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# UNPACKING THE CONCEPT OF NATIONALISM WITHIN RUSSIAN EURASIANISM[**]

*Abstract: Eurasianism was first developed in the first half of the 20th century among Russian emigrants. It advocated a typology of human civilizations based on cultural uniqueness and claimed the equal importance of all cultures. The issue of nationalism was connected with the understanding of culture in the writings of the Eurasianists. They believed that all the peoples of the former Russian Empire should live together in the same State for ecological and cultural reasons, thus forming a common civilization. This is how the territory of the state was formed (whether it was called the Russian Empire, the USSR or Eurasia), which under any conditions had to maintain its integrity. In the meantime, Eurasianism alternatively saw society as having a "personality" and required special descriptive terms such as "folk personality", "symphonic personality," "aggregate personality", "cultural organism" etc. Thus, the purpose of the article is to analyze the understanding of the concept of nationalism in the works of Russian Eurasianists, based on the definition given by the theorist Anthony Smith as it is fully compatible to demonstrate changes in the understanding of nationalism in their works and to answer the question: how nationalism was defined precisely in Eurasianism? The paper argues that nationalism, as explained in Russian Eurasianism, which encompasses ethnic and civil aspects of the Smith definition and subsequently evolved into the idea of a common civilization, has the potential for being used in multi-ethnic and multicultural society as a unifying instrument.*

*Keywords: Nationalism, Eurasianism, Russia, socio-political concept, multi-ethnic unity, "true" and "false" nationalism, cultural and political nationalism.*

**Introduction**

Nationalism has been studied by a number of scholars for decades. Anthony Smith was one of those, who gave utter definition of nationalism. According to Smith, nationalism regards to the population that sharing a common territory, common memory, myths, culture, economy, equal rights and duties for all its members (Smith 1991, 14). He specified nationalism as an ideological movement for accomplishing and maintaining the unity and identity of the community, which can be

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considered as a real or potential nation (Smith 1999, 37). Smith suggested that nationalism cannot be understood simply from a political point of view, as it is an equally "collective cultural phenomenon" associated with national identity. Smith distinguishes between civic nationalism, which focuses on the political and legal equality of its members, and "ethno-nationalism", which gives priority to the concept of community based on common origin, linguistic and cultural criteria (1991, 9). For Smith, the civic model of a nation is linked with territory. States have a well-defined territory and society has a united voice and political will that expresses common goals and political interests. Such a society expresses a set of values and common cultural traditions, feelings and ideas that unite people in their historical homeland. Cultural nationalism sees its problem in the preservation of local languages, traditional way of life, customs, etc., while political nationalism seeks first of all political autonomy or sovereignty. Smith has recognized that ethnic and civic types of nationalism can interact and merge over time. He acknowledges that, over time, most nationalist movements have demonstrated both of the above-mentioned forms (ibid).

When it comes to the notion of nationalism in Eurasianism, it becomes difficult to determine the correct definition or type for its description because it was constantly changing over time. Russian Eurasianism was a unique philosophical trend which emerged in the early 1920s among the Russian emigrants who settled in Europe and later became a socio-political movement. They published collective manifesto - "Eurasianism (formulation of 1927)", where they emphasized the main ideas of their movement. It can be divided into three historical periods: the early Eurasianism of the late Tsarist "Silver Age", which later became known as classical Eurasianism (Pyotr Savitsky, Nikolay Trubetskoy, Pyotr Suvchinsky, Konstantin Chkheidze, Lev Karsavin, Georgy Florovsky, Georgy Vernadsky and so on); Gumilevian Eurasianism of the Soviet era, and the contemporary neo-Eurasianism (Aleksandr Panarin, Aleksandr Dugin, Boris Erasov, Talgat Tadzhuddin and so on). Classical eurasianists, like all Russian revolutionary thinkers, sought answers to questions about Russia's future and destiny through Eurasianism. They called for recognition of the danger of Russia's Europeanisation. They identified Russia with Eurasia, arguing that the country's geographical and cultural characteristics were typical of the entire continent. Lev Gumilev argued that the peoples of Eurasia are deeply interconnected: he stressed the importance of the Eurasian "super-ethnos" (Gumilev 2020, 20). To show the similarity between Russia and the whole of Eurasia, neo-Eurasianists attempted to present their own version of nationalism, which was based on two main components: common Eurasian culture and civilization that could unite all the people of Eurasia. The members of Eurasianism of different periods have their own description of nationalism, which was not always the same. It has evolved and changed over the decades. The issue of nationalism in Eurasianism can be classified

according to Smith's definition of ethnic and civic nationalism, which, intertwined, led to the idea of a common civilization. The idea of a common civilization was also reflected in the speeches of Russian politicians. The paper is unpacking nationalism within Russian Eurasianism by analyzing it and showing its evolution from 1920's to the present. Anthony Smith's definition will be used to study nationalism in Russian Eurasianism, as it is fully compatible to demonstrate changes in the understanding of nationalism in it. The paper argues that nationalism, as explained in Russian Eurasianism, which encompasses ethnic and civic aspects of the Smith's definition and subsequently evolved into the idea of a common civilization, has the potential for being used in multi-ethnic and multicultural society as a unifying instrument.

### Ethnic (cultural) nationalism in Trubetskoy's articles

Smith noted that we see a growing role for cultural nationalism. For while the criteria for joining the world community of nation States were originally political sovereignty and territorial jurisdiction. However, they include a demonstration of cultural unity and solidarity and, preferably, some degree of cultural "uniqueness" over time (Smith 2010, 50). Cultural unity and solidarity were also, in the view of the Eurasianists, a key idea of "true" nationalism. Nikolay Trubetskoy, one of the founders of classical Eurasianism, published articles in the mid-1920s emphasizing the importance of cultural unity in Eurasian nationalism. He noted that there are no fully homogeneous peoples and cultures. On the one hand, every people include subgroups of a lower rank with its own cultural and linguistic specificities. On the other hand, it in turn enters into a broader cultural whole, encompassing several peoples (Trubetskoy 1927, 28). Trubetskoy supported the idea of "unity in diversity", which the Soviet ideology shared for many years. This means that in order to avoid separatism, different types of nationalism must be incorporated into a specific multi-layered structure. In other words, every citizen of Eurasia had to be aware not only of ethnic membership but also of Eurasian one, that is, to have a multilevel identity. Classical Eurasianists noted that positive moral values that elevated the human being spiritually and intellectually could only be created in a national-limited culture imbued with an ethnic spirit that facilitated individual mental activity. On the contrary, in a homogeneous human culture, logic, rational science and technology inevitably prevail over religion, ethics and aesthetics. In this culture he saw absolute evil, condemning mankind to the "secondary moral savagery" associated with the "godless" culture. That is why Trubetskoy criticized the European Romano-Germanic civilization, threatening to destroy cultural diversity and create a monotonous "internationalist" environment in its place. In that regard, he recalled the example of the Tower of Babel. From the very beginning he categorically rejected the concept of "one common human culture", which threatened the destruction of the native local

cultures (Trubetskoy 1921a).

Speaking of nationalism, Trubetskoy noted that there are two types of nationalism: true and false. Those two types he explained as follows "The man with the pronounced egocentric psychology unconsciously considers himself the center of the universe, the crowning of creation, the best and the most perfect of all beings. Of the other two beings, the one closest to him is more like him - better, and the one farther away from him - is worse. … The Romano-German people, infused with this psychology, are building all their assessment of the world's cultures on it. Therefore, two kinds of attitude to culture are possible for them: either the recognition that the highest and most perfect culture is the culture of the people to which the "evaluator" belongs (German, French, etc.) or the recognition that perfection is not only the crown of perfection, but the sum total... of the cultures related to it, created in the joint work of all the Romano-Germanic peoples" (Trubetskoy 1921a). Later he continued "a particular form of false nationalism should also be recognized as a form of cultural conservatism that artificially identifies national identity with some of the cultural values or forms of life already created in the past and does not allow them to be altered even then, when they clearly ceased to embody the national psyche satisfactorily. In this case..., as in the case of aggressive chauvinism, the living connection of culture with the psyche of its bearers at any given moment is ignored, and culture is given absolute importance independent of its attitude to the people: "not culture for the people, but people for culture". This again eliminates the moral and logical meaning of identity as a correlate of continuous national self-knowledge" (Trubetskoy 1921a). Eurasianists saw cultural diversity as the natural state of humanity to be preserved. For that reason, they strongly opposed modernization, which had led to cultural convergence and greater cultural homogeneity. According to Trubetskoy, "every culture is a constantly changing historical product of collective creativity of past and present generations of a given social environment, in which each individual cultural value is designed to meet the specific (material and spiritual) needs of the whole society or of the individuals who make up it" (Trubetskoy 1921a). He also noted that each culture has its own values and means of implementation, which include all products of human activity - norms, literature, technical applications, and so on. This is the group's shared heritage as a bearer of culture. But at the same time, culture must erase differences between people, creating a single psychological type. It should be underlined that the most important part of the Eurasianism is the ethno-phylosophysical teaching of personality which is also described in the works of Trubetskoy. At the same time, the concept of the person is extended by introducing the categories of "private human" and "multi-human" person. The nation for Eurasianists is a special "human", "symphonic" person capable of creating its own culture (Trubetskoy 1995, 105).

Summarizing the above, it can be seen that Trubetskoy invented the concept of a "multi-ethnic nation" (or multinational ethnicities), and Eurasian theory of culture in order to prove their point in national question and to avoid a multitude of its definitions. He had declined separatism and narrow ethno-nationalism, including Russian, rightly perceiving them as an obstacle for unity.

**Civic (political) nationalism in Eurasianism**

Smith's understanding of a nation demonstrates many of the elements that he assigned to the modern nation - public culture, common economy, and common legal rights and duties for all members of society (Smith 1991, 14). These elements constitute the institutional framework of the civilian national State. The latter is usually based on civic ideology, which emphasizes the need to create, strengthen and continuously improve the national community and its institutions. This suggests that ethnic understanding of the nation will almost certainly be balanced by the rhetoric of civic nationalism. This kind of nationalism can also be seen in the works of Eurasianists. The other classical eurasianist K. Chkheidze, for instance, carried the idea of "state-continents" throughout his life, seeing precisely the enlargement of a state as the fundamental trend in the development of humanity and considering the USSR as the ideal of this kind of "pan-European state-continent." He was the first eurasianist who undertakes in-depth theoretical analysis of the problem of nationalism, based on the ideas of Trubetskoy. Chkheidze noted that state unity required a number of essential prerequisites, namely, geopolitical unity, unity of the ethnic system and cultural and historical unity. By geopolitical unity, he understood, first, territorial integrity and, secondly, the close relationship between cultural types and the natural environment. He viewed the ethnic system in a broad sense as multi-ethnic unity based on common cultural elements and inter-ethnic marriages, which gave rise to a natural tension between the ethnic components. It also gives an idea of close genetic relationships or common ancestry. According to the Eurasianism concept, Chkheidze identified a cultural nucleus with a spiritual (religious) sphere, which seemed to inspire the building of cultural unity even in a multi-confessional environment. Unlike other eurasianists, who were deeply religious people and viewed Orthodoxy as the central factor of Russian cultural life and one of the cornerstone for future Eurasian continent-country, Chkheidze admitted that unity could be built on atheism. Multi-ethnic cultural unity could be particularly strong if its individual components had common goals and objectives. Only on this basis could the "state organism" consisting of several nations emerge. This was the Eurasian approach to solving national problems in multi-ethnic states like Russia (Chkheidze 1926, 24). In his opinion, every citizen of Eurasia must be aware not only of his ethnic affiliation, but also of his (or her) Eurasian identity, that is, of his or her dual identity. In

Chkheidze's opinion, all the prerequisites for this existed in Russia, first and foremost unification as a central idea. For this reason, Russia represented an indivisible whole, and fate itself had ordained that it be a multinational state. In order to create the latter, every "nation" ought to be recognized as having a unique identity; all nations must receive equal status, and each of them must have its own government and ethnic territory within the confines of the single state. At the same time, each ought to recognize the "organic" ties with state unity and, developing their original cultures, religions, and notions of the past, avoid chauvinistic deviations (Chkheidze 1926, 25). Furthermore, "specifically Russian culture, supplemented with elements of the cultures of the other peoples of Eurasia, must become the base of the national (Eurasian) culture, which serves the needs of all of the peoples of Russia-Eurasia, without putting obstacles in the way of their national uniqueness. . . " (Evraziistvo, 8).

It should be noted that the Eurasianists appreciated the USSR's experience in nation building. According to their statement in the program document of 1927, in the national issue, they stand on the basis of the exercise of brotherhood of peoples within Russia-Eurasia. They recognize the existing federal system of the USSR as a means of implementing such a brotherhood, with the necessary elimination of the communist oppression that is now being imposed on it, preventing the full identification of the national identities of individual peoples of Russia-Eurasia. Not recognizing communist ideology as the basis of Soviet federalism, Eurasianists nevertheless noted: It must be emphasized that the beginnings of federation and autonomy are defended by Eurasians in Soviet rather than European terms (Novikova and Sizemskaya 1993, 223).

Thus, it becomes obvious that for the salvation of the integrity of the Russian Empire, Eurasianists developed an ideology to help promote the unity of the peoples entering into this state. According to Shnirelman, the principal components of this ideology were the conceptions of the closed geographic and cultural world of Russia-Eurasia, the hierarchical building of culture on principles of unification, the spiritual essence of culture, and ideological unity and at the same time an elitist separation of culture into "high" and "low." Its essence was not only the preservation of the all-Russian statehood, but also the support of the unified "high" culture based on the Russian language, "Russian" orthodoxy, created on the basis of Russia, subordinated to "low" local (non-Russian) cultures (Shnirel'man 2004, 13-14). By advancing of the powerful image of "Russia-Eurasia", the Eurasianists attempted to merge empire and nation.

Classical Eurasianism saw its problem in the preservation or restoration of the Russian Empire as a single political entity. The ideologists of Eurasianism considered that the task of the Russian people should not be limited to guaranteeing the right to self-determination of the nation, but should be broader: the Russian people should

perform a consolidating function in the State not only because of their number; it should unite the other peoples of Eurasia culturally. This is how the task was formulated in 1927: "It is the Russian culture, replenished with elements of the cultures of other peoples of Eurasia that should become the basis of a supranational (Eurasian) culture that would serve the needs of all peoples of Russia-Eurasia without constraining their national identities. Eurasianists set as their goal positive measures that promote the development of Russian culture in its supranational functions and foreign at the same time any shade of restriction and contraction of other national cultures" (Evraziistvo, 9). In all the work on the re-education of national identity, with the emphasis on the symphonic unity of the multi-ethnic Eurasian nation, the Russian people may have to exert their forces more than any other people of Eurasia. For, first, it, more than others, will have to contend with the old attitudes and points of view that built Russian national identity outside the real context of the Eurasian world and separated the past of the Russian people from the general perspective of the history of Eurasia. And second, the Russian people, who before the revolution was the sole master of the entire territory of Russia-Eurasia, and now is the first (in number and importance) among the Eurasian peoples, naturally should set an example to others (Evraziistvo, 9).

Since the identity of Russians in the USSR was primarily associated with Soviet ideology, most of them faced a crisis of identity in the collapse of the old system. The result was a demand for a new collective identity, in which nationalism played a role. In the mid-1990s, Eurasianism became one of the strongest currents of Russian nationalism, if not the strongest. It has renamed into neo-Eurasianism by its members as some points of this concept changed or dismissed. Like their interwar namesakes, most latter-day Eurasianists adhered to a non-ethnic definition of the nation. Political scientist and researcher Marlene Laruelle wrote that neo-eurasianist A. Panarin, for instance, warned that "the logic of ethnic sovereignty takes us back to pre-medieval times and jeopardises Eurasian unity" (Laruelle 2008, 96). He believed that the essence of Eurasia was not expressed in any ethnic complementarity, but in the general past of its peoples, the common State and, above all, the imperial will of a strictly political nature. A large State is above all a rejection of ethnocentrism and xenophobia and the development of the traditions of small peoples at the State level. Only the State is considered to have a national idea. Eurasian unity is expressed not in the cultural unity of the peoples living in the territory, but in the realism of the State that dominates the territory. Thus, to belong to the Russian nationalist movement is to remain faithful to the idea of a strong state. Political power must be ideological, that is, based on ideology (Laruelle 2009, 154).

Meanwhile, another neo-Eurasianist A. Dugin proclaimed the coming of 'a new Eurasian stage in Russian history in which the traditional expansion of the historical

mission of the state will reach its final limits'; in this state 'the preservation of each and every people and ethnos will be regarded as a highest historical value' (Dugin 1999: 32, 134–5). In fact, the foundation of the project for the construction of the Russian civil nation is the work of his sole ideologist, Valery Tishkov, director of the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Unlike most of his Russian colleagues, Tishkov is a committed supporter of the constructivist approach and believes that nations are created by nationalists, not vice versa (Kolsto 2015, 6).

It should be underlined that nationalism places loyalty to the nation above all other forms of political and social loyalties. Nationalism not only makes the nation the focus of political loyalty but also insists that the nation is the only proper basis for the organization of any political activity. Thus the nation, made up of all the people who belong to it, can legitimately claim property, lives and any other sacrifice from its members to ensure the survival of the collective (Harrison and Boyd 2003, 156). Accordingly, as it can be seen, maintaining or restoring pan-Russian statehood remains a priority for today's neo-Eurasianists. Many Eurasian ideas derived from cultural concepts were widely used to support the country's political unity.

Thus, Eurasianism is a synthesis of political and ethnic nationalism, which formed the basis of the imperial idea. It is noteworthy that the neo-Eurasian approach ensured the realization of post-Soviet integration projects against nationalism, supporting the idea of peaceful and mutually advantageous coexistence of different nations (primarily Slavic and Turkic), cultures and religions. Moreover, this approach takes lessons from the past and focuses on cultural unification and the lifting of the importance of religions.

**Common civilization as the cornerstone in Eurasian nationalism**
As mentioned above, Smith has recognized that ethnic and civic types of nationalism can interact and merge over time. The result of this interconnection of ethno-civic nationalism in eurasianism is the idea of creating a common Eurasian civilization, which can include the features of all existed nations in Eurasia. Classical eurasianist Trubetskoy noted that ethnographically, the Russian people are not exclusively "Slavic". The Russians, together with the Finns and the Volga Turks, constitute a special cultural zone with links to both Slavism and the "Turanic" Orient, and it is difficult to say which of these links are stronger and stronger. ... In the folk character of the Russians there are certainly some points of contact with "Turanic East". ... The Russian national character, however, is quite different from both the Finno-Ugric and the Turkic, but at the same time it is strongly different from the national character of other Slavs. A number of traits that the Russian people especially value in themselves have no equivalent in Slavic moral form. The

inclination towards contemplation and adherence to the rite, which characterize Russian piety, are formally based on Byzantine traditions, but nevertheless completely alien to other Orthodox Slavs and rather connect Russia with a non-orthodox East" (Trubetskoy 1921b). It becomes clear that on the national issue, Eurasianists stand on the basis of the creation of common Russian-Eurasian civilization. It is Russian culture, replenished with elements of the cultures of other peoples of Eurasia that should become the basis of a supranational (Eurasian) culture that would serve the needs of all peoples of Russia-Eurasia, without constraining their national identities. Eurasianists aim at positive measures that promote the development of Russian culture in its supranational functions and are at the same time alien to any shade of restriction and contraction of other national cultures (Novikova ans Sizemskaya 1993, 223-224).

The descendant of classical Eurasianism of the 1920s L. Gumilev based his philosophy on the concept of "ethnogenesis" and explained that civilizations are born, develop and perish like living organisms. Hence, civilizations are bound to time and place. According to Gumilev's thinking, the nations in Eurasia are deeply interconnected: he stressed the meaning of a Eurasian "super-ethnos", a civilization that compasses the nomadic peoples of the steppes and the Russians (Gumilev 1998, 38). Gumilev's theories are held in high esteem in certain circles and, for example, the idea of the destructive West is widely cherished by Eurasianists as well as nationalists in contemporary Russia (Laine 2015, 17). According to his ideas, all integral nationalities of the Russian states, from Kievan Rus' to Tsarist Russia, the Soviet Union and now the Russian Federation, are only either European or Asian (Baltic, Non-Russian Slavic, Tatar, Turkic). These ethnicities are related to each other via Russian language as well as the Russian state, such that it is not simply a political bond but an ethno-linguistic bond. This is the basis for Russia as a 'traditionalist' power, a non-European power and a Eurasian power. And it represents dialectic in appropriating Gumilev's thesis of Central Asian empowerment and turning it into an ideology of Russian power. The work of Gumilev came across primarily as a revisionist rewriting of Russo-centric Eurasian history. His work as his body of historiography worked against a Russo-centric view of the history of the Eurasian continent. He agented the vast geography of the Eurasian steppe, from Eurasian Arctic to Kazakh desert. And he found the mark of landscape upon the development of peoples whose own development in turn shaped the historical institutions of first Tsarist Russia and later the Soviet Union (Kenderine and Aidarkhan 2019, 3).

Neo-Eurasianists as well highlighted the idea of common Eurasian civilization. According to that idea, civilization seems to be the unity of place of development, population, historical, sociocultural and religious factors. Neo-eurasianist A. Panarin, developing the views of Eurasianists, continued to call Russia a state-civilization, as

well as an Orthodox civilization. Moreover, Panarin noted that Russia as a civilization has never been ethnocentric and monogenic, but characterized by ethnic and religious tolerance (Panarin 2003). His ideas are close to the definition of nationalism which pointed the importance of creating a 'world view' –a set of coherent ideas and values that gives meaning to the past for a social group, explains the present, and offers a programme for possible future action (Harrison and Boyd 2003, 156). Panarin noted that a new powerful world-saving idea is needed for ensuring consensus of Orthodox and Muslim cultures within the common "super task" (Panarin 1995, 7) and he concluded that such an idea can be civilizational unification of people in Eurasia, based on common past.

It is important to note that all prominent eurasianists were deeply religious people and viewed Orthodoxy as the central factor of Russian cultural life and as the crucial spiritual resource for Russia's moral rebirth in the aftermath of the revolutionary turmoil. For them, Orthodoxy was what created Russia's ethnic/civilizational distinctiveness in the first place and gave Russians superior moral authority. Based on this perspective, "Russia-Eurasia" acquired a new meaning: as an "individuation" of Russian Orthodoxy that would ultimately nurture the culture of the entire Eurasian continent. The Eurasianists created the concept of "potential Orthodoxy". According to that concept, the diverse peoples of Eurasia were seen to be "potentially Orthodox" (Bernsand and Törnquist-Plewa 2019, 44).

Neo-eurasianist A. Dugin suggests that there is no universal pattern of development or a global civilization and that no civilization should or even could be imposed on another (Dugin 2014a, 18). He endorses a "plurality of value systems" and holds that "every people and culture has its own intrinsic right to evolve according to its own logic" (ibid). Like the classic eurasianists, Dugin means that Russia-Eurasia has an original civilization (ibid). The Russian-Eurasian civilization has been formed by its distinct geographical location as well as by historical experiences. Dugin emphasizes the spatial formative factors, noting that the Russian unique civilization was formed by the need to control the vast steppe and wooden landscape (ibid.). It is based on European and Asian features (Dugin 2014a, 20). The Russian people are seen as the politically constitutive people within the broader Eurasian civilizational framework (Laruelle 2008, 139). Dugin uses both the terms Russian and Russian-Eurasian civilization to describe the shared civilization. The same is for definition of Eurasian culture. He says that the Russian-Eurasian culture has an inherent traditional social organization of society that should be strengthened (Dugin 2014a, 54). This traditional society is characterized by strong local communities with a high degree of self-regulation. The local communities are groups connected by a shared heritage, no matter national, social, economic, religious or ethnic differences. To preserve the originality of those communities, by Dugin called

"autonomies", political power should be organized by a subsidiary principle, giving regulatory capacity to the community regarding all internal matters (Dugin 2014a, 64). This provides the foundation of the Eurasianist version of democracy, called demotism (also demotia). The local governance is complemented by a central government enjoying full political power over strategic resources, communications and military and foreign policy (Dugin 2014a, 63). Dugin stresses the role of Russian-Eurasian civilization and describes its characteristics as diametrically opposed to the features of Western culture. The role of traditional religion and spiritual development, as in case of classical Eurasianism, are stressed as important features of an original Eurasian culture. Religious unity is valued whereas schismatic and extreme deviations must be actively opposed (Dugin 2014a, 67). Dugin describes the ideals of the Western world as decadent, evil and as the causes of a coming catastrophe for humanity (Dugin 2014b, 101).

Thus, another core idea of Eurasianism became the creation of alliance between the Slavic and Turkic populations of Russia-Eurasia, an appeal to the common cultural and mental features of these peoples. According to Eurasianists, the main tool for the creation of a unity where the national and cultural diversities can be stressed is creation of a common Eurasian civilization. In this context civilization seems as a unity of place of development, population, historical, sociocultural and religious factors.

**Eurasian nationalism in Russian politics**

Official Russian political discourse in the late 1990s was replete with references to geopolitics and reflected some degree of geopolitical realism, of which the former foreign minister and prime minister, Yevgeni Primakov – who exhibited a pragmatic Eurasianist orientation to foreign policy – was representative (Rangsimaporn 2006, 373). The rise of geopolitical discourse in the Russian political life in both its liberal and nationalist versions was integral to broader conceptual shift from an ideology-permeated and mission-oriented foreign policy to an interest-driven one associated with diversification and pragmatism. The limits of pragmatism were clearly revealed in 1993 when a foreign policy shift required as its discursive legitimation both a new definition of geopolitics and recourse to classical post-revolutionary Eurasianism which in the hothouse political climate of the 1990s became a synonym of Russia's geographic, strategic and worldwide cultural-political distinctiveness (Morozova 2009, 669).

To introduce the Eurasianist nationalism in pragmatic politics, one should pay attention to Putin's speeches of the 2000s. Speaking at Gumilev University on October 10, 2000 in Astana, V. Putin stressed: "The charge that the Eurasian ideas carry is especially important today, when we are building truly equal relations

between the CIS countries. And in this way it is important for us to keep all the best that has accrued for centuries of civilizations both the East and the West" (Putin 2000). According to Putin, Eurasianism is a tradition of Russian political thought. It has long been rooted in Russia, and it acquires a completely new sound, especially in connection with intensification of integration processes in the post-Soviet space. On assuming the presidency in May 2012, Putin stressed that "the historical perspective of the state of our nation today depends on our ability to become leaders and center of attraction of the whole Eurasia" (Putin 2012). Putin's speech suggests that Russia, as philosopher Konstantin Leontiev, whose ideas are largely confirmed by classical Eurasianists, has clearly expressed – has always evolved in "blossoming complexity" as a state-civilization reinforced by the Russian people, Russian language, Russian culture, Russian Orthodox Church and the country's other traditional religions. It is precisely the state-civilization model that has shaped our state polity (Putin 2013). His programme to create economic union in Eurasia Putin bases on need to make a unity to save common features. It should be noted that this aim has evident similarity to Eurasianism's formulation of 1927. Putin says: "The 21st century promises to become the century of major changes, the era of the formation of major geopolitical zones, as well as financial and economic, cultural, civilizational, and military and political areas. That is why integrating with our neighbours is our absolute priority. The future Eurasian Economic Union, which we have declared and which we have discussed extensively as of late, is not just a collection of mutually beneficial agreements. The Eurasian Union is a project for maintaining the identity of nations in the historical Eurasian space in a new century and in a new world. Eurasian integration is a chance for the entire post-Soviet space to become an independent centre for global development, rather than remaining on the outskirts of Europe and Asia" (Putin 2013). In this context it should be noted that the Soviet and Russian philosopher, political scientist, neo-eurasianist Aleksandr Panarin wrote that it is necessary to create a new unified civilizational space, where the unity and differentiation of the peoples constituting it as "self-worth diversity" should be ensured. This diversity, according to Panarin, is the basis of the common Eurasian civilization. The people of the post-Soviet area, having experienced the hardships of economic collapse and the horrors of ethnic strife, are gradually returning to the Eurasian identity and recognition of the existence of a common national destiny (Panarin 1996, 78).

Speaking on the topic of unity in diversity, Putin once expressed his desire for the realization of this concept, saying: "Civil peace and inter-ethnic harmony are not once created and for centuries frozen picture. ... This is the painstaking work of the state and society, requiring very delicate decisions, balanced and wise policies, capable of ensuring "unity in diversity".  Having recognized the multi-nationality of Russia, he notes the role and mission of the Russian people. According to him,

Russian people are state-forming - in fact of existence of Russia. The great mission of the Russians is to unite, to bind civilization. Emphasizing the peculiarity and uniqueness of the Russian people, he tries to show the openness and extranationality of the Russian identity through the universal concept of civilization. Thus, Putin argues: "We need a national policy strategy based on civic patriotism". Thus, two principles are reflected in the current national policy of the Russian Federation: 1) Russia is a multi-ethnic and multicultural society; 2) Russian people should play a special role in Russia, distinguishing them from other peoples. Putin condemned "through false talk about the Russians' right to self-determination". The Russians, he said, had long since self-defined, having created a multi-ethnic civilization, held together by the Russian cultural core. And as long as Russia continues to exist, the Russian people are state-forming in it (Putin 2012).

Former minister of Foreign Economic Relations of the Russian Federation and advisor to the president of the Russian Federation Sergey Glazyev, who is currently the Commissioner for Integration and Macroeconomics within the Eurasian Economic Commission, in his articles stressed the importance of having ideological basis for the economic cooperation: "There can be no strong state without state ideology. The absence of ideology makes it impossible to implement the strategy developed by the Russian Academy of Sciences for faster development, and without it the evolution of our economies is subject to the influence of external power centers, becoming their resource periphery. You need to become an independent center of power with your strategy of advancing development. And for this you need ideological clarity and certainty" (Glazyev and Kefeli 2022, 14). As an ideological basis for the EAEU he offers eurasianism and justifies his choice with the ideas of classical eurasianist Trubetskoy: "Arguing that a solid and permanent union is possible only if there is an ethnic (national) substrate, he [Trubetskoy] concludes that the national substratum of that state, which used to be called the Russian Empire, and now is called the USSR, can be only the whole set of peoples inhabiting this state, regarded as a special multi-ethnic nation and as such possessing its own nationalism" (ibid). Trying to answer the question: how can a sign of common historical destinies or common destiny of mankind be used in practical work on the development of Eurasian integration? Glazyev suggests: "On the basis of the notion of the single destiny of mankind, the basic principles of the formation of a new world economic order, which replaces the imperial, integral world economic system, are being built, recognizing the diversity of countries, respect the spiritual culture and political tradition of each of them, the use of violence is strictly limited by international law as well as the issue of world currencies and the use of any instruments of the world economy and politics. It follows from the above that integration into the new world economic order can be built solely on a voluntary basis, with mutual respect for national sovereignty and

recognition of national interests" (Glazyev and Kefeli 2022, 15).These examples presented above show that from the 1990's to the present day, the ideas of Eurasianism were observed in Russian politics and some of its components, such as the idea of a common Eurasian civilization, was even used in President Putin's speeches.

**Conclusion**

Completing the analysis of the issue of nationalism in Eurasianism, it can be concluded that it has the potential for being used in multi-ethnic and multicultural societies, as it underlines the importance of both ethnic and civic components of nationalism. Eurasianism is a synthesis of political and ethnic nationalism. Trubetskoy invented the concept of a "multi-ethnic nation" and Eurasian theory of culture. The neo-Eurasian approach ensured the realization of post-Soviet integration projects against nationalism, supporting the idea of peaceful and mutually advantageous coexistence of different nations, cultures and religions. Eurasianists have declined separatism and narrow ethno-nationalism, including Russian, rightly perceiving them as an obstacle for unity. Eurasianists identified Russia with Eurasia, arguing that the country's geographical and cultural characteristics were typical of the entire continent. Eurasianists also developed an ideology to help promote the unity of the peoples entering into the state and brought the new civic explanation of the Eurasian nationalism. Many latter-day Eurasianists adhered to a non-ethnic definition of the nation. For example, A. Panarin believed that the essence of Eurasia was not expressed in any ethnic complementarity, but in the general past of its peoples, the common State and, above all, the imperial will of a strictly political nature.

The synthesis of political and ethnic nationalism in Eurasianism has developed a new concept - the idea of a common Eurasian civilization. This should not contradict to Eurasian nationalism but vice versa should empower it as the essential base of nationalism in Eurasianism was/is the underlined existence of the common past of Eurasian people. In this context civilization seems as a unity of place of development, population, historical, sociocultural and religious factors. This idea became the new cornerstone in the nationalist concept of neo-Eurasianism. The idea of a common civilization was also to a large extent manifested in Russian politics.

As it can be seen the definition of nationalism in Eurasianism has been constantly changing throughout its existence. The basic unchangeable component of Eurasian nationalism has been the shared geography of the people in Eurasia. This has been the main argumentation for pointing the importance of creation a common Eurasian nationalism which would include typological parts from civic (political) and ethnic (cultural) nationalisms. So, it can be described as another type of nationalism – a geographic nationalism.

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