fusion of Russian culture with European and Western influences. The “Eurasianist evangelist” Alexander Dugin opportunistically revises these early theories. As a professor at Lermontov University of Moscow, Dugin has gained a respectable following both inside and outside the walls of the Kremlin. His brand of Eurasianism is laced with the conjectures of Sir Halford Mackinder, the British geographer who theorized that Russia and its contiguous periphery occupy a key central position between Europe and Asia known as the “The Heartland.” Mackinder stated, “who rules East Europe commands the Heartland; who rules the Heartland commands the World Island; who rules the World Island commands the world.”

19 Ibid.
21 Mackinder, *Democratic Ideals and Reality*. 
Essentially, the “World Island” encompasses the majority of Europe and Asia with Russia and its neighbors existing within Mackinder’s theoretical “Pivot Area.” Mackinder believed that given the right political circumstances, a government in control of the “Pivot Area” was destined to control the “World Island” of Eurasia. Dugin has been quick to embrace and widely transmit Mackinder’s theory as strategic justification for Russia’s current string of international interventions.

Though he disagrees with Dugin’s Eurasianist perspective, Robert Kaplan, a modern American geo-strategist, is complementary of Mackinder’s “Geographic Pivot of History,” declaring it a “brilliant article” that predicted both World War I and II as well as the subsequent “Cold War.”23 Kaplan is not alone in his admiration of Mackinder. An article by Gary Kearns points out that Mackinder is being quoted by those with “imperialist” visions, adding that Prince Hassan of Jordan, like Dugin, has found the

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utility of Mackinder, although both have taken his work out of context. Kearns asserts that Mackinder saw geography as an important part of promoting democracy; geopoliticians like Zbigniew Brzezinski agreed. Brzezinski’s interpretation of Mackinder’s theory led him to advocate for sowing discord where democracy was absent. Though the Brzezinski “doctrine” is likely at least partially culpable for anti-American claims of U.S. “imperialism,” Alexander Dugin’s Eurasianist philosophy seems to follow a similar course, promoting interventions where “Russians” or their culture is allegedly “at risk."

Dugin’s and Neo-Eurasianists’ modern approach similarly supplants relativist perspectives by extolling the virtues of cultural identity. Like their predecessors a century ago, they believe their mission lies in promoting transnational unity based upon an overarching unifying premise that each of these cultures is historically and uniquely Russian. Differing from internationalism, which Dugin opposes, this Eurasianist unity is focused on societies with purported historical connections to Russia. Their contemporary divergence is displayed, however, by their vision that Novorossiya [New Russia – Ukraine Region] is the focal point for growing the empire, justifying their actions by asserting that their geographic location also predisposes them to establish this transnational empire. In his book, The Fourth Political Theory, Alexander Dugin explains that each preceding governing ideology has had fatal flaws that precipitated their demise. He argues that liberalism is being artfully sustained, but is theoretically a failure. However, according to Dugin, the three philosophies, fascism, communism, and liberalism, all have positive elements that should be included in his “Fourth

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Political Practice,” a government model designed to lead a Russian nation whose citizens hail from across boundaries.28

Politics

Although there is a broad range of information available related to Eurasianism, determining its influence on the Russian regime requires focusing the research to understand why Eurasianism might appeal to Russian policy makers. Understanding this attraction prompts a subsequent inquiry to discover when the influence began in earnest. Though Eurasianism and its proponents were active in the early 2000s, it was not until President Putin and his advisors sensed a threat to Russian interests that its utility was recognized.

In his study completed for the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Anthony Cordesman writes that Russia does not view its actions as overt aggression, but rather as an appropriate response to “American aspiration toward global dominance.”29 Cordesman explained that the “Color Revolutions” that sprang up on Russia’s periphery generated a sense of vulnerability in Moscow and precipitated a comprehensive review of Russian foreign policy.30

An article by Charles Clover also provides a linear approach to defining Russia’s move toward Alexander Dugin’s Neo-Eurasianist ideology.31 Opening his commentary

with a monologue on “dog whistle” politics, Clover describes how Nikolai Patrushev, chairman of Russia’s Security Council, used a media interview to convey Dugin’s prominent ideology. Patrushev answered a question by innocuously mentioning Halford Mackinder’s theory on the “Heartland,” knowing that Eurasianist supporters recognize that the use of “buzzwords” such as “Mackinder,” “Heartland,” and “Atlanticist” convey his support for Eurasianist viewpoints. Indexing Dugin’s works, Clover exposes his anthology of extremist philosophies that, though previously considered “fringe,” have now gained prominence across the breadth of Russian literature, media, politics and religion.32

Military

Anthony Cordesman’s article details a May 23, 2014, conference on International Security, hosted by the Russian Ministry of Defense, where General Valery Gerasimov, the Deputy Minister of Defense, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sergey Lavrov, were among the presenters.33 Cordesman suggests that the Russians believe the Color Revolutions were deliberately incited by the United States to further reduce Russian influence on the region. Sensing that NATO and the United States had adopted a new strategic doctrine, the conference focused discussions on these revolutionary activities designed to foment unrest covertly using a variety of proxies.34 The majority of the Russian foreign policy machine sees the United States and NATO establishing a strategy

32 Ibid.
34 Ibid.
of deliberate destabilization in countries it views as adversaries. The details of this conference reveal that Russia’s “New-Type Warfare” military doctrine and Neo-Eurasianist ideology are emerging as intentionally complimentary strategies.\(^{35}\)

Eurasianism’s influence on military affairs has been direct and in progress for decades. The Russian General Staff Academy has been using Dugin’s book, *Foundations of Geopolitics*,\(^\text{36}\) as a textbook since the late 1990s and the presence of national security strategies with Eurasianist undertones indicates the military is acting on what it has learned and its Eurasianist influences give it context for its doctrinal reforms.\(^\text{37}\) In a recent *Military Review* article, Mr. Timothy Thomas explains that in the conflict years that followed 9/11, U.S. military doctrine evolved rapidly.\(^\text{38}\) The DoD began employing intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance and precision strike capabilities on the same platform. It integrated information operations (IO) and humanitarian functions at all echelons and it started employing Special Operations Forces (SOF) and military contractors in a variety of roles. Thomas’ article points out that these effective techniques gained the attention of Russian military leaders. General Valery Gerasimov has expressed sentiments that appear to accept that warfare has changed. First, he says that clearly defined or “declared wars” are a thing of the past, and though wars are still kinetic affairs, they can be more effective when coupled with


non-kinetic operations that serve to *undermine* the enemy nation’s political will and stamina.\(^{39}\)

According to Thomas this Russian doctrine, designated “New Type Warfare,” by Gerasimov, is similar to U.S. doctrine. In the last decade and a half, Thomas suggests, Russia has learned from U.S. mistakes, and he points out that Russia’s doctrinal plagiarisms suggest an adoption of techniques proven during the U.S. “War on Terror.” Synchronizing IO, electronic warfare, SOF operations, and precision strike, Russian military strategists have developed the foundations of this “New-Type Warfare.” Gerasimov touts “Non-military methods” (protests, covert action, and SOF), “Non-contact or remote engagement” (IO, Cyber), the “use of Joint Forces, no-fly-zones, blockades, private military firms, precision weapons, and unmanned aerial systems” as the building blocks for an effective contemporary engagement. Moreover, Gerasimov is also developing methods for “integrating civilian and military infrastructure” with the purpose of bringing the force of the *full population* to bear in an event requiring national defense.\(^{40}\)

Nesting “operational” tenets of warfare within General Gerasimov’s strategic design, General Andrey Kartapolov’s techniques for conducting offensive “New Type Warfare” include objectives that “pressure the enemy politically, informationally, economically, and psychologically.”\(^{41}\) Doing so, Kartapolov remarks, “disorients the

\(^{39}\) Ibid.


\(^{41}\) Ibid.
military and political leadership” and paves the way for deploying “armed opposition groups” into the area of operations.42

Thomas’ explains how General Kartapolov institutionalized the application of a destabilizing insurgency (disguised SOF) and offensive IO knowing those tactics effectually increase the external political pressure on the host nation government. At that point the host nation government becomes reluctant to resist Russian intervention because of the domestic blowback from a populace which is not only convinced that the Russians are intervening on their behalf, but have also been conditioned (through Eurasianist propaganda) to embrace their historical bonds with Russia rather than those of their own government.43

**Religion**

Orthodoxy is integral to Eurasianism’s foundations. A significant portion of the original Eurasianist theory was developed by Georges Florovsky (1893-1979), an Orthodox scholar. Sources note that Florovsky’s beliefs centered not on the nationalistic sentiment of Russian Slavophile philosopher Nikolai Danilevsky44, or on the cultural birth-life-death cycle proposed by German philosopher Oswald Spengler,45 but rather on the belief that Eurasianists should have a role in sharing the truth of Orthodoxy with those outside Russia.46 Though Florovsky later broke with his peers on the direction of

42 Ibid.
43 Ibid.
Eurasianist philosophy, elements of his Orthodox perspectives do appear among contemporary Orthodox Eurasianists like Konstantin Malofeyev.47

Another factor significant to the discussion in this stream is the subject of the “Third Rome Theory.” This theory holds that Russia will be the third and final home of Christianity, as the preceding two have essentially ceased to exist as the capital of Orthodox Christianity.48 Ancient Rome’s fall caused the center of Christianity to move to Constantinople. The theory’s proponents believe that upon the dissolution of the Byzantine Empire in the 15th century, Russia became the third and final capital of Christianity. Several sources that address other “streams” also include references to a resurgence of the Russian Orthodox Church, and though appearances suggest the religious aspect is peripheral to the Eurasianist theory those sources identify it as a central influencing factor that permeates the other “streams.”49

In a more contemporary religious reference, Robert Zubrin identifies Alexander Dugin’s efforts to use Biblical prophecy as another method for justifying the aggressive pursuit of his Eurasianist objectives.50 Zubrin’s article asserts that history is replete with examples of “men of action” whose twisted worldviews cause them to use their intellect and status to mislead the masses into humanitarian disasters. The interesting aspect of his article is his assertion that Alexander Dugin, who he believes is the philosopher

47 Ibid. Malofeyev is a billionaire oligarch with ties to the Kremlin, the church, and Monarchist groups and is known to have provided support to pro-Russian forces in Ukraine.
48 Laruelle, Russian Eurasianism, 42.
49 Heiser, The American Eurasian Empire Should Be Destroyed, 28.
behind Putin’s strategies, seems to be using a unique personal theology to justify his geo-political ideology.

The preponderance of Zubrin’s article is a synopsis of James Heiser’s book, *The American Empire Should Be Destroyed: Alexander Dugin and the Perils of Immanentized Eschatology*. Zubrin’s review of Heiser’s writings comprises a succinct summary of Alexander Dugin’s life and an explanation into how Dugin developed his Eurasianist theories. Zubrin admits that though Dugin’s theories may sound a bit ridiculous, it is important to understand that his views and perspectives have gained a significant following.

Finally, in an interview conducted in February 2017 by “The Saker,” a religious blog, Lieutenant-General Leonid Petrovich Reshetnikov was introduced as a peer of Vladimir Putin. Ostensibly designed to give Reshetnikov credibility the interviewer mentioned that both Putin and Reshetnikov were former members of the KGB’s First Chief Directorate, now known as the Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR), and that he was “exceptionally intelligent and exceptionally well-educated.” The remainder of the interview explains why Reshetnikov is categorized in the religion “stream.” Though he does spend some time on a diatribe justifying Russian activities against the Ukrainian “atrocities,” it is his subsequent religious comments that are remarkable. Following a simultaneous denunciation of liberalism and communism, Reshetnikov communicates his desire to see Russia a kingdom ruled by Jesus Christ.

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51 Heiser, *The American Empire Should Be Destroyed.*
52 Zubrin, “Dugin’s Evil Theology: His Eurasianism is a Satanic Cult.”
54 Ibid.
Economic

The economics stream encompasses research on both the Eurasianist effect upon Russian economic policies and the financial mechanisms currently employed in support of pro-Eurasianist objectives. In his dissertation, Matthew Schmidt presents the opinion that Russian policy separates into two specific venues: the economic and the political—philosophical.\textsuperscript{55} Schmidt’s descriptions of the origins of Eurasianism highlight Peter the Great’s pragmatic acceptance of the geographic tenets designed to extend Russia’s borders, yet he contradicted some of its other premises by incorporating Western ways into Russian culture. Schmidt believes that Putin is doing the same. Putin wants Russia to becomes a leader in the European energy markets, but he also believes that establishing European and Western trade partnerships does not mean that he must back off the rhetoric that makes him and his Kremlin allies popular domestically.\textsuperscript{56} In addition, Putin recognizes that the “Eurasian” region has equalized American’s ability to dominate international trade.\textsuperscript{57}

Graham Fuller, a former CIA analyst, writes that despite the conflicts within the region, Russia’s trade relationships are sure to improve due in part to the fact that Turkey, China, and Iran also prescribed to forms of an economic Eurasianist vision.\textsuperscript{58} Hence, Putin appreciates Eurasianism’s economic value, even if only from a purely functional perspective.

\textsuperscript{55} Matthew Schmidt, “Is Putin Pursuing a Policy of Eurasianism,” (dissertation for the George Washington University, 2005), 1.
\textsuperscript{56} Schmidt, “Is Putin Pursuing a Policy of Eurasianism,?” 93.
\textsuperscript{57} Schmidt, “Is Putin Pursuing a Policy of Eurasianism,?” 93.
\textsuperscript{58} Graham E. Fuller, "What is Eurasianism?," Graham E. Fuller, last modified September 14, 2016, http://grahamefuller.com/2520-2/.
Political intrigue is another method Putin uses to gain European support to his economic and strategic endeavors. According to Zygar, Putin paved the way for former German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder and former Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi to profit from Russian business deals. Putin continues to offer lucrative positions to other international politicians presumably intending to gain their loyalty (or fealty), that will be reserved for future economic or political negotiations.59

This thesis focuses analysis first on the five seminal works that describe the advent of Eurasianist theories and their impact on the evolution of Neo-Eurasianism. Those works also evaluate Dugin’s writings and develop an understanding of Putin’s personal and political motivations. In addition, the thesis also references secondary literature to develop linkages within and across the steams to illustrate the influence that Eurasianism has gained on Russia’s national security apparatus. This approach lends a multi-perspective advantage that seeks to cross-reference academic research with biographical information and real-time news sources to facilitate unique and accurate conclusions.

59 Zygar, All the Kremlin’s Men, 119-123.
Chapter 2

The Ideology. Origins of Eurasianism

This chapter will explain the origins of Eurasianism. Analyzing the ideology, there are elements of the key questions that will begin to be addressed. Early “influencers” and their theories and objectives are articulated. This chapter also develops an understanding of how contemporary Neo-Eurasianists evoke predecessors’ concepts while actually contrasting with them.

Eurasianism can be segmented into two time periods that book-end a nearly 70-year period that saw its theories relegated to a Soviet-induced obscurity. The “first wave,” as Marlene Laruelle refers to it, began around 1917 and the “second wave” in 1991.60 In the first wave, several Russian expatriates, exiled following the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, developed the concept of Eurasianism and wrote extensively about it. Some of these early Eurasianist thinkers were critical of the Soviet model, while others were not; eventually these friends, contemporaries, and colleagues found themselves embroiled in a ‘schism’ that divided the group. Eurasianism has developed a number of definitions in the century since its inception, and its contemporary meaning, while differing from each of the founding architects’ original intent, does bear signatures of their individual theories, as evidenced in the contemporary Neo-Eurasianist ideology.

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60 Laruelle, Russian Eurasianism, 210.
Shared vision, divergent ideals.

The Russian émigré community, made up of White Russians who fled during and following the Bolshevik Revolution, loosely agreed about Russia’s “prophetic” role as the Eurasian leader. The following five theorists, commonly regarded as the founders of Eurasianist thought, defended their beliefs for a variety of reasons. Some eventually broke ties with the others, and while remaining supportive of basic Eurasianist ideals, they felt their views divergent enough to mandate disassociation from the others.

Nikolai Trubetskoï

Born to Russian nobility (12th century Lithuanian royalty), the first of these original Eurasianist thinkers, Nikolai Trubetskoï, was an intellectual known for his work in language arts. His pedigree, steeped in orthodoxy and congealed in academia, impacted his views on European civilization and culture. Nikolai’s father, a professor of religious philosophy at Moscow University, cultivated Nikolai’s insatiable intellect and was influential in molding his later views.61 The gifted young Nikolai’s uncles contributed to his education and affected his worldview as well. One of them, like Nikolai’s father, taught philosophy, and the other was a diplomat and writer, both purveyors of skills he was to display early and often.62

Trubetskoï’s early writings on Eurasianism coincide with his contemporaries within the Russian émigré community of the 1920s. Trubetskoï’s book Europe and

62 Ibid.
Mankind conveys his view that within the collection of “European” states there exists a “Eurasian” region whose geographic boundaries have become irrelevant, distinguished instead by specific cultural identities. Trubetskoï seems to suggest that Eurasianism should hold natural appeal to Russians, to include Europeans that belong in that category, and that its foremost quality is that it accepts rather than rejects Russia’s [and Eurasian’s] sociological contrasts with Europe and the West.

Trubetskoï wrote that, “By its very nature Eurasia is historically destined to comprise a single state entity.” Noted first for his work in linguistics, this quote suggests he believed that the language landscape of the area could become the fundamental unifying factor that influences regional acceptance of Eurasianist theory.

“Slavdom,” Trubetskoï wrote, “is not ethno-psychological, ethnographic, or a cultural-historical concept but a linguistic one. Language, and language only, links the Slavs to each other. Language is the only link that links Russia to Slavdom.”

Peter Savitsky

Agreeing with prevailing Eurasianist views, Peter Savitsky held that Russia is the “middle state” occupying the main body or “torso” of Europe and Asia. His theoretical divergences centered on his sociological views, and he wrote that cultural progress is not

63 Nikolai S. Trubetskoï, Evropa i Chelovechestvo (Europe and Mankind) (Rossiisko-Bolgarskoe Knigoizdatelstvo, 1920).
64 Ibid.
66 Laruelle, Russian Eurasianism, 35. Laruelle explains that the “Cultural-historical concept” is essentially the method Europe and the West have traditionally used to express their cultural identities, and Trubetskoï seems to be particularly focused on not presenting Slavdom’s conception as a result of anything Western.
linear but cyclic. Only 15 years junior to German writer and philosopher Oswald Spengler, Savitsky appears to have studied his work attentively. Spengler had, by 1911, already foreseen World War I and recognized that policy makers should be interpreting events on a global scale, assessing their affects in a regional geographical context, yet delineating those regions by cultural similarities rather than their state boundaries. Recognizing the value of Spengler’s observations, Savitsky expressed his agreements to the émigré community and his belief in Spengler’s “cultural cycles,” making Savitsky’s work a fundamental component of original Eurasianist doctrine. Incorporating these thoughts into their theories, he and his colleagues recognized that with cyclic cultural patterns as Eurasianism’s foundation they could further justify claims that historical similarities in language or religion vindicate the pursuit of transnational Eurasian unity.\(^68\)

However, Savitsky took this thinking a step further when he asserted that, to apply Spengler’s principles, it would require a religious and moral foundation to survive. He agreed with Georges Florovsky (see below) on this point, though to a lesser extent. He felt that without such “national character,” united under universally acknowledged principles of morality, only a repressive government could stabilize such a model. Hitler’s democratic socialists were to affirm his assertions only a few years later when Nazism became the national “religion,” and replaced any expectation of rights based on an accepted set of “natural laws.”

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\(^{68}\) Stimely, “Oswald Spengler: Introduction to his Life and Ideas,” 2. Spengler believed that cultures had life cycles, they are “living” things, organic in nature, and undergo the stages of “birth-development-fulfillment-decay-death.”
Eurasianists and Bolshevism

As the nascent Soviet regime recognized the expatriate community’s influence, the Soviet state security identified Monarchist elements and Eurasianist theorists as dissident factions that should not be underestimated.69 Among the Eurasianists, Savitsky specifically became a target of an elaborate counterintelligence scheme, known as “The Tuust.” Early in the 1920s, Lenin recognized that, though the armed conflict of the Bolshevik Revolution had subsided and foreign military entities were forcibly ejected, the Bolsheviks now had the monumental task of legitimizing their claims of Marxism’s superiority by successfully rebuilding the country. Perceiving the tenuous nature of their domestic control, Lenin acknowledged his party’s vulnerability to the clandestine activities of the various Russian exile groups, and tasked Felix Dzerzhinsky and the Cheka (Extraordinary Commission, later the State Political Directorate (GPU)), to infiltrate those groups and subvert their efforts.70

“The Trust,” as one of the GPU’s deception organization’s was known, became the vehicle for a remarkable counterintelligence operation designed to marginalize potential intervention by telling the West what it wanted to hear; that the Soviet regime was weak and destined to be replaced by something more acceptable in the near future.71 By infiltrating these émigré groups, the GPU was able to convince them that kinetic terrorist actions and paramilitary operations were not needed to achieve regime change in Russia. Believing it was only a matter of time before the Soviet system crumbled, the émigré groups satisfied themselves with information campaigns and quasi-diplomatic

70 Simpkins and Dyer, “‘The Trust,’” 1.
71 Simpkins and Dyer, “‘The Trust,’” 1.
activities that GPU infiltrators publicized as effective, but which were ineffectual in reality.

By the time “The Trust” was discontinued, it extended to several dissident groups and had stymied most external efforts intended to weaken the Soviet regime. Initially focused on “Monarchist” elements loyal to the Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolayevich, as early as 1922, the GPU also began to emphasize counterintelligence efforts designed to influence the Eurasianist movement as well. Since Eurasianism’s ideology was somewhat nebulous, and did have concepts that agreed with elements of Soviet policy, the GPU became the covert sponsor of a “Conference of Eurasians” in 1924.

According to a CIA study on “The Trust,” Savitsky visited a second similar event held in Moscow in 1926, and was purportedly well treated by his clandestine GPU hosts. These Eurasianists may never have been a threat to the Soviet Union, and ironically it is even plausible that some of the Eurasianists were complicit with the GPU’s misinformation campaign aimed at the West. Savitsky’s apparent nonchalance toward GPU duplicity suggests that during the Soviet Union’s infancy, some of Eurasianism’s proponents had become tools of the GPU. Regardless of Savitsky’s relationship to Communist Party elements, he was influential in articulating Eurasianism as an idea. He envisioned it as a method for graying geographic borders by highlighting cultural similarities and encouraging “political, cultural, and economic unification” to offset European or Western dominance.73

72 Simpkins and Dyer, ““The Trust,”” 11. Simpkins and Dyer also mention that an article published anonymously decades later suggests that Savitsky knew the Moscow chapter was GPU controlled.

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The architects of original Eurasianist thought argued over the legitimacy of the Bolshevik regime, though not for the reasons one might presume. For instance, Georges Florovsky differed with his peers’ perspectives on Eurasianism as his theoretical foundations for adopting the ideology were anchored upon Orthodox theology, firmly placing him at odds with the atheists predominating the Bolshevik ranks. He consequently left the movement in 1923. Trubetskoi, as well, found himself unable to accept the rapprochement the majority of the movement seemed to offer the Marxists, and he too separated from the group claiming it had tainted Eurasianism with Marxists doctrine – an irreconcilable fault.\(^74\)

Eurasianism’s conciliatory overtures toward Marxism were evidenced in the November 1928 issue of *Evraziia*, a weekly magazine that initially published the works of the original Eurasianist theorists.\(^75\) The issue stated that the magazine sought to establish some connection between Eurasianism’s historical view of Russia and Marxism’s political objectives.\(^76\) *Evraziia* then claimed the right to speak for Eurasianism, stating that the originalists were too focused on promoting “Muscovy and Orthodoxy.” The *Evraziia* leadership thought the writers should be accepting of their more pragmatic approach that would “recreate a natural order” to counter “anarchy” – a commonality they suggested Eurasianism maintained with Marxism.\(^77\)

\(^{74}\) Laruelle, *Russian Eurasianism*, 22. 
\(^{75}\) Laruelle, *Russian Eurasianism*, 22. 
\(^{76}\) Ibid. 
\(^{77}\) Ibid.
Georges Florovsky

Georges Florovsky is noted particularly for his explanations relevant to the religious aspects of Eurasianism. Rejecting Nikolai Danilevsky’s “slavic nationalism,” which focused on the biological components that contrasted Russia from the West, Florovsky concentrated rather on the foundational aspects of religious culture.\(^\text{78}\) Though Danilevsky principally described Orthodoxy as a part of Russian culture, an aspect of the political landscape yet not the principle influencer of it, Florovsky believed in it as a symbiosis where to be Orthodox was to be Russian.\(^\text{79}\)

Florovsky also spurned “cultural relativism,” the belief that no culture is superior to another, and attempted to evaluate each objectively. He equated cultural relativism with “moral relativism” and its application of situational ethics.\(^\text{80}\) Arguably, Florovsky chose to highlight this as a fallacy in order to identify specific reasons for pursuing Eurasianism. In his mind Eurasianism was the vehicle for a “cultural rebirth” that would be built upon universal yet unchanging values – which could only come from the Holy Scriptures. Subsequently, his writings dwell upon “neo-patristic synthesis”: the principles of cultural rebirth.\(^\text{81}\) Florovsky believed that even though the Bible spoke in an ancient, often mystical language, the reason that it speaks so authoritatively is that it contains a message that maintains universal (complete) values. He argued that “cultural rebirth” must be focused not on time-honored national traditions, but on the words of

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\(^{78}\) Laruelle, *Russian Eurasianism*, 233. Danilevsky was intentionally left out of the early Eurasianist analysis because, though he was a slavophile nationalist, he did not view the distinctly Orthodox element of Eurasianism as the others did.


Jesus Christ, who sacrificed His life that others might live – ultimately showing the world a blueprint for a form of governance that incorporates fundamental truth and virtue as its foundation. Florovsky’s contribution to the Eurasianist body of work was his conviction that religion, particularly Orthodoxy, would provide the ideal footing for a sociological solution that was more than just political in nature.

**Erendzhen Khara-Davan**

Early Eurasianists understood that expressing and incorporating “Asian-ness” was an important facet of their theoretical construct. They recognized that Eurasianism was not defined simply by “cultural otherness” – being different than the West. They gained a tenuous legitimacy for their Asian references by explaining how Russian religion [Orthodoxy] held more in common with oriental religions than did the other Western religions. This apparently disingenuous parallel is exposed as the majority of Eurasianist discourse discredits all Eastern religions and favors Orthodox Christianity as the only religion “worthy of representing the ideology.” Diverging from the religious dialogue, the Eurasianists sought to define Russia as more “eastern” than European because of the medieval Mongolian influences it underwent.

Erendzhen Khara-Davan, a Kalmyk historian who emigrated with “White Russian” emigres in the early 1920s, wrote that the Mongols who controlled Russia from the late 13th century to the late 15th century installed “something like an administrative hierarchy, which prepared the ground for the establishment of a centralized state, and the

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82 Ibid.
84 Laruelle, *Russian Eurasianism*, 45.
85 Mongol peoples from southwestern Russia.
Russian people, as the single ethnos on a defined historical-geographic space, thus owes its origins to Mongol rule.86 Eurasianists and policy makers should recognize the utility of highlighting the Mongol influence in this way, realizing a twofold benefit. First, geographic regions that fall into this category can now be defined as both Russian and Asian, binding them to present day Russia by a historic cultural bond that is distinctively not European. In addition, this interpretation can allow the Kremlin to apply a variety of justifications (cultural, linguistic, or historical) for meddling in their affairs.

**Lev Gumilev**

Lev Gumilev, has a unique history as a Eurasianist thinker. His works provide the theoretical bridge between the “first wave” émigré Eurasianist community and the “second wave” Neo-Eurasianists.87 Born in 1912, Gumilev was the son of a World War I Russian officer. His mother, Ann Akhmatova, was a well-known poet whose access to Soviet leadership helped keep him from at least one gulag sentence. Nikolai, his father was arrested and executed for purported involvement in a Monarchist plot when Lev was just a child; yet Lev went on to study at Leningrad University, was decorated for bravery in World War II, and earned a doctorate while studying the Turks after the war.88 The Soviets, ever suspicious of him because of his father, arrested and imprisoned him in 1949, but he was released in 1956 as a result of Nikita Khrushchev’s de-Stalinization

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87 Laruelle, *Russian Eurasianism*, 10. Laruelle stated that Gumilev is well known in Russia and that his works are widely read and appreciated.
efforts. His studies led him to write that the Mongol influence enabled Russians to separate from Western influence.

Gumilev introduced a theory that declared the original Eurasianists to be short-sighted and unaware of civilization’s natural transitions, through what he terms “Ethnogenesis.” Echoing Khara-Davan’s sentiments, Gumilev thought that the Mongol occupation did set Russia on a non-European path, and he cautioned posterity that:

[t]he Turks and the Mongols can be genuine friends, but the English, the French and the Germans, I am convinced, can only be cunning exploiters... Let me tell you a secret: If Russia will be saved, then only as a Eurasian power, and only through Eurasianism...harm has always come to us from the West.90

Today, researchers tend to depict Eurasianism as neither a significant element of Russian foreign policy nor the foundation for Russia’s prevailing nationalist political parties.91 Yet the original Eurasianists did have objectives that suggest their desire to influence the governing and the governed bodies. Communicating Russia’s cultural differences with the West as the impetus, the early Eurasianists were actually promoting a political agenda. They espoused a “third way” governing model that would center on fascism yet was not a purely political solution.92 This particular aspect of original Eurasianist thought has become central to much of the Neo-Eurasianist literature and philosophy.

89 Ibid.
91 Laruelle, Russian Eurasianism, 9.
Neo-Eurasianism: Resurrected Ideology

Marlene Laruelle, Eurasianism’s leading contemporary scholar, states that “Eurasianism is defined as a doctrine that is a systematic set of theoretical conceptions upheld as true and promoted primarily by intellectuals.”93 She believes that the doctrine is neither a basis for foreign policy nor nationalistic strategies, but she appears to understand that it does have a role in influencing both.94

As mentioned previously, the word “influence” connotes the intent to change something for a definitive purpose without forcing those changes to happen. Eurasianism appears to be working to that end. Laruelle again provides insight and perspective to that discussion. Eurasianism, she posits, is less an ideology and more a doctrine that proves conflicts are not about socio-economic struggles, but about the struggles within that which provides culture its context - religion.95 Foundational to civilization, religion provides peoples with value systems that promote adherence to social standards which are justified by ideals that transcend the baser, more abstract motivations associated with secular societal patterns.96 Laruelle explains Russian Orthodoxy in a way that further contextualizes its importance to the Eurasianist theory.97 Under Mongol rule Russians gained a new outlook on their religion. They believed that their collective worship, expressed through their individual lives, which were immersed in the rituals of Orthodoxy, coalesced in a collective sense to embody what being Russian truly is.98

93 Laruelle, Russian Eurasianism, 9.
94 Ibid.
95 Laruelle, Russian Eurasianism, 12, 44.
96 Laruelle, Russian Eurasianism, 12.
97 Laruelle, Russian Eurasianism, 44.
98 Ibid.
This sharply contrasts with the Western conceptions of faith where individuals self-associate with a selected denomination based solely on the individual’s acceptance of specific doctrines and beliefs. The interesting aspect of Russian Orthodoxy as a pillar of Eurasianism becomes its universal influence, essentially everyone in what is considered the Eurasian space is likely to identify with this type of religious affiliation regardless of their personal degree of devotion. Even those regions where Islam predominates there seems to be a mildly deferential acceptance to this type of religious expression, perhaps because it mimics the Islamic model where church and state are inseparable.99

In order to contextualize Neo-Eurasianism’s rise as an emerging ideology it is necessary to recognize that its contemporary proponents are manipulating the writings of its founders. While hailing Nikolai Trubetskoi as the “founder of Eurasianism,” Dugin appears to deliberately misinterpret his quote by saying “Trubetskoi’s main idea was that Russia is not simply a European country, as the Russian Westernizers insisted, but a particular, separate civilization, the Russian World.”100 When Trubetskoi derides the European states for aimlessly “Westernizing,” Dugin attempts to characterize those comments to support aggressive Russian incursions designed to vigorously corral these nascent “Eurasian” states, assimilating them for their “greater good.” Though Trubetskoi does seem to assert that these elements within Europe could and should choose to join with Russia to constitute a powerful monolithic entity, Dugin presents

99 Ibid.
100 He said that “Slavdom is not ethno-psychological, ethnographic, or a cultural-historical concept but a linguistic one. Language, and language only, links the Slavs to each other. Language is the only link that links Russia to Slavdom.”
Trubetskoĭ’s thoughts as a near-prophetic Russian entitlement – ostensibly to justify Russian adventurist interventions into Europe.\textsuperscript{101}

By identifying the most influential original Eurasianist theorists, examining their independent ideological perspectives, and analyzing their personal impact upon its development, this chapter provides a summary of the variations that existed in the definition of early Eurasianism. One focused on Orthodoxy, others highlighted Mongol cultural influence, and another believed language preeminent – yet all encouraged the pursuit of an orderly, transcendent Eurasianism. This Eurasianism bonds elements that are ethnically Russian (\textit{Russkii}), with those generic things that pertain to Russia (\textit{Rossiskii}), and close the triangle to form a “trinity” that is Eurasian (\textit{Evraziiskii}) – a culture not subservient or similar to those of the West. These distinctions re-emerge in the contemporary Neo-Eurasianists theories as well. Examining the theories within the context of the religious, economic, military, and political “streams,” will reveal Russian leaders with concurring perspectives and enable the further analysis that will serve to determine their objectives.

Chapter 3
Actors and Allies

Within the context of the religious, economic, military, and political “streams,” this chapter will focus on identifying the figures who have emerged as the “actors and allies,” capable of furthering the Eurasianist agenda across today’s Russian society, academia, government, and the military. These streams all appear to include prominent Russians who are either actively pursuing objectives that are Eurasianist, or are satisfied to allow Eurasianists to work within their sphere. In addition, in an effort to establish Eurasianist “influencers,” it is important to identify “allies” who, while not Eurasianist ideologues, have emerged as likeminded leaders willing to collaborate with them. This chapter provides the historical context by explaining how each of the “actors and allies” are significant within the government or society, and will define degrees of influence to determine on what cross-section of society they tend to focus.

Religion stream actors.
Eurasianism’s cultural inclusivity may not appear to compliment the tenets of Orthodoxy. Yet it is Eurasianism that seeks to embrace the characteristics that will unify the broadest possible following under a “Russian” classification. Prior to the arrival of communism, 900 years of Orthodoxy enabled the church to become an existential component of the Russian existence. The church establishment evolved to bridge anthropological divides transcending diverse physical, linguistic, and geographical
variations with a religion that, in essence, is the culture. It is Orthodoxy’s unique “Russian-ness” that appeals to the Eurasianist doctrinaires.  

Recalling the malevolence that atheist Marxism visited upon it, the church’s patronizing fealty to the ruling class indicates an insecure desire to pledge allegiance to any regime willing to guarantee the church protection and offer it participation in the governing processes. Lending Putin a philosophical link between religion and ideology, the theories of Ivan Ilyin, purported to be Putin’s favorite religious philosopher, can be found laced with the spiritual discussions that touch Eurasianism. Ilyin’s writings that address Orthodox doctrine often give Putin the rhetorical springboard he needs to identify Ukraine, Europe, and the United States as “spiritual threats” to a devout Russia.  

Ilyin, a “White Russian” who associated with the émigré community in the 1920s, was also supportive of the Eurasianist cause. He was born in 1883 to a Russian nobleman and a German Protestant who had converted to Orthodoxy. Prior to the Bolshevik Revolution, Ilyin’s pedigree enabled him to study in Moscow where he found philosophy and law his primary interests.  

Ilyin’s writings are somewhat disjointed at times, but his overarching theories seem to concentrate on the belief that God recognized Creation as a flawed venture, yet decided not to intervene immediately, waiting instead for a nation whose collective

102 Laruelle, Russian Eurasianism, 8-9.
106 Snyder, "Ivan Ilyin, Putin's Philosopher of Russian Fascism."
virtues would return “good” to His universe. Exiled in 1922, Ilyin studied Kant, Hegel, and Freud, which in time led him to embrace Mussolini’s fascism. Ilyin disagreed with Lenin about the existence of God, and thought that Lenin’s atheist Marxist government was proof of the failure that was sure to follow rejection of the Creator. He believed the world needed a hero, a larger-than-life leader that would bring the masses back to restoration. Ilyin felt that democracy allowed the birth of Bolshevism; subsequently he saw fascism as the method for destroying both democracy’s selfish individualism and Bolshevism’s universal fixation with the middle class. He believed that fascists and Nazi’s were right to violently pursue their goals.

Nearly four decades after his death, Ilyin’s works have re-emerged. Ilyin believed that Russia is itself a “living breathing organism,” and hence its constituent historic parts could not be sub-divided. Leaders in Russia now quote his conceptions on geopolitics to justify contemporary interventionist policies, as if they were merely innocent efforts to disseminate Russian virtues that have become endangered internationally. By resurrecting Ilyin’s ideas Putin seeks to rationalize the theory that the Kremlin’s expansionist ambitions are actually based on recovering that which is “historically Russian” and are justified by yet another reliable Russian mind.

Though his theories were erratic and his predictions often errant, it is evident why Putin has resurrected Ilyin’s work and elevated its status. Ilyin felt that no political parties were needed because parties represent only portions of the people; instead he held that a benevolent religious ruler would represent them all. His views on elections

107 Ibid.
108 Ibid.
109 Ibid.
and parties encourage a leader like Putin to establish himself as the autocrat the nation “needs” him to be – the political and military leader wielding absolute power for the good of a nation.

Standing in the place of religious preeminence is Vladimir Mikhailovich Gundayev, better known as Patriarch Kirill. Kirill, the head of the Russian Orthodox Church, is an ardent Putin supporter. Outwardly, his expressions insinuate an allegiance that is not a disingenuous fealty to Putin, and he does believe that Russia is the protector of the “true Christian” faith. In 2014, Putin spoke of the “many Euro-Atlantic countries [which] have moved away from their roots, including Christian values. Policies are being pursued that place on the same level a multi-child family and a same-sex partnership, a faith in God and a belief in Satan.” As a result, Patriarch Kirill is loyal to a Kremlin that seems sincere in its doctrinal concurrence, and he has often bolstered nationalist rhetoric with Orthodox justifications.

However, this holy (or perhaps unholy) alliance goes much deeper. Mikhail Zygar recounts a 2008 celebration of the 1,020th anniversary of the Baptism of Rus that was to be held in Kiev. The pro-Western Ukrainian regime, led by Victor Yushchenko, had prepared festivities that included invitations to eminent church leaders who held sympathetic views. To counter these pro-Western festivities, Kirill, Metropolitan of Kaliningrad and Smolensk at the time, held a competing event nearby. With the help of a Russian rock band and a rousing speech, he made a public display of his ability to use

111 Zygar, All the Kremlin's Men, 233-238.
the church to retain influence in the Ukrainian sphere.\textsuperscript{112} High-level relationships between the church and the Russian state existed even during the Soviet times. Zygar claims that according to declassified KGB documents Kirill and his predecessor, Patriarch Alexis II, collaborated with the Soviet intelligence service. Sergey Pugachev, a banker who became the liaison between the church and the post-Soviet state, introduced Putin to the church leaders in 1996.\textsuperscript{113} Pugachev later fled to France to avoid indictments similar to his disgraced oligarch contemporaries Boris Berezovsky and Mikhail Khordorkovsky.\textsuperscript{114}

When Putin became head of the FSB in 1998, he is said to have begun spending time at Sretensky Monastery, located a few blocks from FSB headquarters on Lubyanka Square, and over the first two post-Soviet decades, he met the early powerbrokers – the \textit{siloviki} – who also became part of Putin’s inner circle.\textsuperscript{115} It was there that Bishop Tikhon (Georgiy Alexandrovich Shevkunov), superior of the Sretensky Monastery, and Patriarch Kirill became formidable members of Putin’s principal council.\textsuperscript{116}

Putin, Zygar wrote, recognized the unifying effect that the church could have on society and facilitated the merger of the Orthodox Church with the “Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia” that had been declared independent following the domestic chaos of 1917.\textsuperscript{117} He also reemphasized the “Uvarov Doctrine,” another resurgent tsarist

\textsuperscript{112} Zygar, \textit{All the Kremlin’s Men}, 229-230.
\textsuperscript{113} Zygar, \textit{All the Kremlin’s Men}, 231-237.
\textsuperscript{114} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{115} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{116} Ibid. According to Zygar, Tikhon is said to have maintained close contact with the intelligence service as well.
\textsuperscript{117} Ibid.
ideal that proclaimed “Orthodoxy, Autocracy, and Nationality” as the official nationality and paved the way for Orthodoxy to gain a quasi-official seat at the policy table.\textsuperscript{118}

Tikhon and Kirill’s decades long religious-intelligence relationship benefited Putin. The duo’s tireless pro-regime media campaign, their defense against “Pussy Riot’s” dissidence in 2012, and Kirill’s aggressive pro-Russian crusade in Kiev contributed to Kirill’s successful ascension to Patriarch status in 2009.\textsuperscript{119} Putin was instrumental in strengthening the Patriarchal network and unifying Orthodoxy beyond Russia’s borders. Though he may not have been in deliberate pursuit of Eurasianist objectives, Putin did know Eurasianists would view his actions as such and he made no effort to dispel such perceptions.

In at least one case, however, an Orthodox leader’s adherence to a moral-based Russian Eurasianist philosophy placed him in opposition to the Putin administration. A Kirill appointee, former Archpriest Vsevolod Chaplin, initially echoed many of Kirill’s pro-regime sentiments and shared Putin’s beliefs in the dangers of the earlier described spiritual relativity promulgated by Europe and the West. Suggesting a deliberate link to Neo-Eurasianist thought, Chaplin also propagated Russia’s “historical” role as home of the “third Rome.”\textsuperscript{120} Moscow, he contends, is the incontrovertible capital of Christendom following the fall of Rome in 476 and Constantinople in 1453.\textsuperscript{121} He believed Russians to be the only “un-enslaved civilization capable of revealing itself as Christian.”\textsuperscript{122} Regularly referring to Russian nationalism as “patriotism,” he said that

\textsuperscript{118} Hill and Gaddy, \textit{Mr. Putin: Operative in the Kremlin}, 63-105.
\textsuperscript{119} Zygar, \textit{All the Kremlin's Men}, 231-237.
\textsuperscript{121} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{122} Ibid.
they “were put on earth to fulfill” Russians’ “understanding of the importance of our unique Christian mission.”

However, in 2016, Chaplin was unceremoniously relieved of his official duties when he was accused of criticizing Patriarch Kirill’s unwavering support for the regime. He was reported to have said that “we should be more critical about the immoral and unjust actions by the authorities,” a comment that neither the Patriarch nor the President would allow to go unchecked. His ouster suggests that though his loyalty to Orthodoxy nested well with Eurasianism and with the Kremlin’s strategic goals, he was not willing to underwrite what he considered unscrupulous tactics to achieve them. It appears that Chaplin was fired because he did not subscribe to the Kremlin’s tactics merely because its stated goals matched those of the church. This particular instance may prove that the Kremlin expects loyalty from church and it reserves the right to act if it perceives a lack thereof.

A loyal Putin supporter, Konstantin Malofeyev boasts ties to Orthodoxy at the highest levels, which makes him a valuable “confluence” within the streams. Both Putin and Malofeyev, the oligarch, Eurasianist, and pro-regime militant, have acknowledged Bishop Tikhon as their personal confessor, establishing a logical connection between Malofeyev and Putin, the Kremlin’s “Godfather” of billionaires. Having met in the late 1990s, Putin and Tikhon have had interactions for some time and their relationship

124 Sindelar, "Orthodox Priest Presents Dystopic Vision Of Russia."
has remained both visible and continuous. Putin’s contact with Tikhon serves to establish a degree of believable devotion, giving Putin credibility with the vast Russian populace that view themselves as Orthodox, whether they are active parishioners or not.

In addition, Tikhon’s relationship with known far-right activists also ties him to Eurasianist ideology, though the measure of his personal acceptance of the philosophy is unclear. In 2017, *bellingcat*, an online investigative journal whose international contributors range from academics to former intelligence analysts, published an article analyzing activities in the Balkans that are reminiscent of Russia’s illegal annexation of Crimea. In this particular article, Christo Grosev alleges contacts between Malofeyev, Dugin, Putin, Tikhon, retired KGB/SVR Lieutenant General Leonid Petrovich Reshetnikov (former Chairman of RISS – Russian Institute for Strategic Studies), and Milorad Dodik – the President of Republika Srpska. Grosev’s article links the aforementioned individuals in their support to Dodik’s 2017 re-election campaign, explaining that they all hoped to see the pro-Russian nationalist maintain control of the Presidency.

These details highlight Putin’s recognition that Orthodoxy provides a host of interconnected benefits to the pursuit of his strategic objectives, and through Ilyin he gains historic religious rhetoric that Kirill, Tikhon, and Malofeyev can help him communicate. This interwoven relationship between Putin, Kirill, Malofeyev, and Tikhon amplifies the public’s support for the church and the simultaneous nationalism that serves to strengthen the Eurasianist movement. Chaplin’s dismissal suggests that

127 Grosev, "The Kremlin's Balkan Gambit."
128 Ibid
Patriarch Kirill does, indeed, recognize that criticizing Putin and his regime is not acceptable. He has no qualms about relieving even the most loyal supporters should they jeopardize the church’s standing with a Kremlin he believes will continue to champion Orthodoxy.

**Economic stream actors.**

Nursultan Nazarbayev, Kazakhstan’s leader since the late 1980s, has been commended by Dugin for his support of “Eurasianism.”

Positioned squarely in the center of Mackinder’s “Heartland,” Kazakhstan is the pivot point of Eurasia. Its membership in the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) does bear noting, because Putin himself characterized Kazakhstan’s positive relationship to Russia as having the “qualities of an alliance and a strategic partnership.” Kazakhstan’s bi-lateral trade and transportation (rail in particular) agreements with Turkmenistan and Iran also provide the foundations for bridging these relationships to Turkey. At present only Russia, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Armenia, and Kyrgyzstan are members of the EAEU. However, Russia is courting China, and perhaps even India, Iran, and Pakistan will join in some capacity as well. Though the EAEU membership is small in comparison to the European Union (EU), its expanse covers a landmass of 20 million square kilometers.

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and houses 180 million people. With a 2015 combined GPD of $1.6 trillion, it is responsible for producing 14% of the world’s oil and 20% of the gas.

Policies relating to the Near Abroad do contradict the Eurasianist doctrine espoused by Dugin and others, yet as a tactic it goes much deeper toward satisfying Eurasianist outcomes or objectives. In his book *All the Kremlin’s Men*, Mikhail Zygar describes the infamous “reset” button interchange between Lavrov and Clinton. Errantly translating “reset” as “overload,” Lavrov joked that he would “try to prevent system overload.” However, Zygar argues that he and Putin did desire to overload American diplomatic interests in order to marginalize U.S. international influence, while simultaneously improving Russia’s. Metaphorically, the Russian political perspective strategizes that if your “house” is nicer that mine, I will vandalize yours so mine appears nicer rather than work to improve mine. From a Neo-Eurasianist perspective, exo-regional interventions and relationships become a necessary “evil,” edging Russia closer to realizing its regional objectives that do fall in line with traditional Eurasianist thought.

Any analysis of Russian economic or finance activity would be incomplete without some examination of the oligarch network. These wealthy opportunists are active across the government and business. President Putin’s ability to manipulate key domestic economic activities combined with his aptitude for shrewd, if not devious, negotiations suggest a strategy designed to synchronize Russian hegemonic efforts across Europe and Asia. Putin’s interaction with former oligarchs have been calculated

133 Ian Bond, ““The EU, the Eurasian Economic Union and One Belt, One Road: Can they work together?”,” Centre for European Reform, March 2017, accessed June 8, 2018, http://www.cer.eu/sites/default/files/pb_eurasian_IB_16.3.17_0.pdf.
134 Ibid.
135 Zygar, *All the Kremlin’s Men*, 172-173.
and appear to be synchronized with his international efforts. Putin’s work in the KGB introduced him to strategic thinking, enabling him to craftily influence negotiations with both business and government officials.

As the new leader in 2000, Putin was quick to begin bringing the oligarchs to heel. They had amassed astounding wealth by arranging back room deals in the 1990s that allowed them to purchase entire industries for fractions of their actual value as they were “privatized.” Putin blamed them for the rampant corruption, pressing them to commit portions of their profits to the state in a sort of penance for profiteering at the expense of the working class. When they failed to take him seriously, he charged them with fraud and tax-evasion, and in the Mikhail Khodorkovsky case, jailed them. Since Putin’s popularity hinges on the strength of the market economy, his actions indicate he saved his authoritarian measures for the “oligarch class,” ensuring they understood that power in Russia was centered on him and that he would not tolerate them, or their international principals, meddling in Russian politics.138

Because domestic economic improvements are imperative for funding expansionist strategies, it would seem that Putin would need to synchronize his foreign involvements and military strategies, with a domestic economy that could sustain it. Therefore, not only did that require him to compel the oligarchs to pay their share, but it broadcasted several other essential messages as well. First, it demonstrably declared Putin’s authority to the oligarchs; second, it gave everyday Russians the satisfaction of

136 Zygar, All the Kremlin’s Men, 47-66.
seeing the tycoons get their comeuppance; and finally, it advised the West that it could not influence Russian policy by exercising leverage bought from the oligarchs.\footnote{139}

Several resources drew attention to one Russian magnate of particular interest, and introduce “oligarch impacts” to the Eurasianist discussion. Konstantin Malofeyev has both purported and confirmed links to Russia’s actions in Ukraine and, more recently, in Montenegro.\footnote{140} This Russian businessman is Putin’s favored billionaire, and the media titled him “God’s Oligarch” for his adherence to fundamental Orthodoxy. Further recognized as a Dugin ‘disciple,’ he finances demonstrations against the West and NATO in Slovakia, Czech Republic, Poland, and Hungary through a Belarusian businessman Alexander Usovski, who it is believed also supports extremist parties in Slovakia.\footnote{141} Malofeyev, the self-proclaimed “Orthodox Patriot” has declared that, “Just as Christians in the West in Ronald Reagan’s time helped us against the evil of communism, we now have to return our debt to Christians who are suffering under totalitarianism in the West. This so-called liberalism, tolerance, and freedom, these are just words, but behind them you can see the totalitarianism.”\footnote{142}

**Military stream actors.**

Valery Vasilyevich Gerasimov is Chief of the General Staff for Russia’s armed forces and was previously first Deputy Defense Minister. Gerasimov was born and

\footnote{139} Ibid.
\footnote{141} Ibid.
raised in Kazan, Tartarstan, an ancient city founded by the “Golden Horde” in the 13th century.143 His local historical paradigm was a Russia that bore the Mongol influences that Lev Gumilev asserted were the attributes that confirmed Russia’s Eurasian origins. Commissioned as an armor officer, he excelled in the Red Army and received additional maneuver training at the Higher Tank School in Moscow. He was later appointed to the General Staff, during which time he became an important cog in the policy wheel.144 His status as a trusted military advisor to both Foreign Minister Lavrov and his immediate boss, Defense Minister Sergey Shoigu, prove he is a man of influence within the regime. Like Lavrov, Shoigu is a valued Putin advisor; according to Mikhail Zygar, Shoigu’s time within Putin’s “inner circle” has been longer than any of his peers.145 As the Shoigu military advisor, Gerasimov should, perhaps, be counted among the siloviki, and his modern warfare theories are fundamental to the implementation of any Eurasianist strategy.146

If Russia was to pursue policies in line with Eurasianist doctrines, two elements of Gerasimov’s theories are complementary. First, his theory on “New Type Warfare,” often errantly labeled “Hybrid Warfare,” is one that integrates military and non-military activities in the prosecution of war – using every means at the nation’s disposal to

145 Zygar, All the Kremlin's Men, 272.
achieve success. His pragmatic strategy conceptions are not strict models or recipes for future conflicts or conquests, but by his own admission are designed with the understanding that “Each war represents an isolated case, requiring an understanding of its own particular logic, its own unique character.” Essentially, he wants policymakers and strategists to think of each situation within its own distinctive context, and tailor plans according to the desired outcome, using whatever tools address the objectives most effectively.

If Gerasimov is the theorist, then implementation is crafted by the “think tanks.” Lieutenant General Reshetnikov is a retired SVR officer who began working for the KGB in 1976, and was likely a Putin colleague given their parallel career fields and timelines. Following his 2009 retirement as the chief of the SVR’s analytical department, he took over RISS, a “think tank” modeled after RAND, Chatham House, or the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS). As the RISS Director, Reshetnikov reported directly to Putin. In 2016, Reshetnikov was replaced by Mikhail Fradkov, another SVR veteran, a Soviet diplomat, and a former Prime Minister.

under Putin.\textsuperscript{151} Under Fradkov, the SVR saw an expansion of its facilities that have reportedly burgeoned to more than twice the original size since 2007.

After nearly a decade as SVR chief, Fradkov left to run RISS, and was replaced by SVR careerist Sergey Naryshkin, who worked in the Soviet Embassy in Brussels about the time that Putin was in Dresden in a similar capacity.\textsuperscript{152} It appears that the RISS directors are carefully selected from either agencies or relationships in which Putin places a high degree of trust. This further suggests that RISS maintains a preeminent role in Russian policy analysis and production. Finally, if RISS does play such a central role in Russian security policy, the director’s (and potential future directors) links to Eurasianist theorists must be evaluated.

The fact that successive career foreign intelligence officers have led RISS suggests its role as an analytical outlet for the SVR. The SVR-RISS-Putin connection does not definitively prove an overt Eurasianist nexus. It does, however, include members who hold Eurasianist views and are associated with proponents of the ideology. It would also be an oversimplification to state that the Putin-Reshetnikov-Malofeyev-Dugin connection mentioned earlier in the chapter, confirmed collaboration on a policy strategy that deliberately included Eurasianist strategy. It is, however, likely that these relationships have allowed Eurasianism to infiltrate Russian national security policy development. Putin values the loyalty of those relationships, appreciates their experience as foreign intelligence officers, remembers their decades in the service of the


Soviet state, and knows they will act favorably in support of his national strategy that places Russia on a path to resurgent glory.

**Political stream actors.**

The best known Neo-Eurasianist is Alexander Dugin. In his book on Dugin, James Heiser suggests Dugin was once on the lunatic fringe, yet now must be taken seriously because of his commanding role in the “emergence of Eurasianism as an armed doctrine.” Born into an influential family with ties to Soviet military intelligence (GRU) and generations of Russian military service members, Dugin joined Yevgeny Golovin’s group known as the Yuzhinskii circle, where he began studying Fascism, Nazism, mysticism, and the occult. Golovin brought Dugin to believe that the world was a chaotic place in need of something that would return it to the “Golden Age” that Greek philosophers introduced thousands of years ago. Golovin, like Spengler and Savitsky, agreed on the theory of historical cycles, and Dugin’s writings reflect his desire to precipitate the return or renaissance of a “Golden Age” of traditionalism.

Marlene Laurelle’s explanation of Dugin’s philosophical foundations highlight what appears to be a propensity for contradiction. His traditionalist beliefs dovetail well with his Orthodox philosophy, but contrast with his Aryan and occultist ideas. However, his book *The Fourth Political Theory* explains why this is. Dugin accepts that each form of government (communism, fascism, and liberalism) has failed, and that a new theory must be developed to replace them. This revised form of government,

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155 Ibid.  
according to Dugin, should use the viable elements of each and discard those that precipitated each form’s failure. Under this construct he can merge elements from divergent philosophies without accepting those attributes that make them overtly incompatible. Categorizing Dugin’s beliefs in strict academic terms or descriptions (fascist, Nazi, communist, socialist, liberal) produces a generalization that leads to errant conclusions with regard to his actual beliefs and socio-political rationales.

Dugin’s theories, according to Hill and Gaddy, incorporate reproductions of the émigré community’s theories of the early 1920s, combining history, geography, and political factors that rationalize Russia’s pursuit of territorial expansion or adventurism. In *Mr. Putin*, Hill and Gaddy explain Dugin’s belief that the “world powers” would perpetually pursue control of Russia and Central Asia (Eurasia). Dugin, they say, argues that the world’s fixation with ruling Mackinder’s “Heartland” is due to the fact that it is the geographic center of the world. Dugin believes Russia must retain control of this strategic “pivot point” in Central Asia. Furthermore, Dugin’s rabid endorsement of Russian interventions in the Ukraine in 2014, highlight his belief that the West (particularly the United States) was supporting a covert strategy to divide Russia from her rightful Slavic-Turkic territories.

Laruelle admits Dugin appears to “exert real influence” on an element of the military as well as the political sector and the President. The self-proclaimed “patriot” is a nationalist who has become the dominant figure associated with Neo-Eurasianist

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159 Hill and Gaddy, *Mr. Putin*, 370-375.
ideology. However, the “Putin experts” believe that Dugin’s vocal support to Putin’s policy decisions post-2014 and his notoriety for those comments do not indicate that Putin is solely inspired by Dugin’s political incantations. Hill and Gaddy explain that the political and media events were a carefully developed Putin strategy, which he deliberately employed in a manner that allowed Dugin and his Neo-Eurasianist peers to be seen as nationalist “advisors” to his imperialist objectives.

Konstantin Malofeyev, identified above as a “Religious Stream” actor, is also active on the political scene. A member of the Russian Monarchist Movement advocating a return of the Romanov ruler, Malofeyev is linked to Tsarist, Orthodox, and Eurasianist activities. As mentioned in the first chapter, the émigré community was populated by Russians who supported these three groups. Now it appears that the Neo-Eurasianists have recognized the utility of broadening the ideology to incorporate them all. An avid Dugin supporter, Malofeyev also finances Saint Basil the Great School, and is anxious for the return of a tsarist monarchy. These monarchists would be willing to see Putin crowned if a Romanov resurgence was unacceptable to the masses.

In general, Malofeyev’s impact does not appear to be appreciated yet he has contributed much to Putin’s agenda. His relationships within the church could gain him reciprocal yet deniable Kremlin access and his business interests allow him covers

162 Hill and Gaddy, Mr. Putin, 272-273.
163 Ibid.
for financing his domestic and international activities. Malofeyev demonstrated his value in 2014, when at the behest of his friend and loyal Putin advisor Vladislav Surkov, convinced him to pursue a pro-Putin agenda in Bosnia and Ukraine.

In late September and early October of 2014, local Bosnian media reported the legal entry of 144 Russian Federation citizens. These Russian “Cossacks” purportedly came to the region for a ceremony designed to commemorate the Cossacks efforts in World War I.\(^{167}\)

Another detail linking Malofeyev to the actions in the two regions was that the group was also accompanied by Zurab Chavchavadze. Chavchavadze, a monarchist, is the director of the Basil the Great charity, also linked to Malofeyev. Reportedly, the charity organization and the Republika Srpska (Serb Republic) Ministry of Culture organized the Cossack “visit.”\(^{168}\) In order to coordinate these types of operations, the Kremlin would need a trusted agent who understands Putin’s goals and could act decisively. Vladislav Surkov was just the man for the job. According to Mikhail Zygar, Surkov was extremely loyal and trusted by Putin, yet he was dramatically “relieved” as Deputy Prime Minister in 2013. However, immediately after being fired Surkov was instrumental in coordinating Malofeyev’s covert execution of the “false flag” efforts in Ukraine in support of Kremlin objectives.\(^{169}\)

Those efforts were designed to insulate the Kremlin from international media backlash and provide deniability to the Kremlin.\(^{170}\) Should the Kremlin’s clandestine

\(^{167}\) Grosev, “The Kremlin's Balkan Gambit: Part I.” What was interesting was the presence of their leader, Nikolay Djakonov, who had been a part of the Crimea operation earlier in 2014.

\(^{168}\) Grosev, “The Kremlin's Balkan Gambit: Part I.”

\(^{169}\) The covert action in this case was the use of Russian military / contract / para-military units masquerading as local dissidents.

\(^{170}\) Zygar, *All the Kremlin's Men*, 272.
insurgency plans in Ukraine fail, Malofeyev’s actions could be labelled as the unilateral and unsanctioned action of a “civilian” and Surkov would be sacrificed as the disgraced rogue agent with no official portfolio.

This chapter identifies Eurasianist players who have and use their influence within their stream and beyond. However, what is interesting is the fact that the people within the religion stream appear to be the ones that intersect with those of the other streams most frequently. Laruelle’s earlier quote that pinpoints religion as the integral anthropological element in society rings true once again, and Eurasianists recognize the importance of making Orthodoxy and its leadership networks a key node within its expansion strategy.
Chapter 4
Strategies

From a strategic perspective, the military and political “streams” are critical to the pursuit of Eurasianist ideology. Military and political leaders who are proponents of the ideology may be “reforming” the military by implementing doctrine designed to address the political objectives that Eurasianism mandates. This chapter describes the impacts that Eurasianism has had upon Russian military doctrine and how that affects Russian foreign policy strategies. The chapter too, reveals that Eurasianism has had a significant impact upon the Russian military establishment and a peripheral yet pronounced effect upon the political and policy mechanisms, and concludes that Eurasianism has indeed influenced Russian policy.

To place some context upon the discussion it should be noted that this examination of Eurasianism’s influence on the political and military structures focuses upon what Marlene Laruelle refers to as the “second wave” of Eurasianism, the period after 1991.\textsuperscript{171} This period is dominated by the theories and writings of Alexander Dugin, and his influence upon the military has been significant. Laruelle explains that the “Second Eurasianism” is Neo-Eurasianism, and encompasses theories that arose after the fall of the Soviet system.

These theories differ from the “first wave” Eurasianist theories (circa 1917) of the Russian émigré community, which were a product of the interwar revolutionary tumult that sought to combine fascism’s “left-wing” economics with a “right-wing” nationalism. This did not constitute a new system; rather a modification of an existing one.\textsuperscript{172} Neo-Eurasianism however, does not seek to find a happy medium between “democracy and totalitarianism” and

\textsuperscript{171} Laruelle, Russian Eurasianism, 210.
\textsuperscript{172} Ibid.
“market economics and interventionism” but rather it does seek to create a new “authoritarian, paternalistic, and autocratic state.”

It is this state that Alexander Dugin is pursuing, and this chapter explains how his views have influenced the military, how they appear to be affecting government policies, and finally, how his concepts in *The Fourth Political Theory* could be implemented.

**Dugin’s Influence on the Military**

As a theorist, Alexander Dugin seeks to engage the minds of business people, Orthodox Church leaders, and politicians, but it is the military brain trust that is critical for developing and implementing his plans for advancing Eurasianist objectives. When Dugin became the chairman of the Geopolitical Section under the Duma’s Council on National Security in 1998, his prominent position gave him opportunities to gain friendships with the Chief of the Russian General Staff Academy, Nikolai Klokotov and Colonel General Leonid Ivashov. However, Dugin’s rise to prominence within the military intelligencia began well before that.

According to Charles Clover, Dugin gained an inroad into the military in 1993 when he began guest lecturing at the Russian General Staff Academy through invitations from General Igor Rodionov. General Rodionov, an armor (tank) officer with command experience at every echelon from the platoon to a field Army, became the Minister of Defense in 1996 and was acknowledged for his efforts at instituting military

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173 Ibid.
174 Heiser, *The American Empire Should Be Destroyed*, 76-77. Ivashov’s previous role as a senior military official caused Dugin to select him as a consultant within the section.

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reforms. His reforms, wrote Lester Grau and Timothy Thomas in 1996, were “profound” in that they sought to bring the “entire defense activity of the state in conformity with the new political, economic, and social changes in society.”

Through Dugin’s writings, Rodionov recognize Dugin as a kindred spirit who understood that military functions should be designed primarily to complement or support political ends. When Yeltsin assigned Rodionov as Defense Minister in 1996, he tasked Rodionov to reform the military, and Dugin’s relationship with Rodionov likely influenced the direction of Rodionov’s intended reforms. However, Rodionov lasted in that position only until May 1997, based at least partially on his vocal criticism of the Kremlin’s lack of clear Defense guidance. Though Rodionov’s firing may have marginalized Dugin’s ideological effect on the Kremlin at that time, Dugin’s influence on the Russian military is evidenced by the fact that his book, *The Foundations of Geopolitics*, has for two decades, been used as a textbook at the General Staff Academy as well as other military schools in Russia.

Though some experts claim that Dugin is not in Putin’s inner circle, the Kremlin appear to have heeded the actions Dugin laid out in his *Foundations of Geopolitics*. In March 2017, Charles Firth wrote that in the late 1990s Dugin and Klokotov

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177 Grau and Thomas, “Russian minister of defense general Igor Rodionov.” 443-452.
179 Clover, “The Unlikely Origins of Russia's Manifest Destiny.”
collaborated on the framework for the work that eventually became *The Foundations of Geopolitics*. Firth’s article is an admission that the work was indeed intended to be the strategy for offsetting Western power, writing that “*The Foundations of Geopolitics* has had an outsized influence” in the years following its publication. \(^{181}\) Highlighting a number of specific activities, ranging from the 2008 incursion into Georgia and the 2014 annexation of Crimea, to less obvious events like “Brexit,” Firth explains that the book’s authors described these events in ways that led him to believe that “much of Russia’s foreign policy has been shaped by Dugin and Klokotov’s thinking.” \(^{182}\)

Dugin’s influence as a Eurasianist can be seen by contrasting contemporary Russian state activities with *The Foundations of Geopolitics* and suggests Dugin has been politically influential for some time. Dugin’s political philosophy is the adaptation of a variety of theories and it is often dismissed as an eclectic hodge-podge of mystical mumbo-jumbo. However, what if there really is a cohesive and *overarching* executive level ideology concealed in plain view? This ideology, its true tenets known only to those within an inner circle, could be disguised by a choreographed set of policy or political misrepresentations designed to distract the media on cue. Is it coincidental that in 1997 the *Foundations of Geopolitics* recommended that:

> It is particularly important to introduce geopolitical disorder into America’s internal activity, and to promote all kinds of separatist and ethnic, social and racial conflicts, actively supporting all opposition movements – extremist, racist, and sectarian groups, thereby disrupting internal political processes in the U.S. It would also make sense simultaneously to support isolationist tendencies in American politics. \(^{183}\)

\(^{181}\) Firth, “This is What Russian Heavyweights Wanted in the 90s.”
\(^{182}\) Firth, “This is What Russian Heavyweights Wanted in the 90s.”
\(^{183}\) Ibid.
Several authors have highlighted Dugin’s influence on Russian national security decision making. Victor Rud, a Ukrainian attorney educated at Harvard and Duke Law School, asserts that Dugin’s book recommends that Russia should make efforts to drive a wedge between Britain and Europe and establish a relationship with Iran that would ally them against the United States. With 35 years spent observing the Kremlin, Rud calls Dugin “Russia’s Ideologue,” suggesting Dugin’s influence runs deep.

Rud’s article lambastes American “torpor” as infantile naiveté, suggesting the United States has ignored the signs from the Kremlin for decades. In view of what he characterized as American indolence following the fall of the Soviet Union, Rud highlighted the remarkable lack of Western interest in holding anyone in Russia accountable for its dark past. In his view, everyone was happy to put the past behind them in some benevolent, yet baseless, salute to the freedom and democracy thought to have been immaculately conceived by the dissolution of the USSR. Although Rud is recognizably biased because Russia unjustifiably invaded his home country, a sovereign nation, his observations are not without merit. Rud’s argument is significant in that he highlights the fact that Dugin’s recommendations are being implemented, but the West remains either unconvinced of Dugin’s influence or unconcerned about Russian intentions.

In an article published by West Point’s Modern War Institute, Tyler Fox explains that the Russian military understands its strategy to be the pursuit of objectives outlined


185 Ibid.
within the tenets of Eurasianism. Highlighting Dugin’s close relationship to Klokotov, Fox confirms Dugin’s “influence on the Russian general officer corps is significant.” Systematically explaining how the Russian government is using history to craft a narrative that supports this ideology (geography, language, culture), Fox notes that it carefully avoids referencing Eurasianism directly, pointing out Putin’s success at controlling the narrative.

Dugin’s success in causing the military to accept and promulgate the theories from his *Foundations of Geopolitics* confirms that he does recognize the ideology as a tactical element that would support the strategic implementation of his “Fourth Political Theory.” Realizing that the Kremlin would recognize the utility of using a tool understood by the military, Dugin found the way to transition from the theoretical to the physical, from ideology to action - to begin what Laruelle defines as Eurasianism’s “conservative revolution.”

James Heiser wrote that Dugin’s Eurasianism is an “Armed Doctrine,” a phrase coined by Edmund Burke describing the Jacobite activities of the French Revolution. One of Burke’s 20th century apologists, Dr. Russell Kirk, expounded on Burke’s extreme distaste for the Jacobite’s ideology by describing it as a “fanatical political creed, a kind of inverted religion.” The fact that Jacobinism began in a secularized Paris monastery is reminiscent of Eurasianism’s relationship with Orthodoxy. Both ideologies surged

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187 Fox, “Eurasianism, History, and the Narrative Space.”
from a fountain of nationalist fervor and are sustained with populist rhetoric. Both also display fascist roots, imperialist objectives, and authoritarian leadership. The French Revolutionaries pursued an ambiguous “liberty,” though this emancipation was devoid of the restraints necessary for a truly civil government and the resulting anarchy created the conditions for the dictatorship that followed. Dugin differentiates this as two different types of “liberty.” One is freedom “from” something: collective identities, class systems, church dogmas, wealth re-distribution, and ethnic attachments. The other is freedom “to do” something: Dugin writes that liberals cannot articulate what individuals should do with that freedom.

Dugin espouses an alternative political theory, a convergence of the “good” elements of the three antecedent “failed” theories: communism, fascism, and liberalism. Dugin’s resulting “Fourth Political Theory” concentrates on the philosophical aspects of political theory. Dugin appears to agree with Burke’s argument that “the restraints on men, as well as their liberties, are to be reckoned among their rights.” Dugin, who studied Burke, also diverges from the French Revolutionary model, yet does so without embracing what he believes is liberalism’s errant focus on the individual rights that change with the wind and are morally relative. Fascism, he says, expired prematurely because of Hitler and Mussolini’s “suicidal geopolitical miscalculations.”

190 Ibid.
192 Dugin, The Fourth Political Theory, 142.
193 Ibid.
194 Dugin, The Fourth Political Theory, 17
Communism too could not outlast liberalism and decayed, according to Dugin, because of its rejection of religious truth. Dugin then posits that the Fourth Political theory is the combination of all that is “acceptable and good” from the three theories that preceded it.

The graphic below (Figure 4-1) shows how Dugin classifies the characteristics of the three ideologies (good or bad) and he explains how each of those “bad” attributes were either the direct or contributing cause of the ideology’s failure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ideology</th>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Bad</th>
<th>Impact to the Ideology (<em>D</em> Direct cause of failure / <em>C</em> - Contributory to failure)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communism / Marxism</td>
<td>Classless society</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Class hatred</td>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Atheistic - rejection of religious &quot;ethnos&quot;</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Future focus / spurns history</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exclusive economic focus</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Correct analysis of the &quot;Bourgeois&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Incorrect analysis of &quot;Proletariat&quot;</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>D (Marxism predicted revolutions would begin in industrial and not agrarian areas)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dogmatic, inflexible, not introspective</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>D (Ideology lacked the ability to reform based on failures)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Satellite &quot;revolutions&quot; poorly executed</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fascism / National Socialism</td>
<td>Racist</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>(Racism of culture, religion, language caused the genocide that erased all credible aspects)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ethnos (ethnocentrism - common heritage)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Authoritarian / Nationalist leaders</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberalism</td>
<td>Globalist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Individual focus (&quot;basic component&quot;)</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>D (The individual focus, selfish activism invites &quot;tolerance&quot; for things that should not be)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rejection of collective identity (anti-ethnos)</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>C (The idea that cultural, religious, or ethnic identities are &quot;intolerance&quot; or racism)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The &quot;idea of freedom&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Objectivist&quot; undertones / foundations</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>C (Ayn Rand, Dugin believes, said that &quot;if one is rich, then he is good...poor and he is evil.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 4-1: Failed Political Theories**

Subsequently, the below graphic (Figure 4-2) depicts what features the “Fourth Political Practice” incorporates and how each element benefits the government and society.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute borrowed from the 3 Failed Ideologies</th>
<th>Action / Re-action it produces</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classless society</td>
<td>Classless society promotes a sense of freedom for the individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not controlled / ruled by the elites</td>
<td>Benevolent leader - Authoritarian executive rule that subdues any group known to have held power in the past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-polar / non-hegemonic</td>
<td>To reject outside influences (NATO, UN, Western)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commonalities recognized (across borders)</td>
<td>Trans-nationally to justify interventions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic separations celebrated</td>
<td>Language, religion, history – in the smaller more local areas to promote nationalism domestically</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom</td>
<td>As a general political genre - to support opportunistic foreign policy, interventions, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 4-2: The Fourth Political Practice**

Traditionalism, Dugin believes, establishes the philosophical boundaries of traditions, culture, and religion that can modify the model and give it the structure to
avert anarchy. Dugin knew as well that Eurasianism would appeal to the nationalism that existed within a military hierarchy suffering from an acute inferiority complex. Therefore, Eurasianism could be evaluated less for its influence on Russian policy in general and more for how it has become the channel upon which the military establishment supports the Kremlin’s eventual adoption of Dugin’s *Fourth Political Theory*. As such, Dugin was able to prepare the military to support the objectives that Putin would later pursue.

The Russian General Staff College recognized Dugin’s work in *Foundations of Geopolitics* as a playbook for countering Western hegemony. They used it to indoctrinate senior military leaders to recognize the areas where the military required changes or reforms. Dugin, however, recognized that in order to pursue the ideas set forth in *The Fourth Political Theory* the military should be prepared to recognize that its actions may at some point be required to move from *The Fourth Political Theory* to the actions of a “Fourth Political Practice.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Term 1</th>
<th>Term 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Theory (Contemplation)</td>
<td>Practice (Things)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metaphysics</td>
<td>Principle</td>
<td>Manifestation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>Myth</td>
<td>Ritual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>Mentality</td>
<td>Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>Idea (Project)</td>
<td>Realisation (Implementation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Use</td>
<td>Thinking</td>
<td>Action</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 4-3: The Fourth Political Theory**

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The chart depicts how *The Fourth Political Theory* (Term 1) should be evaluated as it relates to the Fourth Political Practice (Term 2) and moves from theory to action.\(^{196}\)

The diagram represents the spectrum within which *The Fourth Political Theory* should be used to govern. Dugin is purporting that to “practice” the theory one must test its ontological assertions. He goes on to say that the “Fourth Political Theory is Theory to the same degree that it is Practice, and Practice to the same degree that it is to Theory,” meaning that the model should continue to be tested as it is used.\(^{197}\)

Applying this rationale confirms that Eurasianism has influenced the military to prepare not only for an aggressive shift in Russian foreign and domestic policy, but also to ensure it is comfortable with the changes that will transpire under Dugin’s “Fourth Political Practice” government model. Under this interpretation Neo-Eurasianism adds the objectives (cultural, geographic, and societal) that the Fourth Political Practice will pursue and satisfy.

### Putin’s Influence on Eurasianism

Although Putin’s inner circle does appear to be a revolving door of bureaucrats, oligarchs, political sycophants, military minds, and influence peddlers, few have been cast aside entirely. Putin is too smart for that and he is known to maintain lengthy friendships.\(^{198}\) A more likely scenario is that he has an inner circle that expands and contracts, bringing in the resources, skills, and personalities needed at a specific time. In

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\(^{196}\) Dugin, “*The Fourth Political Theory,*” 177.

\(^{197}\) Ontological in this context means to show the relation between the categories of the Fourth Political Theory. For example, in the field of Metaphysics one would compare “Principle” with its “Manifestation” to arrive at a conclusion as to whether it is good or bad as an attribute of the Fourth Political Practice.

\(^{198}\) Zygar, *All the Kremlin’s Men*, 130-131.
this model Putin would argue that he is not a disingenuous manipulator, but rather that
his loyalty is reciprocal and that his protégés understand that their roles may require
periods in which they do not enjoy close interactions with him. Dugin’s case appears to
suggest this is true, because while he disclaims having close ties to Putin, he seems
decisions.\footnote{Weir, “Putin's Pals.”} However, \textit{Dugin} himself may not truly believe his own statement.

Dugin’s role as an advisor to Putin probably follows the general trend in Putin’s
inner circle, which morphs through necessity. As Putin recognizes specific “mission”
requirements, he cultivates close relationships with the purveyors of those attributes.
Fluctuations in Putin’s inner circle have covered all policy areas. During his early days
in power Putin courted, cajoled, and eventually pilloried Russian oligarchs into
submission as he established himself as Russia’s economic decision maker. He
perpetually exerts control over media sources to dominate the international narrative. He
similarly maintains close ties with the Russian Orthodox leadership, through whom he
works to ensure that key Church leaders themselves are at least nominally satisfied with
his policies, and, in turn, project their loyalty to Russians whose faith channels their
allegiance. In addition, it appears that he has allowed ideologues like Dugin to enjoy the

\footnote{Weir, “Putin's Pals.”}
brief graces of his attention, acknowledging them for establishing a loyal following assembled to coalesce under his ultimate authority.

Due to the fluctuation in Putin’s inner circle, Dugin’s influence on Putin himself is probably indirect. His impact on Russian military decision making, however, is more explicit. The Russian military’s pursuit of Dugin’s Eurasianist worldview is no accident. Dugin gained the confidence of the military strategic establishment two decades ago, and the military leadership has been exposed to his theories since then. It is not a coincidence that the military leadership is pursuing strategies he espouses.

Although the Kremlin deliberately rejects the label “Eurasianist” when categorizing Russian policies, it could be for tactical or security rather than ideological reasons.202 Recent policies do look Eurasianist: offering economic benefits to nations unfriendly to the United States, sowing discord and distrust within the American political systems, and supporting “right wing” movements in Europe are all tactics espoused in Dugin’s writings.203

If Eurasianism’s influence on the military has indeed laid the foundations for the introduction of Dugin’s “Fourth Political Practice,” what are the indications that Putin’s Kremlin is implementing them? Central to this discussion is the fundamental belief that a new model is needed. According to Dugin all three previous forms are dead: fascism following WWII and communism in 1991. Liberalism he surmises, died when “economics replaced politics” in the 1990s.204 Dugin stated that, “communism and

202 If examined in the “denial and deception” context Dugin would need to remain outside Putin’s inner circle enabling Dugin to educate and direct military strategists toward Putin’s policy objectives.
204 Dugin, The Fourth Political Theory, 19.

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fascism lost their battle with triumphant liberalism,” but when liberalism “mutated” into
“selfish individualism that was free from all forms of collective identity” it died as a
viable form of government.205 There are several key factors that suggest that Putin
agrees with both the need for a new model and with the basic premises of the political
theories Dugin puts forth in The Fourth Political Theory.

First, both Putin and Dugin agree that Russians will lose their distinct identity if
they meld into this Western “global society.”206 207 Second, recognizing that each of the
previous political theories had its specific focus—communism: class; fascism: state; and
liberalism: the individual—Putin and Dugin agree that fascist theory provides some
necessary elements to this new form of government.208 209 Dugin asserts that a mixture
of National Bolshevism and Eurasianism provides the best representation of what the
theory might look like and Putin’s belief that Russia should “establish a strong state,” a
“sustainable society capable of resisting the challenge of Europe,” indicates he agrees.210

Although the events of the last two decades imply that Putin seeks to maintain a firm
grip on political power, it would be out of character for him not to prepare a deliberate
succession plan. Dugin’s Fourth Political Practice could be the template, a process
designed to direct a successor to govern according to a defined set of principles not
unlike Machiavelli’s admonitions to the de Medici rulers in The Prince.

207 Hill and Gaddy, Mr. Putin, 39.
208 Dugin, The Fourth Political Theory, 8.
209 Hill and Gaddy, Mr. Putin, 38-40, 270.
211 Hill and Gaddy, Mr. Putin, 274.
For this reason, Putin’s view of Eurasianism should be recognized as means to an end. The Eurasianist theorists recognize, some pragmatically others ideologically, that each of Eurasianism’s foundational ideological elements of religion, language, culture, and geography are “unifiers,” fundamental to coalescing Russians under one of these constituent parts where they become aware and loyal to the whole as a result. These “Influencer” theorists range from “sincere” (Dugin) or “opportunistic” (Patrushev) to “pragmatic” (Putin), yet all appear to understand the functional benefits of Eurasianism. Dugin is a true Eurasianist believer, though his support to the ideology appears to be to bolster his deeper political theories. Patrushev too, appears to support the ideology for the political rhetoric its subjective translation supplies. Putin, however, is a tactical pragmatist and a strategic ideologue. Understanding that Eurasianism is but a tool for Putin, analysts are quick to presume that the ideology is sequestered among a few obscure policy makers and Kremlin elites who are not likely to be able to garner a noteworthy following capable of fully implementing what might seem an aggressive, even outlandish, agenda.

Putin is accomplished in the arts of deception, guile, and manipulation, yet Hill and Gaddy’s work highlight his conviction and deeply held belief that Russia should see its “great nation” status revived. This existential passion has guided both his evolution as a Russian leader and his systematic approach to implementing his plan for guaranteeing Russian ascendancy. It appears that he is preparing the Kremlin for a system that will carry on his vision regardless of the leader who is tasked with carrying it out. In order to better visualize Putin’s process for achieving this objective, Hill and Gaddy’s six “stages” or descriptions of Putin will be applied to Lewin and Kotter’s

Change Model. Each “stage” in the model can be roughly correlated with a specific time period and further contextualized with details on Putin’s personal characteristics as defined by Hill and Gaddy.

This addresses specific timeframes when Putin deliberately sought to engage Dugin and the Eurasianist ideology to achieve his overarching goals at that particular phase. When Putin came to the national stage in 1996, Russia was on the verge of collapse. His transition from Prime Minister to President in 2000 gave him the

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opportunity to publish his “Millennium Message,” detailing his “Russian Idea” that Russia was to become a great power. To do that, he explained that Russia must be united under a system that embraced the Russian values of patriotism and collectivism, building a “strong state” with “structures” that guaranteed order. Putin then declared himself to be the one to build that ordered state. Within the Change Model this could be viewed as the first step, “Creating Urgency” and “Unfreezing.”

Because both the “first wave” and “second wave” Eurasianist writers draw heavily from fascist theories the next two steps tie in the Eurasianist element. In step 2 and 3, “Building the Guiding Team” and “Getting the Right Vision” it is apparent that Putin’s articulated vision carried Fascist overtones and the team he recruited included a variety of former KGB / FSB officers who would support such a path. Eurasianists would presume this to be an ideological success, heartened by the signs that Putin’s actions were in line with their theories.

As Putin moved to step 4, “Communicate Buy-In,” messaging was important. He transitioned to Hill and Gaddy’s “History Man” and began borrowing narratives from Russia’s past in a unique manner. Employing phraseology from the post-Revolutionary period he began quoting the “White Russian” émigré community, many who comprised the early Eurasianist population. Each of these actions either compliments Eurasianist ideals or is directly related to its theories and authors. In the 2000-2006 timeframe, Putin began to transition to the model’s 5th step, “Empowering Action,” and he did so by developing a plan that brought the oligarch community to heel and initiated a concerted

215 Hill and Gaddy, Mr. Putin: Operative in the Kremlin, 41-62,134.
216 Ibid.
217 Hill and Gaddy, Mr. Putin: Operative in the Kremlin, 41-62,134.
effort to build Russia’s financial reserves. Engaging oil and gas resources, Putin’s policies reduced the IMF debt and grew the Russian economy from 23rd to 9th internationally.\textsuperscript{218}

During the last decade Putin’s Russia could be described as approaching the 6\textsuperscript{th} (“Create Short-Term Wins”) and 7\textsuperscript{th} (“Don’t Let Up”) steps of Kotter’s Change Model. It was during this time period that he dealt with the Chechen Wars, navigated an economic downturn and recovery, and reclaimed presidential power.\textsuperscript{219} It is also here that Putin engaged the Eurasianists once again. Following the 2014 successes of pro-Russian separatists in eastern Ukraine, Putin launched a media campaign to ensure his vision was not misinterpreted. In August 2014, Putin gave a speech to a group of young people gathered to discuss politics. In his speech he castigated the Bolsheviks of a century prior for tearing down the “Fatherland” in a time when its military was fighting a foreign war, and he culminated his address by recognizing that the internal strife they had incited caused the eventual collapse of the state. Putin’s oration was designed to unify the nationalist effort, and during this time he allowed the media to portray Dugin as his adviser, using Eurasianism to garner the support of the nationalist populations.\textsuperscript{220} Dugin in turn, continued to perpetuate Eurasianism’s influence upon Russian policies through his relationships with prominent Monarchists and Orthodox personalities who are known patrons of Putin, several examples of church leaders, like Tikhon and Kirill, and Monarchists, like Malofeyev, are known to have contact with Putin and Dugin.

\textsuperscript{218} Hill and Gaddy, \textit{Mr. Putin: Operative in the Kremlin}, 134-135.
\textsuperscript{219} Hill and Gaddy, \textit{Mr. Putin: Operative in the Kremlin}, 63-135, 217.
\textsuperscript{220} Hill and Gaddy, \textit{Mr. Putin: Operative in the Kremlin}, 370-373.
This enduring desire to further a strategic narrative may also explain why Putin sows his own Stalinesque “cult of personality.” Though westerners sometimes scoff at media stunts that would draw wide criticism in the United States, Putin communicates with a broad audience, and he has done so in an effort to cause Russians to visualize him as the human representation, an archetype, of an ascendant Russia. As Russians view Putin in an illustrative sense it is possible that the presidential role becomes defined more by the nation’s long-term goal of rising to “great power” status, subordinating the person residing within the position to that pursuit.

This political immortality does emulate the former Communist model, which is not surprising given Putin’s comments regarding the demise of the Soviet system. Yet pragmatically incorporating elements that his Communist predecessors would not sanction, Putin appears to be embracing a political paradigm, a political prototype, that could be nearing completion. Comparing his actions with Lewin’s and Kotter’s “change models,” Putin’s restructuring appears be in the final stages of “re-freezing” or “implementing and sustaining change.” It is from those stages that the study’s final conclusions reveal areas that the streams converge and provide specific answers to the central question of Eurasianism’s influence.221 222

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Chapter 5

Conclusions

This thesis sought to determine the degree of influence that Eurasianism has had upon Russian policy. It examined the religious, economic, military, and political streams to identify leaders who display both the ability and desire to affect Russian policy, and it examined their actions to correlate any Eurasianist motivations.

Stream convergence.

The chart below categorizes the people discussed within this study by annotating the streams on which they have had an impact. It also distinguishes those who have a known relationship with Putin and those who may have had some external impact upon his policy views. The data confirms the impacts are most heavy in the religious and military streams.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actor</th>
<th>Religious</th>
<th>Economic</th>
<th>Military</th>
<th>Political</th>
<th>Putin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kirill</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malofeyev</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tikhon</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerasimov</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reshetnikov</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lavrov</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dugin</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ilyin</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

X = Annotated “Stream” the Actor is influential in
C = Confirmed relationship with Putin (Or quoted by him – ideological agreement)
P = Probable relationship / communication with or direction from Putin
Each of the people discussed in this study have a role in Putin’s strategy. In several cases there is a verifiable Eurasianist nexus, but within the religion stream it is the early émigré community’s writing on Orthodoxy that emerge most readily. Putin, Kirill, Malofeyev, Tikhon, and Dugin have all offered verbal justifications for transnational interventions using the aforementioned Orthodoxy argument. The fact that there were so many key personalities that support this particular tenet of Eurasianist thought elevates the religious stream as the primary source for Neo-Eurasianist influence within the study.

This study showed that Eurasianism’s influence on Russian national security policy is verifiable. Yet it is the creative articulation of the ideology’s foundations that make it a formidable tool for inspiration, pressure, persuasion, and guidance at the national level. Gumilev bridged early Eurasianist thought with the ideology’s modern “second wave” and his writings are widely read and accepted. Dugin understood this and emulated his theories. His subsequent popularity in academia gave him the opportunity for an enduring impact on national military strategy (which coincided with Putin’s rise on the political scene). Putin’s pragmatic political tactics made use of Dugin’s dogma by allowing Eurasianists to advertise his approval of Eurasianism’s tenets at times where it would benefit him.

Early on Putin and Dugin both appear to have recognized that Orthodoxy, properly engaged, could offer tangential benefits to their individual pursuits. They found it provided exponential value and that by connecting with Orthodoxy’s highest leaders they gained access to a host of narratives and justifications that could be synchronized and used to validate Eurasianism, promote a new governing paradigm, and rationalize
interventionist policies. Eurasianism has influenced Russian policy and it will continue
to do so while it adapts and is adapted in pursuit of Russian “greatness.”

Eurasianist ideology could gain ascendency outside military circles, but it will probably remain subservient to the political-military machine and only occasionally be publicized by populist nationalism during political campaigns. Putin has appeared to endorse facets of the Eurasianist vision. Yet his muted and rather oblique support to Eurasianism leaves media and researchers unable to draw conclusions as to the depth of his commitment to its theories.

These factors suggest that the growth of Eurasianism is actually subordinated to the pursuit of the overarching political theory that Putin believes will bring Russia the prominence that it deserves. Through its continued impact upon specific government, societal, and economic circles, Eurasianism will continue to bolster the ascent of this new political paradigm. Putin’s years in power have allowed him to appoint a trusted cadre of like minds to help him pursue his agenda. It is they that will be in a position to carry on his strategic “vision,” and this vision may be to ensure that an entrenched “Putin Political Paradigm,” the product of Dugin’s Fourth Political Theory, becomes the permanent governing model in Russia.

This study examined some of the situations that indicated the Kremlin has ties to the covert tactical elements known to foment the unrest that precipitated recent Russian “interventions” in Ukraine. Eurasianists applauded these Kremlin activities, seeing them as the deliberate pursuit of Eurasianist geo-political goals that are designed to wrest “unipolarity”

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223 This is a reference to the covert actions taken by “dissidents” who were likely Russian Special Operations Forces or mercenaries resourced through people like Konstantin Malofeyev.
from the United States, and as mentioned in Chapter 1, government officials crafted their rhetoric to ensure Eurasianists would see those activities in such a light.  

The origins of Eurasianism show that the early theorists’ motivations spanned a broad range of ideological foundations. Some focused on theological arguments designed to unify the Russian people under Orthodoxy. Others embraced apologetic interpretations of the Mongol Turkic occupations to justify Eurasianist pursuits as a uniquely Russian cultural alliance. Others still believed that because Russian values have been historically “not European,” and thus they must reject European influences and pursue a new form of government that incorporated elements of monarchy and fascism. This wide range of theories allowed the modern Neo-Eurasianists the latitude to define Eurasianism and its goals opportunistically to validate their own beliefs. This thesis examines and explains how the political leaders recognize that these interpretations and their authors could be leveraged for political expediency. It shows how this has been done, and explains how Putin appears to be using components of Eurasianism to solidify the changes he has instituted within Russian economic, political, and government structures.

This thesis defines the linkage between Eurasianism and Dugin’s book *The Fourth Political Theory* and further explains how this theory could be brought to life in practice. Though Dugin declines to specify the exact tenets of this “Fourth Political Practice,” his book does clarify them as the “good” elements extrapolated from other “failed” political theories. These theories then, can be translated into the “Fourth Political Practice,” an activity that appears to have been put in motion after Putin took power in the early 2000s.

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224 Dugin, “*The Fourth Political Theory,*” 193.
Even as this new political paradigm takes root, Putin knows his ambition to unify the disparate groups of transnational “ethno-Russians” under an economic and security coalition is an objective that his successor may not share. Moreover, he knows he must institutionalize this central objective within a long-term Russian national strategy. Some countries on Russia’s periphery, once Soviet satellites like Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, may even be open to establishing a confederation under some degree of Russian leadership, but he must first coalesce Russians behind a national identity that embraces such ideas. Putin’s nationalism is tempered with a degree of historical cultural inclusion that Eurasianism does promote. By supporting separatism in these Eurasian regions, and by encouraging a wider devotion to Orthodoxy, Putin recognizes that Eurasianism can gain him a broader commitment to his authoritarian leadership style.

Recognizing the temporal fragility of an authoritarian regime, Putin knows he must synchronize the modification and introduction of this governing methodology in a way that institutionalizes his long-term goals for Russia beyond his tenure. With Dugin’s *Foundations of Geopolitics* established as the overarching guidance to Russian military leaders, Eurasianism does define the tactical and operational objectives necessary for the Kremlin to produce a cohesive strategic plan. Yet this strategic expectation and pursuit of Russian preeminence suggests Putin knows his vision must be transferrable to another autocratic leader without it being distorted or exchanged.

Contemporary Russian political power has been often compared to tsarist times. Described as an autocrat, Putin’s authoritarian style does resemble monarchic rule, since it is conducted with the cooperation of selected elites who understand that they are
endowed with wealth and power at the behest of a ruler wielding absolute power.\footnote{225}{Hill and Gaddy, \textit{Mr. Putin: Operative in the Kremlin}, 270-272} Monarchic Fascism, seems to define Putin’s form of government. Russia has a constitution and a parliament and resembles the tsarist political model, under which the leader imposed his will upon the masses, while allowing a minute number of “elites” to hold military and industrial power. Putin’s contemporary model allows his select few protection in exchange for their active allegiance.\footnote{226}{Ibid.}

Parliamentary bodies in Russia were created not with democratic principles in mind, but were designed to receive the tsar’s intent and communicate it down to the peasants (the \textit{narod}).\footnote{227}{Hill and Gaddy, \textit{Mr. Putin: Operative in the Kremlin}, 272-274} The Duma, then, was conceived as a functional efficiency measure designed to relay the tsar’s one-way communiques to his subjects. It is apparent, according to Hill and Gaddy, that even today the Federal Assembly also remains compliant to the will of the Kremlin’s central figure.\footnote{228}{Ibid.}

The similarities do not stop at the political level. In tsarist Russia, the monarch held authority over the church as well, wielding the claim that he was accountable only to “divine law.”\footnote{229}{Ibid.} Putin’s relationship to the church may not paint him as the divinely appointed leader, but Hill and Gaddy recognize that his consistent and visible partnership with church leaders does give him credibility in the religious realm. The Russian Constitution is a secular document; however. Putin, they say, sees Russia (\textit{Rus’}) as the a thing that is holy and the church leaders agree.\footnote{230}{Ibid.}
This nuanced combination of monarchy and fascism appears to be unique to Eurasianism. Significant to the study’s analysis was an explanation of how Malofeyev, a monarchist and Dugin supporter, recognizes how the blend of Orthodoxy, fascism, and monarchy affords Eurasianism the theoretical flexibility needed to gain a wider following without compromising its ideological intent. Malofeyev supports the church and has high-level friendships with its leaders. He was recruited by Surkov to coordinate the efforts of Russian separatists in Ukraine. He is supportive of reinstating the monarchy and would happily crown Putin. Each of these factors have a significant impact on the Russian national security apparatus and each has Eurasianist support.

Hence, reaching back to the Orthodox-tsarist days when Orthodox Christians were baptized into the Russian Orthodox Church they became Russian (russkiy) regardless of their country of origin. Converts may not have changed their names, but their religion came to identify them as pravoslavnyy–russkiy, and, as Russians, entitled to the protection of the state. Putin and Patriarch Kirill have vocalized this Russian right to protection on a number of occasions, and it is this particular element that is a key tenet of Dugin’s Neo-Eurasianism.

Pragmatism characterizes the success of Eurasianism. It motivates the church to accept the state’s proclamation of “faith,” and persuades the state to acquiesce to the church’s doctrinal demands to establish the social norms. The public too is pragmatic in

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231 Grosev, “The Kremlin's Balkan Gambit: Part I.”
233 Hill and Gaddy, Mr. Putin: Operative in the Kremlin, 273.
234 Ibid.
its acceptance of an autocratic regime in exchange for a “market economy” that delivers better than the Soviet model did. This pragmatic outlook is significant because it reveals that the relationships that extend across the streams (religious, military, economic and political) each take advantage of what the other can do for its “cause.” It is also important because it suggests that Putin recognizes that this development only compliments his pursuit of a governing method that is unique – a fascist / tsarist model of sorts.

Adapting this top-down approach to modern Russia, by allowing superficial “democratic” reforms, market economic policies, and an improved standard of living, Putin is implementing pragmatic adjustments he recognizes as essential to maintaining power for the pursuit of his ideological end-state: Russia as a “great power.”
Bibliography


