

# A New Ideology in Russian Foreign Policy Nationalist Eurasianism

---

MERVE SUNA ÖZEL ÖZCAN

## Introduction

**W**ITH THE fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the world witnessed the end of the Cold War. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics also collapsed shortly after the fall of the wall. Thus, the only victor of the international system is the Western world, led by the United States. In the world of liberal democracies, there is no longer any place for the contender global power of the Cold War, the USSR and communism. Against the backdrop of this conflict, ideological transitions in the foreign policy of the Russian Federation in the post-Cold War era will be discussed. In this respect, we see that nationalism has blended with the Eurasian approach in foreign policy, especially in the last decade. The unchanging position and power of Russian nationalists after the Cold War is observed in the perception of the Russian state. It is important that this situation takes a new direction towards a new conceptualization.

In Russia, the issue of nationalism can be seen as a reality that has evolved over the centuries. The Russians need to take one of the global leadership roles that was lost with the collapse of Soviet Union in the post-imperial period. It can be assumed that this situation is the manifestation of a messianic approach that has always been in the nostalgic foundations of nationalism. In this respect, the collapse of the USSR in 1991 created a great shock and subsequent trauma for the Russians. Since then, the great nature of nationalism, which had been held in the minds of Russians for centuries, came to an end.

Russian nationalism has undergone a great change between the “glasnost” and “perestroika” policies, one of the decadence steps of the USSR. As a result, the “Russian nationalists” discourse of the 1990s was replaced by “national patriots,” and imperialist patriotism began to be brought forward. While Vladimir Putin is perceived as a nationalist leader by Western countries, Russians prefer the term “patriot” more. The most interesting aspect of the Putin Era is that he utilizes the rise of nationalism in Russian society as a means of legitimacy, while neglecting the minimum signs of independent political Russian nationalism in terms of the political stability of the country. With the policies implemented by the Putin government, Russian political nationalism, which was already weak during Putin’s first presidency, continued by combining with Eurasianism.

On the other hand, in Russia, nationalism was in an embryonic stage in the early 2000s (Prizel 2004). However, it is possible to say that nationalism has taken its final form with Putin today. In this context, despite the cultural richness of Russia, Russian political nationalism has had the opportunity to define itself over many different forms since the early 2000s. Many situations involve racism or redefine themselves through belongingness. Nationalist Eurasianism, which emerged during the Putin period, has been essentially rooted in Russia's imperial and hegemonic past. Nevertheless, it has been subject to rapid redefinitions as seen in young nationalisms. Although there were times when regimes turned to nationalism as a source of legitimacy in both tsarist and Soviet eras, it can be said that a different process was followed during the Putin Era.

Although nationalism, which I will discuss in the context of my study, is a unique new model of nationalism, it finds its roots in its historical past. The paper studies ideological transitions in Russian foreign policy. My assumption focuses on Russia's implementation of Nationalist Eurasianism under the "Great Power Discourse" in its foreign policy after 2000. Even if this concept includes the principles underlying the nationalist and Eurasianist approaches, the most important aspect is its emphasis on great power.

In the article, I argue that the main ideology in the Russian foreign policy in the post-2000 period is my own conceptualization of "Nationalist Eurasianism." Putin started to introduce this to the Russian subjects during the period of military, economic and political stability in the country, especially after the 2000s, and this consequently contributed to the legitimacy of Putin's government. Thus, it can be said that nationalism and Eurasianism played an important role in overcoming the socio-cultural trauma of the 1990s. The general methodology of the study is to focus on the difference of Russian nationalism within nationalism in the context of the case study. In this respect, my conceptual framework has been shaped along the axis of nationalism and Eurasianism.

## Describing Nationalism

**T**HERE IS no agreed definition in the literature on the concept of nationalism. On the contrary, some definitions are subjected to certain criteria and classifications and shaped in line with the ideological point of view. The concept of nation, which is the cornerstone of nationalist ideology (Kedourie 1961; Gellner 1983; Smith 1986; Anderson 1991; Hobsbawm 1992), has been placed at the heart of a social and political organization. Smith (1986) points out that to evaluate the relationship between ethnic groups and nations in a cycle, the differences and similarities between ethnic communities and nations should be examined in terms of ethnicity and nation-building. At this point, collectiveness and belonging to a group are the basis of the concepts of national and ethnic identity, which both denote the concept of nationalism. In all types of nationalism, there is a direct relationship with identity. Regardless of the political goal set up by nationalism, the consciousness of being a nation and the sense of collective identity perceived as patriotism is important. Many observations and institutional studies on the identity issue in the field of social sciences have been or are being made (Smith

1986, 153–169). As the quality, quantity, and speed of changes between different societies increase, the subject has spread to a wider audience. Thus, it started to be discussed within the scope of identity.

With the emergence of the idea of nationalism following the French Revolution, the concept of nation gradually gained importance in Europe. In this respect, with the declarations issued after the revolution, the idea of the sovereignty of the nation was strengthened and the concept of nation started to be highlighted in every field. In the light of the new trend created by the French Revolution and the subsequent expansion of new ideas, the concept of nation was redefined in Europe resulting in the emergence of the ideology of nationalism. When looking at the ideology of nationalism, undoubtedly, the most important point relates the meaning of nation as a concept. It can be said that the word “nation” is the modern heir of the *ethnos*, which is much older than itself. For this reason, it contains all the symbols and myths of pre-modern ethnicity. The concept of nation in its simplest form is a cultural unit consisting of people who speak the same language, share the same belief, and are connected within a common past. The word “nation” is a concept derived from the word “*nasci*,” which means “birth” in Latin language, which has been used since the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Kedourie (1961) points out that the concept of “nation” has different meanings in the context of each concerned period of time, and the concept is used in colloquial language to denote a small community larger than a family but smaller than a tribe, thus, it is a community of people who are naturally similar to the Roman people. On the other hand, the term was used to describe foreigners, and as the use of the word spread, it was seen that the word was sometimes used with a negative connotation (Kedourie 1961, 13–15). But neither nationalism nor ethnicity is a piece of the past that destroys the rules of the past. On the contrary, it is a tool for elites and individuals struggling in the political arena to awaken and promote awareness about identity. In this respect, concepts provide homogeneity and re-structure the identity that shapes the daily life of the individual and forms both before and after the existence of the individual (Calhoun 1993, 211).

According to the definition of Marx and Engels, the nation is seen as the product of a long historical process that resulted in the capitalist mode of production replacing feudalism. Marx and Engels noted that the bourgeoisie brought together the dispersed people, centralized the means of production, and concentrated property in a few hands, which eventually led to political centralization. According to Anderson (1991, 5–6), the nation is an imagined political community, a community imagined to be involved in both sovereignty and limitation at the same time. In addition, Anderson stated that even though the nations are small, their members live in the mind of each other as the imagination of their sum without seeing and knowing each other. Smith defines the nation as a historical land/country, common myths and historical memory, a mass public culture, a common economy, the name of a community of people that share common legal rights and duties (Smith 1986, 22–41). Also, Renan points out that the existence of the nation ultimately determines the individual’s will. In this sense, as Renan has stated, the only thing to do is to return to the will of the individual. Because while determining his destiny, the individual also reveals that he wants to see himself as a member of a nation (Renan 2018). In addition, the idea of nationalism emerges when the ethno-national

group becomes aware of its distinctiveness and differentiates its own traditions, customs, and beliefs from those of other groups. The integration of the masses of the people with nationalism in a common political form envisages the establishment of a centralized state on a territory to which nationalism is subjected in ideal or concrete terms (Roger 2008, 108–109). Indeed, nationalism is, according to Kedourie (1961), the doctrine of self-determination. In this respect, nationalism is also used as a tool to realize the political ambitions of some groups. Nationalism can become a key tool for demands of independence or autonomy.

Hobsbawm (1992), who gave a definition of nationalism using the social history approach, defines nationalism as a political principle that requires the overlap of the state and the nation. Hobsbawm states that nationalism can be grasped by examining the ideas of ordinary individuals who represent society, not from the acts of leaders who produce ideas about nationalism or create policies. On the other hand, the traditional Marxist approach tends to describe nationalism in the context of the struggle between imperialism and anti-colonialism. This struggle is mainly based on the activities of the capitalist classes or the indigenous bourgeoisie, who pursue their economic interests under the cover of an instrumental nation ideology. This view is frequently encountered in the writings of Lenin and Rosa Luxembourge on nationalism (Jaffrelot 1998, 55). The collapse of the Soviet system not only indicated the difficulty in gathering different ethnic groups under one roof, but also revealed the collapse of an ideology that aimed to equalize/unify ethnic differences.

Gellner (1983) emphasized that two people can only be considered as parts of the same nation if they share the same culture and that they belong to the same nation only if they know each other as members of the same nation. He defines nationalism as a theory of political legitimacy denoting that ethnic boundaries do not extend beyond political boundaries, and especially that ethnic boundaries within a state do not separate those who are in power and those who are ruled. In this respect, Gellner points out that people either cannot reach the boundaries of local culture or are bound by the sanctification of certain concrete relationships and bonds that cross the boundaries. Thus, he argues that the element that held society together in the past was not culture, but social structure. He states, however, that this is not the case today, and the mystery of nationalism is hidden in the new role of culture in industrial society (Gellner 1983, 19–25).

Based on these definitions, the most important issue to be expressed is undoubtedly the revived sense of nationalism. Kedourie (1961) argues that nationalism is a doctrine coined in Europe in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. According to Kedourie, this view claims to establish a system that will provide the criteria for choosing the population unit sufficient to form its government, using state power legitimately, and properly regulating the community of states. The open understanding and adoption of this view also gave nationalism an unknown meaning. This has been a triumph of the doctrine that cannot be underestimated. The successful birth of nationalism was the first phase of nation-building (Kedourie 1961, 20–32). In this sense, nationalism bears three assumptions. The first is a nationality endowed with a distinctive and unique character. Second, the interests and values of this nation are superior to all other interests and values. Finally, the nation should be as independent as possible, which requires recognition of its politi-

cal sovereignty (Leca 1998, 15). From this point of view, I see Nationalist Eurasianism as an ideological sub-plan of Russia in the Putin Era. Within the Eurasianism of a self-reproducing expression, there is a hierarchical dimension of the ideology of nationalism.

Finally, Smith (1986) holds that amidst the emergence of nationalism there was a historical and social process that evolved from “ethnic identity” to “national identity.” The notion created by this process is, in the final analysis, the “nation-state.” The dominant ideology of this nation-state appears as nationalism. Smith emphasizes continuity as well as necessity and functionality in nationalism (Smith 1986, 200–208). Gellner (1983) argues that the nations and nationalist movements that Anderson calls “imagined communities” and that have moved towards social engineering in a sense are a necessity created by the industrialization process in high culture. In short, the answer to the question of what nationalism is depends on the definition and, more so, on what defines it. The definition of nationalism does not allow for a complete solution, so its meaning varies from person to person and according to context. In this respect, major contradictions surround the political character of nationalism, and while it appears as a progressive and emancipatory force by asserting national unity and independence, it can also become aggressive and expansionist as a reactionary belief. Therefore, territory and conjunctural returns are important when nationalist ideology is used. In this respect, it is determined in which direction the nationalist approaches will continue to be channeled. We will see these transformations in Russian nationalism and identity, which we will consider after this theoretical introduction. Whether historical and ideological breakdowns, due to the nature of nationalist ideology, capture conjunctural changes on the Russian fabric, or how it is used will be seen.

Finally, we should briefly touch upon Russian nationalism as well as upon the theoretical definition of nationalism. The hugeness of the Russian geography and the inability of Russian nationalists to draw a natural border in their identity definition made it difficult for them to form an understanding of nationality that exists in many European states. However, we can focus here on certain historical features. The foundations of Russian identity began to take shape with the adoption of Orthodoxy in the 10<sup>th</sup> century. The Crimean War of 1854–1856 was a turning point in terms of nationalism and Pan-Slavism during the imperial period in Russia as Russia’s defeat triggered the change of Russian nationalism (Özel Özcan 2021). Towards the 1870s, in parallel with the beginning of Pan-Slavism as orthodoxy in Russia, a Russification policy focused on Russian culture. During the period of Alexander, Russia aimed at the destruction of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Ottoman Empire. This situation constituted the final stage in the transformation of Pan-Slavism into Pan-Russism (Armaoglu 2005, 492–493). Russia redefined the goal of “going down to the warm seas,” which had been adopted as a foreign policy goal since Peter the Great. In this context, foreign policy has become a tool used in the issue of nationalism. In short, the speed and extent of enlargement have been too great to allow new societies to melt away and establish a single identity.

## Ideological Transitions in Russian Foreign Policy

**I**N THE Soviet Era, the whole system is a Matryoskha-like structure. The Communist Party, the highest unit, directed the system by dictating what and how to believe and act. In this respect, it can be said that the Politburo created its own ideology. Marxism or Leninism disappeared following the economic crisis, especially in the last periods of the Soviet Union. In the second half of the 1980s, based on the awareness of the nation-state, the discourse of national and ethnic identity among the peoples of the Soviet Union began to develop. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russian nationalism and communism experienced a huge fracture. After the establishment of the Russian Federation, Soviet ideology was a depiction of the past, a large part of an ideal future. Marxism, Leninism and Stalinism as approaches of the international political system no longer exist. The people and the state have had difficulty in perceiving the international system due to the conflicting nature of capitalism.

In this respect, while dealing with the Russian Federation, the successor of the USSR, the power of ideologies should be questioned ontologically in both domestic and foreign policy during the 1991–1999 period, when Boris Yeltsin was the head of state. Because the trauma of collapse could not be fully capitalist at a time when the state was trying to integrate into capitalism by restructuring, and it could not get rid of the nostalgic bonds of the past.

On 8 December 1991, the Commonwealth of Independent States was established under the leadership of Russia. This initiative is an indication that Russia still maintains its nostalgic ties in foreign policy and at the same time sets its red lines despite the collapse. Although Boris Yeltsin's foreign policy focused on the integration of the former Soviet geography, the main question here is the relation with the West.

In the first half of the 1990s, Russian foreign policy followed a Western-oriented path. This can also be seen as a goal of integrating into a world where liberal democracy and capitalism became the sole dominant ideologies. The pro-Western policies of the Yeltsin cult, who appeared as Atlanticists in this period, were criticized for seeing Russia as a "little ally of the USA" in the international arena (Kamalov 2008, 5). Russia needed a new foreign policy strategy after independence, and this strategy began to be criticized in its early years. This process has revealed debates about the formation of a new identity instead of the communist ideology. From the first days of Russia's independence, the West was seen as its political ally.

In addition to ideological issues, economic problems are also assumed to be influential on ideological approaches in Russia. The process of transition to uncontrolled capitalism destroyed the economy. While the GDP of the USA was 9.3 trillion dollars in 1999, that of Russia corresponded to approximately 200 billion dollars (Trenin 2001, 285). Here, in 1993, we see the effect of the economic and ideological correlation. In this year, as a result of the crisis, the dispute between the president and the legislature plunged the country into turmoil. President Yeltsin finally sent tanks to the White House (Moscow) to suspend the Constitution and force the opposition to comply. In foreign policy, pragmatic nationalist views dominated (Light 2003, 45).

When all these problems are considered, filling the gap in the process of creating a new identity on the international level has revealed new “doctrines” in Russia. The first of these is the Near Abroad Doctrine, in which Russia also directly defines its interest in the former Soviet region. Again, with the concept of foreign policy of April 1993, the military doctrine of November 1993 and national security plans in December 1997, a certain route was tentatively mapped out in Russia’s domestic and foreign policy (Light 2003, 43).

All these doctrines and the intensive influence of nationalism can be seen as the efforts of a state that still could not create the image of a strong Russia in the international arena. Because in the 1990s, when the USA was the only hegemonic power, Russia’s prominent goal was to establish a certain balance in the system. In this period, Russia tried to create this balance together with China within a multipolar approach.

## What is Classic and Neo-Eurasianism?

**W**HILE TALKING about Eurasianism, it is important to first define the Eurasian region and the place of Russia. The interpretation or construction of geographical space will also reveal visions of Russia as a specific type of geographical entity. One of the most important aspects of Russia’s identity is undoubtedly its geographical area. Toynbee suggests that empires grew in cold climates and poor lands. According to him, the people of these regions are well aware of their obligation to struggle to overcome a harsh and hostile environment to establish and protect their empire (Lieven 2001, 201). This assumption of Toynbee is partially embodied in the sui generis structure of the Russian instance. The inclusion or exclusion of Russia as part of Europe or Asia is far from being a subjective and value-laden judgment. However, the question we should ask about the Russian identity should be “Where does Russia belong?” The debates on Russian identity have been one of the most important issues of Russian foreign policy for centuries. In this respect, the development of the idea of Eurasianism constitutes one aspect of these discussions. It can be said that the first step regarding the identification of Russia started with westernization during the period of Peter the Great (1672–1725). It can be said that Peter I’s court geographer Vasily Tatishchev (1686–1750) played a part in the search for Russian identity. Tatishchev suggested that the Ural Mountains, which he called Veliky Poias (large belt), should be seen as the “natural configuration” of the European and Asian continents (Schmidt 2005, 88). Therefore, it can be said that a borderline has been established in the geographical definition of Russian identity.

Ever since, there has been the question of which civilization the Russian identity belongs to. When defining Eurasianism, it is possible to think that it is an idea that generates itself in the face of others or an adversary. In the case of Russia, there is always a need for intellectual development and self-definition against the West. In this respect, although Eurasianism is a search for identity, it is a search for an identity in the face of the West. In this context, it is essential to be naturally against the West and to question

the factors with which this is encountered. Hence, the issue of Eurasianism is essentially important in Russia's identity definition (Özel Özcan 2021).

The emergence of the idea of Eurasianism, in a sense, can be said to be the idea of the period of collapse. In the 1920s, the Eurasian idea emerged among the Russian diaspora in various cities of Europe. The founders of the Neo-Eurasian movement differ from the classical Eurasian movement<sup>1</sup> that had emerged among the Russian diaspora in Prague, Berlin, and Paris in the interwar period with its interest in political radicalization, a historiographic simplification, and the Turkish-Muslim World (Laruelle 2004, 116). Also, within the framework of Russian nationalism that has been prevalent since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the ideas of Classical and New Eurasianism have been discussed in terms of the contrasts with the West. Throughout history, the conflict between these two civilizations has been fed with endless hatred and hostility of the West against Russian Eurasia. The discussion of the "West" problem in Russia started with the publication of the first of the "Philosophical Letters" written by Peter Chaadaev in the *Teleskop* magazine in 1836. Eurasian thought establishes a direct contextual relationship with Westernization and the indigenous movements that shaped 19<sup>th</sup>-century Russian intellectual life (İsmayılov 2011, 22–23). In the context of Eurasianism, the important issue in respect to the West is to express the differences. Thus, we see that Eurasianism positioned itself with the perception of civilization in the establishment of the classical period. This situation continues uninterrupted on the same axis today. At this point, the linguistic and geographic distinctions are a step forward in the classical period. Trubetskoy (1950) reveals the differences between Russian culture and Russians in Europe and even in the world, while also approaching the situation on the basis of the Eurasian approach. The difference here is the features that highlight the Russians and Russian culture in a sense. Therefore, considering the Slavic origins, the effect of the difference between Russians and Europe on the language has been highlighted. In this respect, geography and language are considered determinants of culture.

Also, there is no common point between these cultures. Eurasians also rejected the views of Westerners because they had a Eurocentric point of view. Eurasians have defined Russian Eurasia exactly in terms of its differences with the West and its superiority against it. This difference is put forward in the form of Europe's materialist thought, individualism, and colonialism versus Russia's tolerance and social integrity (Bassin 2008, 289). According to Trubetskoy (2012), one of the important terms of the classical Eurasian approach, Europeanization brings along weaknesses for different cultures. The reason is that the socio-cultural life of the Europeanized people faces difficulties as they cannot be fully subordinate to the Roman-Germanic population (65). This situation is observed not only in the socio-cultural sector but also in the military structure. Trubetskoy draws attention to the fact that the people who became European to protect themselves from the foreign threat could not make rapid technological progress like the Europeans in the context of self-protection (67). In this context, European criticism of classical Eurasianism appears as an important feature at the first stage. This situation is also seen as nationalism. Indeed, this is because of the perception of others as adversaries, as well as the consequent effect whereby the bonds of individuals in domestic politics are strengthened.



On the other hand, one of the most discussed issues of Eurasianism has been European cultural colonialism. Non-European peoples have felt their backwardness against Europe, and it has become an ominous law that pushes these peoples on the path of Europeanization. In addition, as the “Wild Europeans” reality shows, there are no universal principles of development as Europe suggests. In this sense, the concept of “Wild Culture” is devoid of any meaningful content. It is wrong for today’s European scientists to apply this concept both to their distant histories and to cultures such as Eskimo and Africa (İsmayilov 2011, 27–30).

In the context of both classical and neo-Eurasian movements, Laruelle (2004, 2008) argues that being a Russian nationalist and having believed in statist approach mean the same. Imanov (2008) points out that Eurasians developed a futuristic discourse, and they focus on the future even though they were nourished by the past and tradition. In this sense, Eurasianism manifests Turkophile tendencies in many areas related to history and identity, from anti-Westernism to Russian State discourses, and even Orthodoxy through the Mongolian-Tatar heritage (Laruelle 2014, 21).

The classical Eurasian view involves a civilizational imagination composed of Russian, Byzantine, and Central Asian cultures. Although the West is absent in this sequence, the Byzantine attribution is absolutely essential for us. It is obvious that the emphasis on religion, which is based on classical and neo-Eurasianism, signifies this assumption. Orthodoxy emerges as an important feature of Eurasianism. In this respect, given the foundations of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Rome Theory,<sup>2</sup> the historical foundations of the process will be understood. Hence, the definition of Eurasia for Eurasians is largely *rossiyskiy* and the idea of the Russian and the content of its existence include multi-national, multiple peoples, cultures, traditions, religions. In short, the idea of Eurasianism contains the coexistence of all peoples of the region. At this point, what is important is that the Neo-Eurasians attach importance to the dialogue between the Orthodox and the Islamic World in respect with the Slavic and Turkish-Mongolian world. Thus, for Eurasians, it is possible to reproduce themselves within this cosmopolitan structure (Laruelle 2004, 118).

Against the backdrop of this anti-Western view, the role of the Eurasian position itself is important. Indeed, as I mentioned, the cosmopolitan structure and anti-colonial stance are important features. However, there are also differences in the original context. According to Soltan (2001), there is failure in the westernization efforts on the Russians. However, this situation is covered by different tools. Even though Russians have their own Christianity and other national values, they lagged behind the West in many aspects, as we have seen in the historical process. In this case, although it was central during the both the empire and the Soviet times, it has always created a real policy in the sense that they positioned themselves as the dominant power against the West. Obviously, we can argue that the source of this was imperial expansion and the use of military power.

For today’s Russia, Aleksandr Dugin (2000) has an important place in the Neo-Eurasian school. In the early 1990s, amidst the collapse of the Soviet Union, Dugin began to assume a political role and established an association with “Statist Patriots” in the communist camp (Dunlop 2004). In 1993, Dugin joined Eduard Limonov and his team to form the National Bolshevik Party (NBP). Dugin served as the party’s chief theorist, while Limonov played the role of a fascist leader. According to Dunlop (2004), the

new organization was more influenced by German than Russian National Bolshevism. As we can see, Dugin took part in many different ideological and political bases before he came to the fore as a theologian in Eurasia. In 1997 Dugin left Limonov, and in 1999 he published a series of articles about the Eurasian writer Prince Nikolay Trubetskoy. Again, according to Dunlop, Dugin saw a similar lofty role for himself as the proponent of the “Russian Idea.” Also, Dugin is a member of the Advisory Board at the Russian State Duma.

According to Dugin, the history and fate of geopolitics as a science is paradoxical, because the concept is actively used in modern politics. In this context, Dugin’s description of Eurasianism through the geopolitical approach is crucial (Dugin 2000, 7). Dugin defining Russian geopolitics argues that Russia is not only one of the continental countries but also is in a category that has the basic principles of geopolitics. In this respect, Russia is geopolitically and geographically the “Heartland,” “Mainland and Eurasia” (Dugin 2003, 127). It is important to first define Eurasianism. According to Dugin (2014) Eurasianism is “a philosophy, and as all true philosophy it implicitly contains a political perspective, an approach to history and the possibility of being transformed into an ideology.” Based on this definition, it can be argued that the general concern of Eurasianism is civilization. There must not be just one origin, but an approach to civilization made up of different civilizations. Indeed, Russians cannot position themselves as being neither Western nor Eastern. Thus, Eurasianism came to the fore with its Turanian origins at a time when there was identity confusion in Russia and discussions on its European and Slavic origins. Dugin (2000) points out that the anti-Western position of Eurasian thought has changed, and this position should call the Atlantic World, Atlanticism. In this context, it can be said that the influence of Dugin’s ideas, especially in the post-2000 period, created an observable aspect in Russian foreign policy. In what follows, I shall further discuss Nationalist Eurasianism in Russian foreign policy on the basis of the conceptual framework that I have created so far.

## Nationalist Eurasianism in Russian Foreign Policy

**F**ROM A GEOGRAPHICAL perspective, the Russian Empire had an important place not only in Europe but also in Asia (Bassin 1991). So much so that Peter I tried to reveal this aspect of the Russians. In the contemporary situation, however, Russia is more tied to Asian characteristics than Europe. In this context, the foundations of this can be seen more clearly in the crisis period of the 1990s. The rise of ‘geopolitics’ in Russian political discourse in the early 1990s has been part of a broad conceptual shift as a foreign political factor that permeates ideology. However, it can be said that progress without ideology was pursued in the crisis period of the 1990s. During Yeltsin’s presidency, the Atlantic-European world approach was more effective in foreign policy, which was a factor of disappointment for the nationalists. Therefore, the need for an identity defined in the geopolitical context has arisen. According to Morozova (2009), the application of Eurasianism and the change in foreign policy emerged clearly in 1993

and Russia took a cultural-political step. In this context, since 1993 Russia's "Eurasian spetsifika" has referred to the "pragmatic nationalist" position "Eurasian middle ground" as a common reference frame for Russian foreign policymakers, and the "Eurasian alternative" and "Eurasian lobby" have emerged (Morozova 2009, 669).

Not surprisingly, it can be said that in the Soviet Union period, there was no need for an ideological identity. Everyone was a Soviet person (*Sovjetsky narod*) after all. During the Soviet period, however, the historian of the Turkish nomadic world, Lev N. Gumilev (1912–1992), continued to make the traditional Eurasian evaluation of the steppes in Russian history (Laruelle 2004, 118). After the collapse of the Soviets, Russia faced a simple temporal obstacle. According to Laruelle (2009), there are two conflicting obstacles. On the one hand, the essentialist approach in which Russia cannot adopt the values of the West, on the other hand, the existing linear approach (14). In this respect, the role of the Western European model of the medieval urban bourgeoisie is a situation that Russia has never actually experienced. Hence, Western-style feudalism has always lived under an autocratic political regime (Özel Özcan 2021). In this context, one pillar of Eurasianism's opposition to the West in its search for identity requires confronting historical realities. However, rather than this, the differences-oriented progress of the Putin period is maintained with the nature of nationalism.

The most important point when defining Nationalist Eurasianism is that it contains certain characteristics of nationalism and Eurasianism. In this context, while listing the characteristics of nationalist Eurasianism, the first issue is hostility to the West and/or USA. Especially Eurasians have defined Russian Eurasia precisely in terms of its differences with the West and its superiority against it. This difference is put forward as Europe's materialist thought, individualism, and colonialism versus Russia's tolerance and social integrity. The second issue is the nostalgic discourse of belonging and the power of nationalism, which also stands out in Eurasian nationalism. The third characteristic relates the power of autocracy in Russia. It is observed that the authoritarian approach existed in the empire and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is still maintained. Indeed, autocracy and centralization appear simultaneously, which was carried out in Putin's Era, especially with his statism approach. Fourthly, it is the target of imperial expansion in the Russian foreign policy. Putin has also intended to rehabilitate the reputation, that was lost in Russian had foreign policy. Finally, we should add the clout of leader that Putin created. Unlike Marxism-Leninism, Putinism<sup>3</sup> combines all elements such as great power, statism, anti-Westernism, anti-Americanism and conservatism in the system. It is the biggest factor that unites nationalism and Eurasianism. Therefore, it has started to pursue a more active and confrontational role in foreign policy.

It can be said that the steps taken after 2000 in terms of centralization and establishment of authoritarian rule in Russia fed the domestic political side of nationalist Eurasianism. In 1999, the first president of the Russian Federation, Boris Yeltsin, resigned with a sudden decision and was replaced by Vladimir Putin, whose name was not heard in the international arena before. Putin's rise to power was the landmark for the adventure of Nationalist Eurasianism in the country. Vladimir Putin became the President of Russia with 52.6 percent of the votes he received in 26 March 2000 election. Russia witnessed a centralization process with Putin (Volkov 2000). These features, which had

an important place in the giant Russia during the era of Ivan the Terrible, once again revealed in the Russian political culture during the Putin Era. After Putin became president, the most striking change took place with the construction of vertical authority. In the first stage, the focus was on the Caucasus region and especially Chechnya. This trend can be observed not only in this particular region but also in many autonomous regions within the Russian Federation. However, this authority is employed with the use of military forces, especially in the Caucasus. In this respect, when defining the Putin Era, it is possible to call it the period of re-assembling and re-controlling the mass. It should not be overlooked that, concurrently with these, the subtexts of the political forces and policies implemented in the country have formed the basis of nationalism and empire.

On the other hand, developments in the military field are also noteworthy. Especially in terms of Nationalist Eurasianism, the steps taken in the post-2000 period regarding military power are important. During the Putin Era and the following the 2000 military doctrine, less attention has been paid to the economic goals of military cooperation compared to the 1993 version. According to the 2000 military doctrine, strategic nuclear forces are the basis of Russia's nuclear capability. Also, the 2000 military doctrine makes it possible to use nuclear weapons in response to the use of weapons of mass destruction (Sokov 2000). This is also important in terms of Great Power Discourse in the international arena. As a matter of fact, this doctrine is the first stage of the military modernization process, which initiated the later processes.

During the 2000s, Putin began to emerge in the axis of “the good, the bad and the ugly,” as Tuminez expounded it with the concept of “reasonable statist nationalism.” The good side of this understanding of nationalism created by Putin has been the love of the country and the rhetoric of *dostoïnaia zhizny* (worthy life) for the Russians. In this context, raising the dignity of the country and the nation as well as condemning imperialism has been used as an important ideological discourse. The ugly side of the concept of nationalism has been the decreasing trust in democracy as an organizational principle within the context of the state-people relationship (Tuminez 2000, 3). This idea is also behind Putin's “super-centralized” understanding of the state, as I mentioned earlier. Finally, when we look at the ugly side, the clearest indicator is that the Chechens are designated as terrorists and dark forces. This situation can be considered as an important means of separation, considering that Russia is a country consisting of approximately one hundred ethnic groups.

While the Russians are applying nationalism and assimilation in domestic politics, the most important problem is that they cannot fully resolve which civilization is most suitable for them. So, at the point their identity belongs to the state. As the hostile approach from the West towards Russian Eurasia was criticized in Eurasianism, another issue was European cultural colonialism. Non-European peoples have a feeling of backwardness vis-à-vis Europe. In this respect, Eurasians also rejected the views of Westerners because they had a Eurocentric point of view. Eurasians have defined Russian Eurasia exactly in terms of its differences with the West and its superiority against it; this difference has been put forward as the materialist thought of Europe, individualism, and colonialism as opposed to Russia's tolerance and social integrity. On the other hand, it creates one of the largest subtexts in the socio-cultural structure of Russian nationalism. The most

powerful ideology that has spread to social life uninterrupted since the imperial period is nationalism and one of the sources that feed this is Orthodoxy. In this respect, religion has become an important part of socio-cultural life in Russia. In 1999 and afterward, the Russian Orthodox Church emerged as the most influential social or cultural institution in post-Soviet Russia (Kamalov 2008, 308–310).

Like Yeltsin, Putin saw Orthodoxy as an important component of Russian national identity. But the main problem here is that although Orthodoxy is a key component of the formations of a post-Soviet Russian national identity, it is a defining feature of the ethnic Russians (*russkiy*). Finally, the discourse of the Russian people (*rossiyani*) gains importance in the context of Nationalist Eurasianism. *Rossiyani* is completely different. The most important historical feature of Russian nationalism is undoubtedly the “Slavic” and “Orthodox” elements on which Russian identity is based (Price 2007). In this context, the Russians tried to assimilate all non-Russian peoples around the “Russian pot,” even if they were Slavs, with the Russification policy of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. We see that nationalism was not completely removed from the system by the USSR after the period of empires. The fact that nationalism is open to conjunctural situations due to its nature has caused a change of Russian nationalism in the historical process. Thus, it can be said that at this point, nationalism together with Eurasianism creates an existence through public creation and *rossiyani* by reproducing itself. For this reason, this situation has revealed once again the fact that while Orthodoxy, which is an indivisible part of the Russian identity, feeds autocracy and nationalism, it will strengthen the situation in terms of the future of Russian Federation at the point it adds to the system. The increasing Muslim population in the country has an important place and role.

When the issue is analyzed in the context of imperial expansion, some developments, especially after 2010, come to attention. As we have seen, from the moment Putin came to power, Russia’s lost reputation in foreign policy aspect has started to be reconstructed. In this respect, Russia has started to pursue a more active and confrontational role in its foreign policy. First of all, Putin publicly condemned events such as NATO’s enlargement and sought to restructure relations with countries such as North Korea and Cuba, which were strategic partners in the past. In the international arena, in conjunction with the anti-Western opposition, it called for a “Multipolar International Order” against US hegemony (Hekimoglu 2007, 237). It also tried to demonstrate Russian power by directly engaging in the areas of global and regional conflict. An important aspect to be added to this approach is its international dimension, which can be seen as means of legitimacy. Putin tries to show that Russia is a global power by intervening in international issues at every opportunity. In this regard, the 2007 Munich Summit is worth mentioning.<sup>4</sup> It can be seen as a milestone in Nationalist Eurasianism, which is Putin-type nationalism. Putin demonstrated both his quest for hegemony and his ambition to become an imperial power at the Munich Summit in 2007. Russia has started an important program to ensure its economic power and stability by developing its “sovereign globalization” strategy. At the Munich Security Conference in 2007, Putin demonstrated his stance against the unipolarity of modern world politics. While this speech in a sense is a challenge to the US hegemony, it is an indicator that Russia’s place in the modern world has also changed.

On the other hand, foreign policy is an important arena of application in terms of the conjunction between Eurasianism and nationalist nostalgia. With Putin's implementation of Russian exceptionalism in foreign policy, the groundwork was laid for the nostalgic imperial power. In this context, as a Russian patriot, Putin is willing to cooperate with the West when it serves his interests. Putin, who was one of the first leaders to express his condolences after the 11 September attacks, did not hesitate to protect Russia's interests against the West. The Russian intervention in Georgia in 2008 is an important example of how Moscow alarmed the West with the idea that NATO could only expand towards NATO. Russia has started to use reward-punishment practices actively in the direction of hegemony by rearranging its immediate surroundings as a very close environment (Galeotti and Bowen 2014). Thus, Putin defined the hegemonic areas of influence of the Russian Federation.

Ukraine's independence in 1991 restricted the Russians geopolitically and the dream of founding a new Eurasian empire ended. With the annexation of Crimea by Russia in 2014, these dreams were revived. Regarding the annexation of Crimea by Russia, with the Ukraine crisis of 2014, Putin stated that Crimea had a sacred meaning for Russia. Again, he declared Crimea's crucial position, like "the Temple Mount in Jerusalem for Jews and Muslims" (Putin 2014). This statement is seen to bear deep traces of the Russian nationalist mindset. It is important for the emphasis on this geography, which has great importance in adopting Orthodox Christianity by the Russians, in terms of the baptism of Knez Vladimir here and later in terms of laying the foundations of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Rome Theory. For Nationalist Eurasians, after the Georgian intervention, Crimea can be seen as a field of successful imperial expansion and an exercise of military power. Given the official dimension, although Russia could not establish the Eurasian empire at this stage, it geopolitically exceeded its limitations.

On the other hand, when we look at the notion of Novorossiia, which Laruelle (2014) conceptualized about Russian nationalism, the first ideological motif that feeds this is Soviet memory. Hence, it can also be seen as nostalgic highlights of Nationalist Eurasianism. Again, the concept of Novorossiia provided both a spatial and an ideological basis for the reaffirmation of Russia as a great power. This situation is also seen in the implementation of Nationalist Eurasianism in foreign policy. Indeed, the Ukrainian example, where geopolitical arguments are being considered, is important. Here, with the Donbass rebellion, Russia aims to create a Soviet perception of a region that takes pride in its industrial heritage and points the way to a new oligarchy. This is the red side of the concept. The white side, on the other hand, appears in the context of religion. The "white" approach sees the Donbass rebellion as the means for the renewal of political Orthodoxy (Laruelle 2014, 1–3). As I have stated, this situation strengthens the aim of both imperial expansion and Orthodox patronage in the context of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Rome Theory.

Finally, it can be stated that currently Russian foreign policy maintains a clear Nationalist Eurasianist approach. Within the conservative structure of nationalism, the search for domination and hegemony in the Eurasian corridor, where it sees itself as a great power, has come to an end. Domestically, the Russian Federation, while moderately neo-tsarist (Trenin 2011, 81), imagines an empire that thinks it controls the former Soviet geography in foreign policy.

## Conclusion

**P**UTIN'S GREAT Russia goal and discourses changed the perception of the 1990s as a society that lacked ideology and lasted only in the past. In this respect, the nationalism that they are trying to create in Russia reveals a Russian people's discourse that encompasses all segments, and Putin expresses it every so often. The nationalist approach in this period has been turned into a policy that continues under control. Although it is possible to see the influence and activities of ethnic Russian nationalism in almost every corner of the state during the Putin Era, it is in reality combined with tolerance-oriented Eurasianism.

The nation-building process of the state in a country where many different ethnic groups are present, with a population of more than 140 million, has also faced a big problem in this regard. The lack of ideology that existed in the 1990s created a huge vacuum for the Russian people. For the Russian population, who lived under an ideology for centuries, ideology can be considered as a way of making sense of life. Putin is working to consolidate the shaken Russian state and strengthen Russia's position in the international arena. Hence, the nationalism that is emerging in Russia aims to reveal a Russian popular discourse that encompasses all segments, as well as to expand the imperial area of influence in foreign policy. As a result, in the light of these trends, it comes as no surprise that there is a new understanding of Nationalist Eurasianism, which satisfies both Eurasianists and nationalists. Rather than its applicability in the country, it is possible to bring it forward with initiatives that increase domestic political support for foreign policy. As a matter of fact, the most important foundation and self-realization of Putin's Era can be studied within the discourse of Eurasianism which is different from the West and the chauvinistic nationalism.



## Notes

1. According to Dugin the proponents of Eurasianism are Nikolay S. Trubetzkov (1890–1938), Pyotr N. Savitsky (1895–1965), Georges V. Florovsky (1893–1979), George V. Vernadsky (1887–1973), Nikolay N. Alexeyev (1879–1964) and V. N. Ilin (Dugin 2014).
2. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Rome was first made by Priest Philotheus of Pskov Monastery. And this theory has become an important tool of foreign policy over time. The main point here is to strengthen the imperial power claims of the Russian princes and establish legitimacy in foreign policy by establishing ties with the Romans (Cohen 1996).
3. Brian Taylor's book *The Code of Putinism* (2018) is a study that examines the Vladimir Putin era and evaluates how successful Putinism has been in both domestic and foreign policy areas.
4. When we see Putin's speech in Munich, maybe the most important part is: "I consider that the unipolar model is not only unacceptable but also impossible in today's world.

And this is not only because if there was individual leadership in today's—and precisely in today's—world, then the military, political and economic resources would not suffice. What is even more important is that the model itself is flawed because at its basis there is and can be no moral foundations for modern civilization” (Putin 2007).

## References

- Anderson, B. 1991. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Revised Edition. London–New York: Verso.
- Armaoglu, F. 2005. *19. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi (1789–1914)*. Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları.
- Bassin, M. 1991. Russia between Europe and Asia: The Ideological Construction of Geographical Space. *Slavic Review* 50, 1: 1–17.
- Bassin, M. 2008. Eurasianism “Classical” and “Neo”?: The Lines of Continuity. In *Beyond the Empire: Images of Russia in the Eurasian Cultural Context*, edited by Tetsuo Mochizuki, 279–294. Sapporo: Slavic Research Center, Hokkaido University.
- Calhoun, C. 1993. Nationalism and Ethnicity. *Annual Review of Sociology* 19: 211–239.
- Cohen, A. 1996. *Russian Imperialism: Development and Crisis*. Westport, CT–London: Praeger.
- Dugin, A. 2000. *Osnovy geopolitiki: Geopoliticheskoe budushchee Rossii: myslit' prostranstvom*. Moscow: Arktogeia-tsentr.
- Dugin, A. 2003. *Rus Jeopolitigi Avrasyacı Yaklaşım*. Translated by V. İmanov. İstanbul: Küre Yayınları.
- Dugin, A. 2014. *İnsanlığın Ön Cephesi Avrasya*. Translated by E. Ergen. İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları.
- Dunlop, J. B. 2004. Aleksandr Dugin's Foundations of Geopolitics. *Demokratizatsiya: The Journal of Post-Soviet Democratization* 12, 1: 41–58.
- Galeotti, M. and A. S. Bowen. 2014. Putin's Empire of the Mind. *Foreign Policy*. 21 April: 16–19. Accessed 10 December 2021. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2014/04/21/putins-empire-of-the-mind/>
- Gellner, E. 1983. *Nations and Nationalism*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Hekimoglu, A. N. 2007. *Rusya'nın Dış Politikası I: ABD, AB, Çin, Hindistan, Orta Asya*. Ankara: Vadi Yayınevi.
- Hobsbawm, E. J. 1992. *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- İmanov, V. 2008. *Avrasyacılık: Rusya'nın Kimlik Arayışı*. İstanbul: Küre Yayınları.
- İsmayilov, M. 2011. *Avrasyacılık: Mukayeseli Bir Okuma, Türkiye ve Rusya Örneği*. İstanbul: Doğu Batı Yayınları.
- Jaffrelot, C. 1998. Bazı Ulus Teorileri. In *Uluslar ve Milliyetçilikler*, edited by J. Leca, translated by S. İdemen, 54–65. İstanbul: Metis Yayınları.
- Kamalov, İ. 2008. *Moskova'nın Rovansı: Putin Dönemi Rus Dış Politikası*. İstanbul: Yeditepe Yayınevi.
- Kedourie, E. 1961. *Nationalism*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. London: Hutchinson.
- Laruelle, M. 2004. The Two Faces of Contemporary Eurasianism: An Imperial Version of Russian Nationalism. *Nationalities Papers* 32, 1: 115–136.



- Laruelle, M. 2008. *Russia's Central Asia Policy and the Role of Russian Nationalism*. Washington, D.C.: Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silkroad Studies Program.
- Laruelle, M. 2009. *In the Name of the Nation: Nationalism and Politics in Contemporary Russia*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Laruelle, M. 2014. Novorossiya: A Launching Pad for Russian Nationalists. *PONARS Eurasia*, 15 September. Accessed 10 December 2021. [https://www.ponarseurasia.org/wp-content/uploads/attachments/Pepm357\\_Laruelle\\_Sept2014.pdf](https://www.ponarseurasia.org/wp-content/uploads/attachments/Pepm357_Laruelle_Sept2014.pdf).
- Leca, J. 1998. Neden Söz Ediyoruz? In *Uluslar ve Milliyetçilikler*, edited by J. Leca, translated by S. İdemen, 11–20. Istanbul: Metis Yayınları.
- Lieven, D. 2001. *Empire: The Russian Empire and Its Rivals*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Light, M. 2003. In Search of an Identity: Russian Foreign Policy and the End of Ideology. *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics* 19, 3: 42–59.
- Morozova, N. 2009. Geopolitics, Eurasianism and Russian Foreign Policy Under Putin. *Geopolitics* 14, 4: 667–686.
- Özel Özcan, M. S. 2021. *İmparatorluklar*. Ankara: Orion Yayınevi.
- Price, R. J. 2007. Russian Nationalism: Creating A Civic Identity. Glasgow ePrints Service. Accessed 10 December 2021. [eprints.gla.ac.uk/3726/1/price3726.pdf](http://eprints.gla.ac.uk/3726/1/price3726.pdf).
- Prizel, I. 2004. *National Identity and Foreign Policy: Nationalism and Leadership in Poland, Russia, and Ukraine*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Putin, V. 2007. Speech and the Following Discussion at the Munich Conference on Security Policy. Accessed 10 December 2021. <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/24034>.
- Putin, V. 2014. Crimea Is Russia's Jerusalem. RadioFreeEurope, RadioLiberty. Accessed 10 December 2021. <https://www.rferl.org/a/russia-putin-crimea-sanctions/26724940.html>.
- Renan, E. 2018. *What Is a Nation? and Other Political Writings*. Translated and edited by M. F. N. Giglioli. Foreword by D. Howard. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Roger, A. 2008. *Milliyetçilik Kuramları*. Translated by A. U. Kılıç. Istanbul: Versus Yayınevi.
- Schmidt, M. 2005. Is Putin Pursuing a Policy of Eurasianism? *Demokratizatsiya: The Journal of Post-Soviet Democratization* 13, 1: 87–99.
- Smith, A. D. 1986. *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Sokov, Nikolai. 2000. Russia's 2000 Military Doctrine. Accessed 15 May 2021. <https://www.nti.org/analysis/articles/russias-2000-military-doctrine/#:~:text=The%20Russian%20Federation%20will%20not,troops%2C%20its%20allies%2C%20or%20a>.
- Soltan, E. 2001. Coğrafya, Tarih ve Rus Kimliği. *Avrasya Dosyası* 6, 4: 64–94.
- Taylor, B. D. 2018. *The Code of Putinism*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Trenin, D. 2001. Üçüncü Kuşak: 21. Yüzyıla Girenken Rus-Amerikan İlişkileri. *Avrasya Dosyası* 6, 4: 283–296.
- Trenin, D. 2011. *Post-Imperium: A Eurasian Story*. Washington, DC, etc.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.
- Trubetskoy, N. 1950. *The Common Slavic Element in Russian Culture*. Edited by L. Stilman. New York: King Crown's Press.
- Trubetskoy, N. 2012. *Arrupa ve Beşeriyet*. Translated by V. İmanov. Istanbul: Küre Yayınları.

- Tuminez, A. 2000. Russian Nationalism and Vladimir Putin's Russia. PONARS Policy Memo 151. American International Group, Inc. and Council on Foreign Relations. Accessed 10 December 2021. [www.ponarseurasia.org/wp-content/uploads/attachments/pm\\_0151.pdf](http://www.ponarseurasia.org/wp-content/uploads/attachments/pm_0151.pdf).
- Volkov, V. 2000. Putin's Election As President Signals Authoritarian Turn in Russia. *World Socialist Web Site*. Accessed 10 December 2021. <http://www.wsws.org/articles/2000/mar2000/russ-m30>.

### **Abstract**

#### **A New Ideology in Russian Foreign Policy: Nationalist Eurasianism**

Throughout history, Russian geography has played a considerable role in shaping the Russian people and identity. It can be said that the geopolitics of the Russian land, which is squeezed into the north, both isolated the Russians and connoted the idea that they are different. In this context, it is assumed that the development and content of the idea of Eurasianism are actually based on this understanding of difference. In addition to the idea of Eurasianism, the strengthening of nationalism in the country and its reflections in the domestic and foreign policy are important. When the Russian perception of being different from Europe and the West is added to this situation, a new approach emerges. In this context, the idea of Nationalist Eurasianism that I will try to put forward within the scope of this study is the formation of these two intellectual developments. Indeed, it is not surprising that its nature, which can be articulated with nationalism, is involved in Eurasianism. Based on the belongingness the idea of Eurasianism also defines an identity. Nationalist Eurasianism, however, is mostly a product of Putin-led Russia in terms of the resources it feeds. In this context, Nationalist Eurasianism is an important fact that became visible in domestic politics and foreign policy as a new ideological approach of Putin-led Russia. Finally, this article is intended to explain Nationalist Eurasianism in Putin-led Russia by laying the common ground-work of nationalism and Eurasianism.

### **Keywords**

Russia, nationalism, Eurasianism, Vladimir Putin