

Marcin Składanowski, Łukasz Borzęcki

Away from the West. The Cultural Security of the Russian Federation in Aleksandr G. Dugin's Eurasian Project*

Introduction

The relations of the Russian Federation and the countries of the West have considerably deteriorated in the last years. The most evident reasons for the said change are political and military conflicts: the Russian invasion of Georgia in 2008 followed by the acknowledgment of independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia; the annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, and the support granted to the pro-Russian separatists in those regions of the Luhansk and Donetsk Oblasts which are not controlled by the Ukrainian government; as well as the support of the Russian Federation, alongside Iran, granted to the government of Bashar al-Assad in the ongoing civil war in Syria. In reality, however, one can notice that these apparent manifestations of the escalating conflict between Russia and the West (encompassing the countries of the European Union and NATO) are a result of the long-lasting growing tension in mutual relations. From the Western perspective, this problem is seen as the intensification of Russian aggressive imperial policy, particularly in the post-Soviet space which is considered by the Russian authorities as their exclusive area of political and military influence. On the other hand, from the Russian perspective, this conflict is a sign of an entirely different phenomenon. It accompanies the process of Russia's political emancipation, that is the severance of the ties of political and economic dependence on the West which characterized the 1990s. That period, which featured the chaos of Russian political life, economic fall and the massive crisis of Russian identity, finished when V. V. Putin acceded to the presidency. Striving to regain Russia's rightful and key position in international relations characterizes the policy of his administration. In popular Russian journalistic discourse, this endeavor is called „Russia's rising from its knees”.

* The article is a result of a research project funded by the National Science Centre, Poland, no. 2016/21/B/HS1/00815.

Modern Russian political discourse, dominated by the conservative and neo-imperial thought, links the crisis of Russia's significance in the international arena and the crisis of Russian identity to the Western influence. This destructive influence of the West on Russia is supposed to take place both in the political and economic domains as well as in the cultural and civilizational domains. Consequently, Russia's revival as a superpower as well as an independent civilization, which plays a crucial and inspiring role in the sphere of international cultural relations, is possible by rejecting the West and liberating from its influence. In this context, numerous aspects of the policy of President Putin and his administration find their support, ideological justification and profundity in Russian neo-conservative circles, in particular, those associated with the ideology of Eurasianism¹.

A prominent representative of these intellectual circles is Aleksandr G. Dugin. Although in the 1990s he belonged to poorly supported circles of the Russian extreme far right, since the beginning of the 21st century his participation in Russian public life has significantly increased². In the context of a clear pursuit of the Russian Federation authorities to strengthen the international position of their country and regain the influence that was lost after the fall of the Soviet Union, not only in the post-Soviet space but also in other countries (such as Cuba, Venezuela, Syria or Iran), Dugin's geopolitical and historiosophic analyses become an important intellectual and ideological foundation of Russian political and military activities. Contrary to some of the media reports, however, he cannot be considered an official Kremlin ideologist. Nonetheless, President Putin's official statements indicate that he knows and supports the concept of Eurasianism developed by Dugin³. Moreover, Russian engagement in the conflict in Ukraine, not only in its military but also in propagandist dimensions, shows that a number of Dugin's postulates are fulfilled in the actions undertaken by Russian authorities.

The present article is devoted to Dugin's concept of the cultural security of Russia. This concept is closely linked to Dugin's anti-Occidentalism and Eurasianism, in which he sees the guarantee of the independent and free from foreign influences development of Russia, which is an important entity in the sphere of international relations and a separate civilization. Firstly, as an introduction, the main elements of Dugin's Eurasian project will be outlined, including the basic categories he uses to describe international relations, particularly from the historiosophic and geopolitical perspective. Secondly, an attempt will be under-

¹ А. Г. Дугин, *Новая формула Путина. Основы этической политики*, Москва 2014, pp. 123-124.

² A. Shekhovtsov, *Alexander Dugin and the West European New Right, 1989-1994*, [in:] *Eurasianism and the European Far Right. Reshaping the Europe – Russia Relationship*, M. Laruelle (ed.), Lanham (Maryland) 2015, pp. 36-46.

³ M. Laruelle, *Eurasianism, the European Far Right, and Putin's Russia*, [in:] *Eurasianism and the European...*, pp. 15-16.

taken to define the cultural security of Russia according to Dugin and extrapolate its basic elements. Thirdly, Dugin's anti-Occidentalism will be presented as a way to ensure the cultural security. Finally, the evaluation of Dugin's understanding of Russia's cultural security will be proposed.

The main premises of „the Eurasian project”

The Eurasian project is a part of the „fourth political theory” proposed by Dugin⁴. This theory aims to be the model for establishing international relations both in the political and economic domain as well as in the cultural and civilizational field. It forms an answer to three previous theories – liberalism, Nazism, and communism – which did not achieve the intended aims. The model of international relations proposed by Dugin is supposed to lead to the creation of a multipolar world, as opposed to the bipolarity of the Cold War and unipolarity being the result of the world dominance of the United States and their allies⁵. The poles, which are the political centers of the world organized according to Dugin's theory, would be large civilizational spaces organized by the states which form separate, independent civilizations or are the centers of bigger civilizations that transgress their borders⁶. According to Dugin, making „poles-civilizations” the foundations of international relations would enable the creation of a just international order in which neither political, economic nor cultural dominance of one center would be possible. It would be impossible to impose specific patterns of political and social life or interpersonal relations on individual cultures-civilizations; neither would it be possible to assign the universal and common character to particular and regionally determined ideas and paradigms.

This last statement clearly betrays the anti-Occidentalism of Dugin's concept. Formally, he accepts the West (understood as the United States and their allies) as a unified cultural space entitled to develop its own value system or the model of political and economic life. However, he thinks that after the fall of bipolarity of the Cold War period, the Western countries, deprived of their alternative in the form of the Eastern Bloc, began the unfounded political and cultural expansion. The hegemony of the United States, or broadly speaking the West, is demonstrated not only in political or military dominance. Cultural hegemony is of far greater consequence⁷; this dominance is understood as an attempt to impose typically

⁴ А. Г. Дугин, *Четвертый путь. Введение в Четвертую Политическую Теорию*, Москва 2014, pp. 134-135.

⁵ Idem, *Геополитика*, Москва 2015, pp. 420-422; idem, *Международные отношения*, Москва 2014, pp. 287-289.

⁶ Idem, *Геополитика*, pp. 451-455.

⁷ Idem, *Международные отношения*, p. 299.

Western values such as democracy, human rights or anthropological and ethical individualism which emphasizes the subjectivity of an individual and their primacy over the state and society⁸. Dugin notes that Western socio-political patterns are shown as universal. They are sometimes treated as indicators of cultural development and the aims to achieve by particular states. Meanwhile, according to the idea of multipolarity of the world and equality of all the civilizations, these Western paradigms possess their value only in the Western civilizational and cultural context. Outside of this context, they should not be imposed on anyone. Complying with the Western civilizational norms cannot form the criterium for evaluating the level of development of individual states or societies.

Accusing the West of political and cultural expansion and the imposition of their lifestyle and value systems on other countries and societies is the aftermath of yet another fundamental element of Dugin's Eurasian project. Although Dugin considers all the civilizations equal and assigns them the role of the poles of the future just world order in his fourth political theory, he does not refrain from attempting to judge these civilizations. The result of this assessment is a definite unfavorable opinion of the West (slightly nuanced as far as France and Germany are concerned, which is connected with their possible role in building new Europe in opposition to the United States and in alliance with Russia⁹). On the other hand, the East, comprising of Russia and great Asian cultures – China, India, and Iran – is perceived in Dugin's thought in an unequivocally positive manner. The justification for such evaluation of civilizations, theoretically incompatible with the premises of the theory of the multi-polar world, Dugin finds in the historiographic reflection on the eternal conflict between Land and Sea¹⁰. According to this view, the civilizations of the Sea were supposed to be expansive in principle, based on the cult of progress and individualism, and hostile towards tradition and traditional values. Their ancient symbol was Carthage and its modern equivalent is the United States¹¹. On the other hand, the civilizations of the Land had a non-expansive, traditional and conservative character, and considered the good of an individual subordinate to the good of a society¹². In the ancient times Rome was such a civilization and its modern equivalents are the above-mentioned Asian civilizations. We can see certain conceptual difficulties in this approach. Firstly, pointing to Russia as the center of a particular civilization leads Dugin to the arbitrary statement that China, India or Iran, whose culture and civilization have much deeper roots than the Russian culture, have the character of „peripheral” or „local civilizations” while Russia creates a civilization that has global aspira-

⁸ Idem, *Воображение: философия, социология, структуры*, Москва 2015, p. 308.

⁹ Idem, *Геополитика*, p. 477; idem, *Евразийский реванш России*, Москва 2014, pp. 44-47.

¹⁰ Idem, *Геополитика России*, Москва 2014; idem, *Геополитика*, p. 49.

¹¹ Idem, *Русская война*, Москва 2015, p. 53.

¹² *Ibidem*, p. 119-124.

tions¹³. Secondly, an obvious difficulty with perceiving Russia as a continuator of the civilization of ancient Rome (while at the same time denying that right to Western civilization that is directly rooted in Greek and Roman cultures) leads Dugin to support the medieval Rus' historiosophic and religious theory which grants Moscow, as the heir of Byzantium, the status of „Third and Last Rome”¹⁴. In reality, this idea was of marginal significance in the process of shaping Russian statehood and culture. Moreover, in the domain of international relations it is difficult to grant it any importance.

Setting aside the internal inconsistencies of Dugin's concepts as irrelevant for this article, one should note the frequent recurring topic in his historiosophic and geopolitical thought which is essential for defining the idea of the cultural security of Russia. This topic is anti-Occidentalism, which also happens to be one of the main elements characterizing Dugin's whole thought. Anti-Occidentalism is basically two-sided here. Firstly, it presents the West as the existential enemy of the East, that is – in a narrower sense – Russia. The West aims to expand, impose its lifestyle and value system, destroy social ties based on tradition and to promote individualism which ultimately destroys all the traditional communities from within, be it religious, political or ethnic¹⁵. Secondly, anti-Occidentalism is for Dugin the foundation of the definition of Russia itself in opposition to the West. Under no circumstance can Russia be considered a part of, even though independent, Western civilizational or cultural space. Shaped by European and Asian influences Russia has created its own, original and independent civilization which, at the same time, contrary to the above-mentioned closed and local Asian civilizations, is considered global. It proposes the rules of social organization and value system that can pose as an alternative to the Western cultural expansion occurring under the conditions of the rivalry among great cultures and the marginalization of local cultures and societies. These local communities will, eventually, have to take the side of one of the big „poles” of the world to survive. In such a way anti-Occidentalism leads to the description of Russia as a Eurasian cultural and civilizational space¹⁶. This, in turn, forms the starting point to define the cultural security of Russia, its main threats and means of defense.

¹³ А. Г. Дугин, *Евразийский реванш...*, р. 6-11.

¹⁴ Idem, *В поисках темного Логоса. (Философско-богословские очерки)*, Москва 2014, pp. 55-57.

¹⁵ Idem, *Украина: моя война. Геополитический дневник*, Москва 2015, р. 11.

¹⁶ Idem, *Русский логос – русский хаос. Социология русского общества*, Москва 2015, pp. 186-187.

The cultural security of Russia

The concept of cultural security is closely linked to the understanding of security as such. Security cannot be limited to the idea of peace, that is the state in which an individual or community is not subject to any form of external aggression or is not involved in any kind of conflict. As Brunon Hołyst, a Polish scholar researching the problem of security, points out, security is a particular state of mind, a biological, social, cultural and legal state. With respect to an individual, security means that a person feels perfectly safe, which means that they are aware of the support they can obtain from other people or from the fully functioning legal system of the country where they live. However, security also has a communal aspect. It means the lack of feeling threatened, whether it refers to an individual, a particular social or religious group, or the whole nation or society¹⁷. From this perspective, one can also characterize cultural security, both in its individual as well as social dimension. Culture is the entirety of the means by which people adjust to different natural conditions, particularly as far as the management and explanation of reality is concerned¹⁸. Essential elements of culture, with particular emphasis on the cultural identity of individuals and whole societies, are the language, tradition and value system¹⁹. Therefore, cultural security would be, firstly, the feeling that a typical for an individual or community way to explain the reality, which is expressed in the rules of individual and social life, in religious norms and traditions, and in moral standards, is not threatened. At the same time, however, cultural security is manifested in the trust, or the feeling of certainty, that the manners of explaining the reality which people share alongside the lifestyle and evaluation criteria are just and efficient in shaping human life, that they provide life with the meaning and, therefore, can form the support for all the aspect of life and social functioning of both individuals and communities. From this perspective, all the external influences, which question the entirety or particular elements of the given culture, would pose a cultural threat²⁰. The result of this would be the imbalance of the given social structure and the deprivation of certain individuals and communities of their rules of conduct which, until that time, regulated all dimensions of their lives.

It is difficult to ignore at this point, however, that the cultural interactions which were connected to the economic, political and military expansion of certain states, led in the course of human history to the imbalance or even fall of numerous local cultures. The result of such actions was the replacement of the

¹⁷ B. Hołyst, *Bezpieczeństwo. Ogólne problemy badawcze*, Warszawa 2014, p. 9.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 140.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 144.

²⁰ А. Г. Дугин, *Четвертый путь...*, p. 393; idem, *Теория многополярного мира. Плюриверсум*, Москва 2015, pp. 133-134.

manner of explaining the reality and organizing human life, which was characteristic for the ancient culture of a given community, by the patterns and rules that belonged to the new, victorious culture. This process is not restricted to the conquest and colonization processes of the past. As a result of globalization, which also has its strong cultural dimension, this process is ongoing. It is manifested in transforming numerous cultures, in questioning their vital elements or in implementing in a particular cultural space external elements that belong to a foreign and expansive culture. It is the so-called culture of the West that is being accused nowadays in this context of the expansive character. One should notice, however, that the processes of globalization also transform the Western countries. It is noticeable particularly in the religious and philosophical domain, in which weakening Western religious and ethical schemata are often replaced by religious and philosophical ideas of the Eastern, Asian origin.

Dugin's theory of the multi-polar world, which is based on great cultures-civilizations that are considered fixed elements of cultural and political order in the world, assumes the necessity to stop such a mutual cultural influence. If the „poles” of the world postulated by Dugin are supposed to be fixed and indisputable, then every form of cultural confrontation, which could potentially lead to the elements of a given civilization being questioned and the introduction of foreign, external ideas, should be perceived as definitely negative. It is the reason for such a negative assessment of the phenomenon of globalization, which – according to Dugin – is a tool of Western cultural expansion and a manifestation of the desire to dominate the entire world culturally²¹. Dugin does not take into consideration the above-mentioned fact that the process of globalization influences the Western culture as well in a significant way, which also includes questioning its religious and ethical foundations²². Such Dugin's position, however, becomes the basis for him to develop the concept of cultural security of the Russian Federation.

While developing this concept, Aleksandr Dugin starts with the ideas outlined above, which refer to the actual state and the target model of international relations. He takes it for granted that Russia is being confronted with multi-aspectual expansion and even aggression of the West, most of all the United States. Moreover, the confrontation with the West and the fight to preserve its own identity is, in Dugin's approach, a constant element in the course of the history of the Rus' and Russia. It becomes even more important as he perceives the actions of the West as striving to limit Russia's influence, its impact beyond the borders of the Russian Federation and even to destroy Russia as an independent entity in international relations²³.

²¹ А. Г. Дугин, *Русский логос...*, pp. 48-50.

²² Idem, *Геополитика*, pp. 382-383.

²³ Idem, *Русская война...*, pp. 92-94.

Reflection over Russia's fate and the importance of its relationship with the West for Russian political, economic and cultural situation lead Dugin to the conclusion that submitting to Western influence has always been destructive for Russia. This position is shared by numerous Russian conservatives, both 19th-century Slavophiles and Eurasians²⁴ as well as the representatives of modern neo-imperialism, who have noticed in the policy led by V. V. Putin an opportunity to get their postulates fulfilled by the authorities. From such a perspective, the great crises of Russian statehood and also its identity, such as the February Revolution and the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 or the fall of the Soviet Union and the so-called „poor 1990s” (лихие девяностые), are a result of the pressure of the West aiming to maximally restrict the significance of Russia and to weaken it internally, to divide it or even to destroy.

The anti-Occidentalism has yet another aspect in Dugin's perception of the problem of Russia's security that characterizes numerous Russian conservative religious and political movements nowadays as it used to in the past. It is the conviction, typical more for historiosophy and religious mysticism than for geopolitical reflection, that Russia has a unique role to play in the world and that its existence and development serve to fulfill this particular mission. However, due to the fact that it was the reforms of Peter the Great in the 18th century that formed the foundations of modern-day Russia, the understanding of its particular role or historic mission requires from Dugin (and other Russian conservatives and neo-imperialists) the admission that Russia should be identified with the Rus'. He does that by assuming that the only rightful heir of the original Rus' (namely, the Kievan Rus') was Muscovy (the Moscow Rus'), which later became Russia. Other manners of materializing Rus' culture and statehood (such as the culture, language, and statehood of Ukraine and Belarus) are not accepted in this approach.²⁵ They can be merely perceived as certain regional richness, a part of a wider Rus' culture and civilization which, in fact, is the culture and civilization of Russia. As far as security is concerned, this approach is significant because all attempts of the cultural, ethnic and political emancipation of Ukraine and Belarus have to, according to Dugin's concept, be considered not only as unacceptable but even threatening to the cultural integrity of Russia and consequently, its cultural security. It is the reason why Dugin postulates an open engagement (which includes a military intervention²⁶) of the Russian Federation in Ukraine against the pro-Western government that was created as a result of Euromaidan and „the dignity revolution” in 2013 and 2014²⁷.

²⁴ Idem, *В поисках...*, p. 67; idem, *Геополитика*, pp. 146-147.

²⁵ А. Г. Дугин, *Новая формула...*, pp. 68-70.

²⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 192.

²⁷ А. Г. Дугин, *Геополитика России*, pp. 500-501.

In this light, one can say that Dugin's understanding of the cultural security of the Russian Federation is based on the conviction that the culture of the Rus' and Russia, rooted in European and Asian cultures and treated as a separate, independent and original entity²⁸, presents the only proper way to explain the reality and organize the lives of the inhabitants of the Russian Federation and other countries falling under its political and cultural influence (the so-called „Russian world” – *Русский мир*). As a fully-fledged culture, which forms the foundation of an independent civilization, Russian culture does not need any external influences²⁹; it concerns particularly those influences that could lead to the replacement of typically Russian values by the rules and values that are foreign. All the external cultural influences should, therefore, meet with the reaction of authorities, one of the objectives of whose is to protect the cultural integrity of Russia. Moreover, Russia's cultural security also means that all of its inhabitants can trust Russian cultural paradigms being an appropriate manner to explain the reality and organize their lives. That is why the objective of the authorities of the Russian Federation should also be to support Russian traditions in order to supplant any foreign tendencies from social consciousness due to their destructive impact on Russian social life³⁰.

The self-definition of Russia with respect to the West

Dugin's concept of Russia's cultural security is not only a theoretical model. Just as Dugin's scholarly reflection is accompanied by his pronounced political activism, similarly, the outlined security issues are strictly related to particular political conclusions, including the ones within the cultural domain. Dugin's statements, although rooted, albeit slightly, in the Russian isolationist political and religious tradition, confirm the observation of Brunon Hołyst. Hołyst claimed that the collectivist way of explaining the social life, including cultural phenomena, frequently needs to appeal to stereotypes and prejudice which are based on categorization, namely the division of the social world into dichotomous categories. This, in turn, leads to the creation of a social identity that is based on stereotypes and prejudice³¹. It is inevitable, given such an identity, to negatively evaluate other cultures and assign a particular value to one's own culture.

These are Dugin's suggestions regarding the cultural self-definition of Russia. This self-definition is supposed to lead to such an approach to Russian cultural

²⁸ Idem, *Ноомахия: войны ума. Цивилизации граници*, Москва 2014, pp. 22-23.

²⁹ Idem, *Русский логос...*, p. 92.

³⁰ Idem, *Русская война*, pp. 205-209.

³¹ B. Hołyst, *Bezpieczeństwo. Programy promocji*, Warszawa 2017, pp. 256-257.

identity which would protect Russia from Western civilizational pressure. At the same time, such self-definition would present Russia as an alternative, fully-fledged civilizational proposition with respect to „the peripheral civilizations”. These are those countries and societies which are not able to create their own independent civilization. Therefore, in order to secure their survival in the reality of a new multi-polar world, they should associate themselves with one of the future poles, namely great cultural and civilizational centers³².

Conclusions that Dugin draws from his observations regarding the issue of Russia’s cultural security can be divided into two groups. The former combines positive conclusions; they aim to demonstrate the independence and value of Russian culture as the one able to create its independent civilization. The latter, on the other hand, has the polemic and confrontational character; it compares the elements of Russian culture with the culture of the West, notices the mutual incompatibility, and even the contradiction, of these two cultural systems.

The primary conclusion, belonging to the first of the indicated groups, is Dugin’s deep conviction that the Russian Federation is not a European state. He does not mean merely Russia’s geographical position in Europe and Asia, but also the foundations of state and social organization as well as the values on which the rules, laws and customs in Russia are based. Russian culture should not be considered a part of European culture either. Admittedly, one can state that Russian culture has its beginning in certain elements of the European civilization; in particular, in the above-mentioned traditions of the ancient Rome preserved in the Byzantine Empire and implemented into the Rus’ alongside Christianity³³. The element of Byzantine origin is Orthodoxy itself, which is so different from Western Christianity not only in terms of worship but also, and much more so, in the anthropological and ethical dimension³⁴. Such a version of Christianity, namely conservative, sacralizing the state and hostile to any form of individualism, was also a factor contributing to the creation of the original Rus’ culture³⁵. At the same time, however, the roots of the Rus’ culture can be found in Asian traditions, mostly Turanian³⁶, which played a massive role in shaping Russian social and political life. Appreciating the Asian roots of the Russian culture serves in Dugin’s work as the development of the earlier Russian Eurasianism³⁷ that aims, which is specifically visible in the works of Trubetskoy and Gumilev³⁸, to demonstrate the original character of Russian culture as the synthesis of European and Asian ele-

³² А. Г. Дугин, *Международные отношения*, p. 313.

³³ Idem, *Русский логос...*, p. 45.

³⁴ Idem, *Ноомахия...*, pp. 44-45.

³⁵ Idem, *Русский логос...*, p. 345.

³⁶ Idem, *Ноомахия...*, pp. 23, 37-43.

³⁷ Idem, *Этносоциология*, Москва 2014, pp. 224-225.

³⁸ Idem, *Геополитика*, pp. 161-162, 173-174.

ments; the synthesis which forms the foundation of new cultural and civilizational quality³⁹. Such an approach to the origin and ingenuity of Russian culture leads to the conclusion that it can preserve its own identity only in isolation from Europe and Asia. The separation from Europe is far more important because it is the West that Dugin accuses of cultural expansion. Moreover, cleansing the Russian culture of all the Western influences, particularly those that infiltrated Russia in the 1990s⁴⁰, is a necessary condition to regain true Russian identity and the self-awareness of being an independent civilization. This, in turn, forms the beginning of the path of Russia to regain its rightful position of a superpower; a country that is strong in its military but also cultural and civilizational dimension.

This indicated tendency to assure the cultural security of Russia by emphasizing the original character of its culture is accompanied by Dugin's remarks aiming to define those elements of Western culture that particularly oppose Russian identity. These elements, which entered Russia as a result of globalization processes and even modernization processes undergoing in Russia, are inherently negative from the perspective of Russian conservatives⁴¹. They should be rejected and removed from Russian social, political and economic spheres in order to maintain the integrity and identity of Russian culture. Firstly, Western individualism is indicated as opposing Russian primacy of a community over an individual. Both Orthodox anthropology as well as Asian (Turanian) traditions of social life clearly make an individual subordinate to the state and society. Western emphasis on the individual dignity, and in particular its non-transferable character that does not depend on the community an individual is a part of, is contradictory to Russian tradition according to which an individual can be identified as a person only in and through a community. In Dugin's opinion, attempts to develop the Western concept of civil society in Russia are deeply contradictory to Russian culture⁴². As such they can have only destructive influence; they lead to the weakness of the state and authorities, and they distract the citizens from working for the sake of the state as prime good, the goal that requires sacrifices of all the individual interests⁴³. The contrast between Western individualism and Russian sense of community (collectivism, in fact, although it has been stripped of ideological interpretation that was typical to communism) can be most vividly seen when Dugin condemns the Western effort to enable every person to self-define in every aspect of their life⁴⁴. The freedom of political beliefs, the rules of democracy and the freedom to self-definition in interpersonal relations (manifested e.g. in the

³⁹ *Idem*, *Ноомахия...*, pp. 128-129.

⁴⁰ *Idem*, *Русская война*, p. 208.

⁴¹ *Idem*, *Русский логос...*, p. 121.

⁴² *Idem*, *Этносоциология*, pp. 801-802.

⁴³ *Ibidem*, pp. 447-455.

⁴⁴ А. Г. Дугин, *В поисках...*, pp. 112-116.

acceptance of same-sex couples and even their legal status, equal to the status of heterosexual couples) are perceived by Dugin as decidedly negative. For him, it is not as much a sign of the decadence of the West, but more a result of accentuating individualism and human rights, and granting them the primacy over the social or state interest⁴⁵. In opposition to Western individualism and egoism, „spiritual foundations” (духовные скрепы) that are characteristic for the Russian culture manifest themselves in the service to the community and state, as well as in ethical conservatism which does not allow for any other self-definition in private or social life than traditional. In this context, the fact that Western individualism, including its tolerance for a variety of minority behaviors and manners of self-definition, pervades Russian culture, bears a negative and destructive impact on this culture. According to Dugin, defending their culture requires from the authorities of the Russian Federation a decided actions against the individualistic tendencies arriving from the West and attempts to build the civic society, all of which would actually undermine the foundations of the Russian social and political structure.

Conclusions

The observation of the actions undertaken by the authorities of the Russian Federation led by President Putin indicates that these measures are ambiguous in the cultural dimension. On the one hand, one can talk about certain modernization tendencies, which were more evident at the time of D. A. Medvedev's presidency. Moreover, even under the conditions of the conflict with the West related to the war in Ukraine, Russian authorities did not opt for the policy of complete isolation, characteristic to specific totalitarian regimes such as North Korea. Russia, despite some political difficulties, remains an active participant in the international cultural exchange.

However, on the other hand, certain tendencies to create the internal policy based on cultural and ideological isolation have become more and more prominent in Russia. The rhetoric of President Putin and other representatives of the government has become increasingly more anti-western since 2014. The Western countries are portrayed as inspiring the anti-Russian and emancipation tendencies in the post-Soviet region (the phenomenon described in Russian propaganda as „Russophobia”). The West has been referred to as the enemy more and more frequently, not only in political, economic and cultural confrontation but also in the potential military conflict. In this context, one cannot ignore President Putin's recent statement directed to Russian entrepreneurs that pointed out the necessity

⁴⁵ Idem, *Четвертый путь...*, p. 516; idem, *Новая формула...*, p. 156.

for the Russian economy to convert to wartime⁴⁶. This rhetoric is accompanied by the cultural policy of the government which is aimed to emphasize the greatness and originality of Russian culture and its superiority over the falling culture of the West. A shocking sign of this tendency is a well-known statement issued by the Russian minister of culture Vladimir Medinsky, according to whom the Russians are supposed to possess „an additional chromosome” which has made their culture immune to foreign aggression over the centuries⁴⁷. All such signs are accompanied by legal regulations which are aimed to make the access to the information that is free from state control far more difficult for the Russians. The emphasis is put on the control of social media (officially justified by the war on terror) and planned restrictions in the access to the Internet.

In this context, one can state that although the radical ideas of Aleksandr Dugin and his supporters regarding Russia's complete cultural isolation have not been fulfilled yet, numerous statements and the elements of cultural and informational policy of the authorities of the Russian Federation imply that the cultural isolation from the Western world could be considered the best way to ensure social stability in Russia, which currently experiences increasing economic struggles. One can, however, claim that such a tendency to isolation is natural for Russian culture supported by Orthodox religious ideology, which is the reason for the lack of significant opposition in the Russian society.

Abstract

Marcin Skłodanowski, Łukasz Borzęcki

Away from the West. The Cultural Security of the Russian Federation in Aleksandr G. Dugin's Eurasian Project

The article is devoted to Aleksandr G. Dugin's concept of the cultural security of Russia. This concept is closely linked to Dugin's anti-Occidentalism and Eurasianism, in which he sees the guarantee of the independent and free from foreign influences development of Russia. Firstly, as an introduction, the main elements of Dugin's Eurasian project are outlined. Secondly, an attempt is undertaken to define the cultural security of Russia. Thirdly, Dugin's anti-Occidentalism is presented as a way to ensure the cultural security. Finally, the evaluation of Dugin's understanding of Russia's cultural security is proposed.

⁴⁶ *Военные рельсы Путина*, <https://www.svoboda.org/a/28870469.html> (24 I 2018).

⁴⁷ *Мединский: у народа России имеется одна лишняя хромосома*, http://www.bbc.com/russian/rolling_news/2013/01/130121_rn_medinsky_usa_interview (24 I 2018).

Keywords: cultural security, Russian Federation, Aleksandr G. Dugin, eurasianism, anti-occidentalism

References

- Dugin, A.G., *Chetvertyy put'. Vvedeniye v Chetvertuyu Politicheskuyu Teoriyu*, Moskva 2014.
- Dugin, A.G., *Etnosotsiologiya*, Moskva 2014.
- Dugin, A.G., *Geopolitika*, Moskva 2015.
- Dugin, A.G., *Geopolitika Rossii*, Moskva 2014.
- Dugin, A.G., *Mezhdunarodnyye otnosheniya*, Moskva 2014.
- Dugin, A.G., *Noomakhiya: voyny uma. Tsivilizatsii granits*, Moskva 2014.
- Dugin, A.G., *Novaya formula Putina. Osnovy eticheskoy politiki*, Moskva 2014.
- Dugin, A.G., *Russkaya vojna*, Moskva 2015.
- Dugin, A.G., *Russkiy logos – russkiy khaos. Sotsiologiya russkogo obshchestva*, Moskva 2015.
- Dugin, A.G., *Teoriya mnogopolyarnogo mira. Plyuriversum*, Moskva 2015.
- Dugin, A.G., *Ukraina: moya vojna. Geopoliticheskiy dnevnik*, Moskva 2015.
- Dugin, A.G., *Voobrazheniye: filosofiya, sotsiologiya, struktury*, Moskva 2015.
- Dugin, A.G., *V poiskakh temnogo Logosa. (Filosofsko-bogoslovskiye ocherki)*, Moskva 2014.
- Dugin, A.G., *Yevraziyskiy revansh Rossii*, Moskva 2014.
- Hołyst, B., *Bezpieczeństwo. Ogólne problemy badawcze*, Warszawa 2014.
- Hołyst, B., *Bezpieczeństwo. Programy promocji*, Warszawa 2017.
- Laruelle, M., *Eurasianism, the European Far Right, and Putin's Russia*, [in:] *Eurasianism and the European Far Right. Reshaping the Europe – Russia Relationship*, M. Laruelle (ed.), Lanham (Maryland) 2015.
- Medinskiy: u naroda Rossii imeyet-sya odna lishnyaya khromosoma*, http://www.bbc.com/russian/rolling_news/2013/01/130121_rn_medinsky_usa_interview (24 I 2018).
- Shekhovtsov, A., *Alexander Dugin and the West European New Right, 1989-1994*, [in:] *Eurasianism and the European Far Right. Reshaping the Europe – Russia Relationship*, M. Laruelle (ed.), Lanham (Maryland) 2015.
- Voyennyye rel'sy Putina*, <https://www.svoboda.org/a/28870469.html> (24 I 2018).

Marcin Składanowski – ks. dr hab. teologii, prof. w Katedrze Historii Dogmatów i Teologii Historycznej Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego Jana Pawła II.
ORCID: 0000-0003-1437-8904

Łukasz Borzęcki – ks. mgr teologii, doktorant w Instytucie Ekumenicznym Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego Jana Pawła II. ORCID: 0000-0002-2927-983X