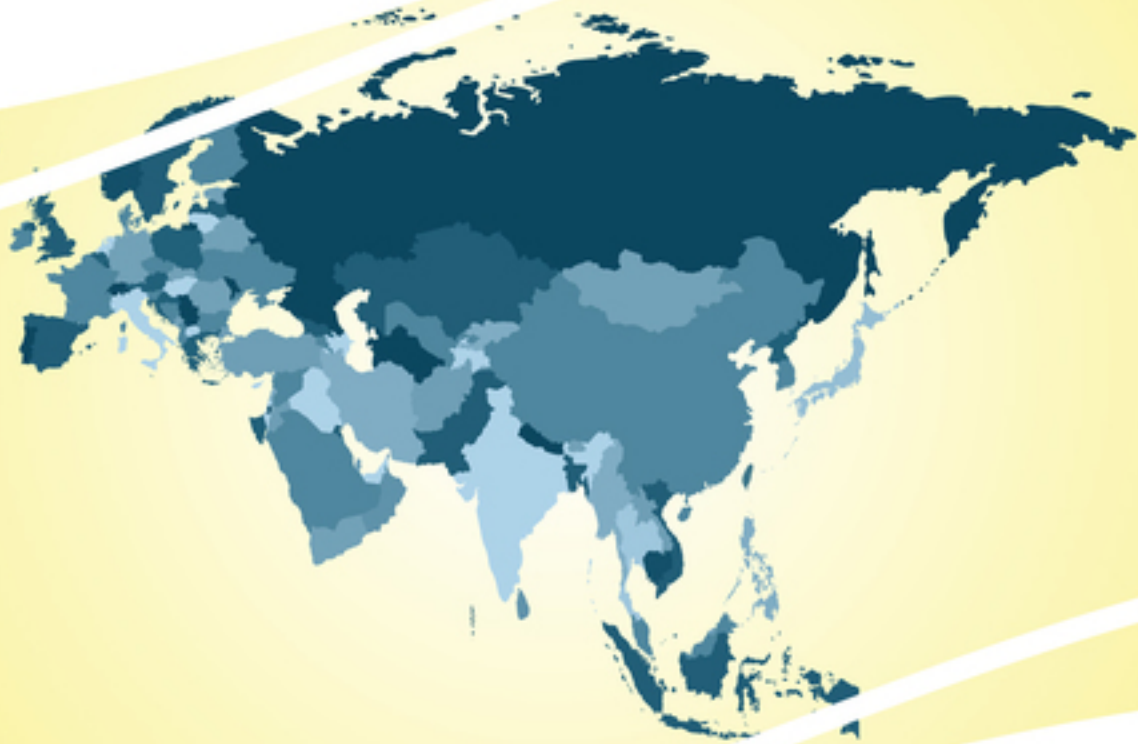


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Regional Integration and Future Cooperation Initiatives in the Eurasian Economic Union



Maria Lagutina

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Regional Integration and Future Cooperation Initiatives in the Eurasian Economic Union

Maria Lagutina
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Table of Contents

Preface	XV
----------------------	----

Section 1 **Theoretical Basis of Eurasian Integration**

Chapter 1

A Concept of Eurasia: From Classical Eurasianism to Pragmatic Eurasianism.....	1
<i>Maria Lagutina, Saint Petersburg State University, Russia</i>	

Chapter 2

Eurasian Regionalism: Specifics, Problems, and Prospects.....	16
<i>Ekaterina Mikhaylenko, Ural Federal University, Russia</i>	
<i>Valeriy Mikhaylenko, Ural Federal University, Russia</i>	

Chapter 3

The Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) From the Perspective of International Relations (IR) Theories	37
<i>Gülşen Şeker Aydın, Ataturk University, Turkey</i>	

Chapter 4

Eurasian Economic Union as the Space of Security in the Context of English School of International Relations: Theoretical and Practical Aspects	56
<i>Natalia Eremina, Saint Petersburg State University, Russia</i>	

Section 2 **The Main Directions of Eurasian Integration**

Chapter 5

The Main Stages of Eurasian Integration Development	76
<i>Denis Alekseev, Saratov State University, Russia</i>	

Chapter 6

Common Market of Goods, Services, Capital, and Labor in the EAEU: Directions of Integration and Further Improvement.....	94
<i>Vera Ozhigina, Belarus State Economic University, Belarus</i>	

Chapter 7	
Eurasian Integration and Problems of Civil Society: Trends and Limits of Development.....	117
<i>Elena Stetsko, Saint Petersburg State University, Russia</i>	

Chapter 8	
Features of “Soft Power” in the Eurasian Economic Union and the Role of Russia	135
<i>Natalia Markushina, Saint Petersburg State University, Russia</i>	

Section 3

National Strategies to Eurasian Integration

Chapter 9	
Armenia’s Approach to Eurasian Integration.....	152
<i>Norayr Dunamalyan, Russian-Armenian (Slavonic) University, Armenia</i>	

Chapter 10	
Eurasian Integration of Belarus as Path-Dependence.....	174
<i>Evgeny Treshchenkov, Saint Petersburg State University, Russia</i>	

Chapter 11	
The Eurasian Idea of Nursultan Nazarbayev.....	193
<i>Yerzhan Saltybayev, Institute of World Economics and Politics Under the Foundation of the First President of Kazakhstan, Kazakhstan</i>	
<i>Lidiya Parkhomchik, Institute of Word Economics and Politics Under the Foundation of the First President of Kazakhstn, Kazakhstan</i>	

Chapter 12	
The New Model of Cooperation in Eurasia: EAEU and SCO Within the Framework of the “Greater Eurasian Partnership”	209
<i>Konstantin Kurylev, Peoples’ Friendship University of Russia, Russia</i>	
<i>Marina Lapenko, Saratov State University, Russia</i>	

Section 4

“External Contour” of Eurasian Integration

Chapter 13	
Connecting Eurasia: Is Cooperation Between Russia, China, and the EU in Central Asia Possible? 234	
<i>Fabienne Bossuyt, Ghent University, Belgium</i>	
<i>Irina Bolgova, Moscow State Institute of International Relations, Russia</i>	

Chapter 14	
“External Contour” of Eurasian Integration: Cooperation Between the EAEU and the ASEAN.....	251
<i>Nikolai Fedorov, Saint Petersburg State University, Russia</i>	

Chapter 15

Eurasian Economic Union and Iran: From Negotiation Process to the Operation of the Free Trade

Zone 273

Ahmad Vakhshiteh, Peoples' Friendship University of Russia, Russia

Compilation of References 289

About the Contributors 332

Index..... 336

Detailed Table of Contents

Preface	XV
----------------------	----

Section 1 **Theoretical Basis of Eurasian Integration**

Chapter 1

A Concept of Eurasia: From Classical Eurasianism to Pragmatic Eurasianism.....	1
<i>Maria Lagutina, Saint Petersburg State University, Russia</i>	

This chapter analyzes the process of the Eurasian idea's evolution in historical retrospective, as well as the identification of the general and special in the basics of classical Eurasianism and neo-Eurasianism, on one hand, and modern pragmatic Eurasianism, which underlies the implementation of the Eurasian strategy of Russia and other EAEU countries and the "Greater Eurasia", on the other. The author identifies the basic principles of the ideology of modern Eurasian integration, explains the motives and reasons for the beginning of the integration process, and defines its features.

Chapter 2

Eurasian Regionalism: Specifics, Problems, and Prospects.....	16
<i>Ekaterina Mikhaylenko, Ural Federal University, Russia</i>	
<i>Valeriy Mikhaylenko, Ural Federal University, Russia</i>	

The term 'Eurasia' is an ambiguous concept that includes in different studies: 'Greater Eurasia', which is associated with the Eurasian continent; 'Central Eurasia' as a post-Soviet space; and the term Eurasia can be associated with specific integration projects in Eurasia, such as Eurasian Economic Union. This chapter defines Eurasian regionalism and prospects for its development. Authors analyze modern scientific discourse around Eurasian integration and Eurasian regionalism. They examine modern approaches to regionalism and identify some of the distinctive features of the construction of regions.

Chapter 3

The Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) From the Perspective of International Relations (IR) Theories	37
<i>Gülşen Şeker Aydın, Ataturk University, Turkey</i>	

This chapter examines the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) from the perspective of the main theories in the Discipline of International Relations (IR). The author sketches out the main stages of the development of the EAEU cooperation by highlighting the conceptualization of the scheme by President Nazarbayev

of Kazakhstan in 1994, the establishment of the Customs Union (CU), and the Common Economic Space (CES) between Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan in 2010. Theories analyzed include Neo-Realism, Neo-Classic Realism, Hegemonic Stability Theory, Liberalism, Functionalism, Neo-Functionalism, Neo-Institutionalism, the English School, Constructivism, and Neo-Gramscian Theory. The author makes an overall evaluation and stresses the need for an eclectic approach for analyzing the EAEU experience.

Chapter 4

Eurasian Economic Union as the Space of Security in the Context of English School of International Relations: Theoretical and Practical Aspects 56
Natalia Eremina, Saint Petersburg State University, Russia

Regional integration creates a common economic, social, and political space, which is based on interstate dialogue. A common integration space forms the territory of security, since the security sphere is not only to solve specific tasks, but also to create permanent instruments for preventing various risks. The Post-Soviet space remains a complex territory, the states of which have gone through a period of political destabilization, faced various threats, and come to the idea that only collective security mechanisms in the framework of constant cooperation are capable of preventing risks. Therefore, the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) is not only an economic project, it is a project that forms a common security space for all participants, and not only for its member states. In this regard, this chapter is structured around two key problems: established conceptual approaches in the field of security in relation to integration processes and tools of the EAEU for the formation of a common and indivisible security space for all its participants.

Section 2
The Main Directions of Eurasian Integration

Chapter 5

The Main Stages of Eurasian Integration Development 76
Denis Alekseev, Saratov State University, Russia

The scholarly approach toward the analysis of the issue of stages of Eurasian integration has to offer not only a timeline data with milestones and the key events, but also conceptualized logic of Eurasian integration alongside with explanation of the consequent steps that were undertaken by the regional countries on their way to create the current level of integration. The chapter starts with the point that Russia, as the biggest political, economic, and military power in the region played a fundamental role in the integration of the post-Soviet republics. Practical steps in this way were made only when Russian leadership embraced this idea as the best alternative to the other forms of interaction and cooperation for the post-Soviet space under the umbrella of the CIS.

Chapter 6

Common Market of Goods, Services, Capital, and Labor in the EAEU: Directions of Integration and Further Improvement..... 94
Vera Ozhigina, Belarus State Economic University, Belarus

The chapter examines the stages preceding creation of the common market of goods, services, capital, and labor within the EAEU, evaluates effects and proposes directions of improvement, considering the world experience. Attention is given not only to negative integration (elimination of barriers), but also to positive (signing of agreements, creation of institutions, mechanisms for cooperation, budget management

and joint projects). The production cooperation, joint research, and digital economy are also considered. Based on the methodology of system analysis and integration design, the author identified problems of the EAEU common market and proposed aspects for improvement: deepening of negative integration and regulatory convergence; increasing positive integration; combination of integration with development; creation of the common system of protection; redistribution of benefits and costs; strengthening of supra-national regulation; improvement of statistics and monitoring; increasing of budget, stimulating innovations, structural changes, sustainable development and inclusive growth.

Chapter 7

Eurasian Integration and Problems of Civil Society: Trends and Limits of Development..... 117
Elena Stetsko, Saint Petersburg State University, Russia

The chapter studies the relationship between the development of integration processes and the development of civil society in the post-Soviet space and, in particular, in the countries of the Eurasian Economic Union. It consists of five parts. The introduction presents the main trends and vectors of integration processes in the post-Soviet space. The first part considers the concept of “civil society” and its features in Western and Russian political thought. The second part highlights the features of building a civil society in the independent states of the EAEU. General points and differences in the emerging civil societies of the EAEU countries are revealed. Further, in the fourth part, the “Eurasian idea” is considered in terms of its compatibility with the peculiarities of the development of civil society in the post-Soviet space. The final part proposes a discussion topic on the possibility of political integration within the EAEU.

Chapter 8

Features of “Soft Power” in the Eurasian Economic Union and the Role of Russia 135
Natalia Markushina, Saint Petersburg State University, Russia

The chapter is devoted to the problem of the formation of “soft power” in the Eurasian space. All attempts to find a common language between states in the world lead to the fact that an appeal to “soft power” appears more and more often on the states’ agenda as a tool of achieving the goals of the states, including the states of Eurasian region. The concept of “soft power”, introduced into the circulation of the modern theory of international relations by J. Nye, is being actively discussed in Russia. In recent years, President V. Putin and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia S. Lavrov were repeatedly called upon to multiply the Russian resource of “soft power” for solving foreign policy tasks. Undoubtedly, this is also valid when we speak about Eurasian integration.

Section 3

National Strategies to Eurasian Integration

Chapter 9

Armenia’s Approach to Eurasian Integration..... 152
Norayr Dunamalyan, Russian-Armenian (Slavonic) University, Armenia

The Armenian view on Eurasian integration is multidimensional, as it includes various ideological, historical, political, and economic aspects that simultaneously contradicts to the classical Eurasianism, but gets along with the political and economic contexts of this phenomenon. Joining CSTO and the EAEU is explained by searching political and economic stability in regional integrative projects, as well as within a country. Highlighting three levels of reflection of Eurasian integration allows observing a large gap

of state, public, and diasporic approaches to understanding and mastering the idea of integration in the post-Soviet space. However, there is no split in the Armenian public opinion as the initial prerequisite for Armenia’s participation in the Eurasian integrative project concerning the political and economic aspects. Another feature of the Armenian approach to the CSTO and the EAEU is the consideration of these projects in the general direction of Russian-Armenian relationship, rather than a scrutiny of multilateral cooperation.

Chapter 10

Eurasian Integration of Belarus as Path-Dependence.....	174
<i>Evgeny Treshchenkov, Saint Petersburg State University, Russia</i>	

There is a tendency to explain all the problems and choices made by the Republic of Belarus as a result of the policy of its leadership. This text offers a take on choices made by Belarus in favor of preserving and strengthening relations with Russia through the prism of the concept of path-dependence. Simply said, economic, social, and political circumstances determine the vector of development of the country since the collapse of the Soviet Union, as well as they frame and transform president Lukashenka’s intentions. Thus, country’s participation in the formation of the Eurasian Economic Union is a predictable step in a chain of interconnected choices that the Belarusian political elite have been making since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Special attention in the text is paid to what the analysis of the Belarusian case can tell about the nature and prospects of integration in the region.

Chapter 11

The Eurasian Idea of Nursultan Nazarbayev.....	193
<i>Yerzhan Saltybayev, Institute of World Economics and Politics Under the Foundation of the First President of Kazakhstan, Kazakhstan</i>	
<i>Lidiya Parkhomchik, Institute of Word Economics and Politics Under the Foundation of the First President of Kazakhstn, Kazakhstan</i>	

The First President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev had always emphasized the mutual influences of the culture and religions of people living in the country. Having absorbed both the European and Asian traditions Kazakhstan illustrates the principles of a diverse country that could build bridges among West and East. It became obvious that the newly independent nation led by Nursultan Nazarbayev was confronted with the need to find new forms of cooperation with the world community after the major geopolitical change. As a result, the Leader of the Nation proposed the long-term initiative, namely, the Eurasian idea that was designed to create an atmosphere of mutual confidence and cooperation. In this regard, this chapter will briefly identify the preconditions for the introduction of the Eurasian initiative with special emphasis placed on the transformation of Kazakhstan’s vision of the issue. As a result, the conclusions of this chapter focus on the further prospects for integration between the Eurasian states within the frameworks of Nazarbayev’s Eurasian concept.

Chapter 12

The New Model of Cooperation in Eurasia: EAEU and SCO Within the Framework of the “Greater Eurasian Partnership”.....	209
<i>Konstantin Kurylev, Peoples’ Friendship University of Russia, Russia</i>	
<i>Marina Lapenko, Saratov State University, Russia</i>	

The authors analyze the main characteristics of the EAEU – SCO partnership as a model of interstate interaction that can provide an institutional and value platform for the “Greater Eurasian Partnership”. The chapter provides the comparative analysis of the two regional associations, forms, and mechanisms of cooperation, identifies areas of intersection of their activities, and determines the synergetic effect of their interaction. The relevance of the study is determined, first of all, by the need to understand the new regional agenda, as well as to develop new approaches to the development of cooperation within the framework of the “Greater Eurasian Partnership”. As a result of the study, conclusions are made about the prospects for the formation of a new model of cooperation in Greater Eurasia, its value and institutional content, the possibilities of achieving a new balance in the socio-economic development of the countries of the region.

Section 4 **“External Contour” of Eurasian Integration**

Chapter 13

Connecting Eurasia: Is Cooperation Between Russia, China, and the EU in Central Asia Possible? 234

Fabienne Bossuyt, Ghent University, Belgium

Irina Bolgova, Moscow State Institute of International Relations, Russia

As China further embarks on implementing its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and remains firmly set on pursuing the ambitious goal of connecting China overland with Europe, the European Union (EU) and Russia - as indispensable stakeholders for this continental connection to successfully materialize – have been developing policy responses to China’s initiative that reveal an unexpected willingness to cooperate. In scrutinizing the likelihood of cooperation on connectivity between the EU, China, and Russia in Central Asia, this chapter identifies the common interests between the three sides, and highlights to what extent cooperation between them is possible in Central Asia. In doing so, the chapter points to the main opportunities while outlining the main bottlenecks, which mostly stem from the underlying geopolitical rivalry between these three actors, as well as their diverging beliefs and approaches to connectivity and development.

Chapter 14

“External Contour” of Eurasian Integration: Cooperation Between the EAEU and the ASEAN 251

Nikolai Fedorov, Saint Petersburg State University, Russia

The Eurasian Economic Union is interested in development of cooperation with external actors. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations is considered as a prospect partner. ASEAN states play a significant role in economy and international relations in the Asia-Pacific region. The ASEAN is seen as one of the key institutions in Asia-Pacific integration. Moscow keeps stable and friendly relations with many states of Southeast Asia and the ASEAN. It lays a solid foundation for development of a dialogue in Eurasian format. The EAEU signed with Vietnam a free trade agreement in 2015 and it is negotiating on similar treaties with some other states of the ASEAN. The Association expressed readiness to consider the issue of a comprehensive free trade zone between the EAEU and the ASEAN. In November 2018 the Eurasian Economic Commission and the ASEAN Secretariat adopted a memorandum of understanding. The dialogue in Eurasian format can accelerate cooperation between states of the EAEU and Southeast Asia and create more benevolent conditions for alignment of the EAEU and the ASEAN.

Chapter 15

Eurasian Economic Union and Iran: From Negotiation Process to the Operation of the Free Trade Zone	273
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Ahmad Vakhshiteh, Peoples' Friendship University of Russia, Russia

The EAEU and Iran signed an Interim agreement on the creation of Free Trade Zone in May 2018. This agreement is opening a new stage in the development of relations at the bilateral and multilateral levels. The document was concluded for three years and provides for the reduction or cancellation of import customs duties on a broad list of goods. This chapter analyzes the negotiation process for the creation of Free Trade Zone, as well as promising areas of cooperation between the EAEU and Iran. The Eurasian Economic Union is interested in developing a special relationship with Iran not only in trade but also in the development of the infrastructure of the International North-South Transport Corridor. The chapter also provides an analysis of the Anzali Free Trade Zone as one of the most successful and rapidly developing economic zones of Iran and an important link in the development of the International North-South Transport Corridor.

Compilation of References	289
--	-----

About the Contributors	332
-------------------------------------	-----

Index	336
--------------------	-----

Preface

The monograph deals with regional integration and future cooperation initiatives in the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) in the modern global world. Today, the idea of Eurasian integration, which was first discussed at the end of the XXth and beginning of the XXIst centuries, has gained real features, proving its historical validity and prospects. In 2019 we celebrated the 25th anniversary of the idea of modern Eurasian integration and the 5th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty on the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU). It is known that the idea of a Eurasian integration project was proposed by the then President of Kazakhstan N. Nazarbayev, who in 1994 launched an initiative for reintegration on a Eurasian basis, which consists in creating a completely new association of the former Soviet republics, and proposed to call it the Eurasian Union (EAC). Thus, the Kazakh leader wanted to maintain the unity of the countries of more than 70 years living together as a part of the USSR. The basis of this alliance was to be oriented towards interstate cooperation and integration into the economic and humanitarian spheres of the most prepared countries for this in the region. However, then the former Soviet republics were not ready for new forms of integration and this idea did not receive a response among the leaders of the newly independent states. The idea of creating the Eurasian Union was returned at the beginning of the second decade of the XXIst century when twenty years after the emergence of the idea the necessary prerequisites were formed for the development of a new stage of integration in the post-Soviet space. As a result, in 2014 the leaders of three countries — Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Russia — signed the Treaty on the establishment of the Eurasian Economic Union and the idea expressed in the mid-1990s found its real embodiment.

During this period, the EAEU has taken place as a rapidly developing, open and quite attractive integration association, which has become the undeniable reality of regional processes in modern Eurasia. It seems possible to summarize the first results of Eurasian integration, assess its effectiveness and prospects. So, during the existence of the EAEU, an impressive array of supranational legislation has been created that ensures the free movement of goods, services, and labor in a single economic space. Today, a single market for goods and services is functioning successfully, freedom of investment is ensured, common markets for medicines and medical products have been created, 47 technical regulations of the Union have been adopted that ensure the safety of goods in a single Union market. It is also important to note that in 2018, the new EAEU Customs Code entered into force, which simplified the procedure for moving goods across the customs border of the Union. Besides, during the indicated period, the EAEU expanded the number of member-states, as well as the list of its “external” integration partners in the Greater Eurasia space. So, immediately after the entry into force of the Treaty on the EAEU in 2015, Armenia entered the Union and then Kyrgyzstan. Tajikistan and Uzbekistan also expressed their interest in participating in Eurasian integration. Moldova received an observer status at the EAEU. Today, states

located outside the post-Soviet space also show interest in cooperation with the EAEU, which gives grounds for highlighting the so-called “external contour” of Eurasian integration. At the moment, a free trade zone was already created with Vietnam (2015), an interim agreement on a free trade zone was signed with Iran (2018), a trade and economic agreement with China (2018) and a free trade agreement was signed with Singapore (2019).

At the same time, the EAEU continues to face some difficulties and problems along its development path, including:

- an imbalance in the level of economic development of the EAEU countries;
- preservation several trade barriers and various non-tariff restrictions;
- the orientation of the raw materials still prevails in the EAEU economy, the real sector of the economy, high-tech production, small and medium businesses are poorly developed, tourism is in its infancy;
- the EAEU’s dependence on such external factors as the economic sanctions of Western countries to Russia, world prices for energy and natural resources, the US dollar and the euro rates, etc. ;
- a lack of a single union identity (preservation of stereotypes and fears of a totalitarian union past),
- a small degree of civil society involvement in integration processes (“integration from below”) and the prevalence of “integration from above”,
- the fragmented opinions of the EAEU members on some issues regarding the strategy for further development of the EAEU (for example, the expansion of the EAEU, the strategy for conjugation of the EAEU and the SREB, the introduction of a single currency, etc.),
- a low degree of awareness among various population groups of the member countries of the Union, a lack of positive information about neighbors, poor use of modern methods and tools for promoting the Eurasian integration project, etc.

Moreover, the presence of such problems is not a specific feature of Eurasian integration; rather, this factor should be regarded as an integral attribute of any integration project at the beginning of its formation and development. In this regard, the modern Eurasian expert community face with the task of examining each of the presented problem groups, which includes identifying the main causes of the appearance and preservation of the problems noted, their contents, as well as predicting the possible further development of the situation in each case.

The purpose of this book is to examine the current state of regional integration in Eurasia in the framework of the EAEU. Particularly, the book will produce a comprehensive analysis of various aspects of the current Eurasian integration: historical, theoretical-conceptual, institutional, etc. and define the problematic agenda of the current Eurasian integration. It is not less important to understand what factors facilitate and impede Eurasian integration’ development? Equally, it is vital for the future of EAEU to figure out whether it is unique, original or just copy what has already been done by other integrational bodies (first of all, the EU)? More generally, is EAEU able to contribute to ‘Greater Eurasia’ development or is it doomed to remain a marginal regional project which has no impact on the world integrational processes?

Nevertheless, the dynamism of the political decisions made by the Eurasian states - Kazakhstan, Russia, Belarus, as well as Armenia and Kyrgyzstan - contributes to a strong interest in the scholar community for the prospects of the integration project, as a result of which an active discussion began in the scholar and expert communities on assessing the prospects of the Eurasian integration.

Preface

Today, Eurasian integration is the subject of a quite active study in Russia, the countries of the post-Soviet space and abroad.

As for the conceptual foundations of modern Eurasian integration, until recently, only publications of the founders of the EAEU were considered as such: articles and monographs by N. Nazarbayev, articles by V. Putin and A. Lukashenko, published in the newspaper “Izvestia” on October 2011. Recently, especially with the advent of the concept of “Greater Eurasia” and “Greater Eurasian Partnership”, mainly analytical works began to appear, in which the authors attempt to elaborate in detail the theoretical foundations of these ideas: in the works of D. Trenin, S. Karaganov, T. Bordachev, F. Lukyanov, I. Timofeev and others. Most of the works of these authors were written and published as analytical materials of the Valdai Club and the Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC). The first section of this book is also devoted to the theoretical understanding of modern Eurasian integration. The authors of the book “Regional Integration and Future Cooperation Initiatives in the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU)” consider the issues of the formation of the Eurasian ideology in historical retrospect and at the present stage, special attention is paid to the problems and features of the formation of Eurasian regionalism, as well as to the analysis of the EAEU from the standpoint of various theories of international relations.

The works of many Russian experts are devoted to the study of the features of formation, various aspects of the integration process and the prospects for the development of the EAEU: E. Vinokurov, Yu. Kosov, A. Toropygin, E. Kuzmina, A. Kazantsev, M. Lapenko, M. Lagutina, A. Podberezkin, K. Borishpolets, K. Meshcheryakov, E. Treschenkov, E. Alekseenkova, S. Glazyev, K. Koktysh, N. Medkovich and others. In their studies, the authors determine the conditions for the development and modernization of the Eurasian space, explore the prospects and conditions for effective objective integration in the space of modern Eurasia, reveal the features of the development of integration processes in various fields, etc. Within the framework of the presented book, the second section covers the main stages of development of integration within the EAEU, and the authors touch upon such little-studied problems as integration from the bottom, in particular, features the formation of civil society in the EAEU space, as well as the specifics of the implementation of the “soft power” policy in the EAEU by the example of Russia.

Eurasian issues have also been actively developed in recent years in the research of scholars of the EAEU member countries. So, various aspects of Armenia’s participation in Eurasian integration are presented in the publications of the following Armenian experts: A. Khalatyan, A. Tavadyan, G. Harutyunyan, A. Paronyan, V. Dilanyan, etc.; in Belarus, such researchers as A. Dzermant, L. Krishtapovich, E. Efimovich, I. Levyash, A. Gaishun, I. Kozlov, M. Kozlova, E. Guyda, and others are actively involved in Eurasian studies; in Kazakhstan, developments on Eurasian topics are also actively underway: A. Satkaliev, S. Kazhirova, T. Marmontova, A. Ospanova, E. Ryakova, S. Shaimukhanova, Zh. Suyubaev and others; finally, in Kyrgyzstan, Eurasian topic is developed in the works of N. Satvaldiev, S. Kozhemyakin, I. Khalansky, N. Brovko, E. Garbuzarova. Basically, the authors in their works assess the current state and integration prospects of the EAEU, analyze the national strategies of their states regarding Eurasian integration, the role of their states in the EAEU, relations with Russia and other participants in Eurasian integration. This book also contains a section on the analysis of national strategies of the EAEU countries in relation to the prospects for the development of Eurasian integration, prepared by experts from the EAEU countries.

Finally, recently, studies of the so-called “external contour” of Eurasian integration have been actively developing, in which the authors study the international relations of the EAEU with countries of various regions of the world and other regional associations. It may be noted that, despite a fairly large number of publications on Eurasian topics, most of the studies are devoted to the study and analysis of the pros-

pects for the development of the EAEU within the post-Soviet space, at the regional level, while there are no many works analyzing the so-called “external contour” of Eurasian integration. In this book, the fourth section is devoted to the prospects for the development of the “external contour” of the EAEU and considers the possibilities of cooperation between the EAEU and the EU, ASEAN and other countries.

Thus, the book “Regional Integration and Future Cooperation Initiatives in the Eurasian Economic Union” is the result of the collective collaboration of researchers from the EAEU’s countries, the EU and other countries. The authors of this book are experts from Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russia, Belgium, Turkey, and Iran. Thus, this book is aimed at bridging the gap in political-science literature in the domain of comprehensive analysis of the current Eurasian integration both in regional and global contexts.

ORGANIZATION OF THE BOOK

The book is organized into 15 chapters. A brief description of each of the chapters follows.

Chapter 1 analyzes the process of the Eurasian idea’s evolution in historical retrospective. The author identifies the general and special in the basics of classical Eurasianism and neo-Eurasianism, on the one hand, and modern pragmatic Eurasianism, which underlies the implementation of the Eurasian strategy of Russia and other EAEU countries and the “Greater Eurasia”, on the other. The chapter identifies the basic principles of the ideology of modern Eurasian integration, explains the motives and reasons for the beginning of the integration process, as well as defines its key features.

Chapter 2 reviews the modern scientific discourse around Eurasian integration and Eurasian regionalism and determines the main concepts used by the researchers. The authors of this chapter set an ambitious task to determine what Eurasian regionalism is and what the prospects for its development are.

Chapter 3 examines the EAEU from the perspective of the main theories in the discipline of International Relations (IR). The author starts the theoretical analysis with Neo-Realism and continues with Neo-Classic Realism, Hegemonic Stability Theory, Liberalism, Functionalism, Neo-Functionalism, Neo-Institutionalism, the English School, Constructivism, and Neo-Gramscian Theory. The conclusion of the chapter makes an overall evaluation and stresses the need for an eclectic approach for analyzing the EAEU experience.

Chapter 4 regards the post-Soviet space as a complex territory, the states of which have gone through a period of political destabilization, faced various threats and come to the idea that only collective security mechanisms in the framework of constant cooperation are capable of preventing risks. The author argues that the EAEU is not only an economic project, but it is also a project that forms a common security space for all participants, and not only for its member states. This chapter is structured around two key problems: established conceptual approaches in the field of security in relation to integration processes and tools of the EAEU for the formation of a common and indivisible security space for all its participants.

Chapter 5 presents a historical development of major events and milestones which marked the process of the Eurasian integration as well as the political and economic context of these events. This chapter contains an attempt to put a direct link between the stages of Eurasian integration and the evolution of Russia’s strategies of dealing with its neighbor-states in the field of reintegration of the post-Soviet space.

Chapter 6 examines the stages preceding creation of the common market within the EAEU, evaluates effects and considers directions of improvement, taking into account the world experience. Attention is given not only to negative integration (elimination of barriers), but also to positive (signing of agree-

Preface

ments, creation of institutions, mechanisms for cooperation, budget management and joint projects). The production cooperation, joint research, the digital economy is also considered. Based on the methodology of system analysis and integration design, the author identified problems of the EAEU common market and proposed aspects for improvement.

Chapter 7 discusses the relationship between the development of integration processes and the development of civil society in the post-Soviet space and, in particular, in the countries of the EAEU. The author considers the concept of “civil society” and its features in Western and Russian political thought and then highlights the features of building civil society in the states of the EAEU. The “Eurasian idea” is considered in terms of its compatibility with the peculiarities of the development of civil society in the post-Soviet space.

Chapter 8 is devoted to the problem of the formation of “soft power” in the Eurasian space. The author discusses the perspectives for the use of the “soft power” tools that are to be determined with regards to the Eurasian integration. The chapter is aimed to point out the role of Russia’s state institutions in the determination and implementation of soft power in the EAEU.

Chapter 9 presents the Armenian view on Eurasian integration. The author defines this approach as multidimensional because it includes various ideological, historical, political and economic aspects that simultaneously contradicts to the classical Eurasianism, but gets along with the political and economic contexts of this phenomenon. The author of this chapter highlights three levels of reflection of Eurasian integration that allow observing a large gap of state, public and diasporas’ approaches to understanding and mastering the idea of integration in the post-Soviet space.

Chapter 10 offers a take on choices made by Belarus in favor of preserving and strengthening relations with Russia through the prism of the concept of path-dependence. The author believes that economic, social and political circumstances determine the vector of development of Belarus since the collapse of the Soviet Union, as well as these circumstances frame and transform president Lukashenka’s intentions. Special attention in the chapter is paid to what the analysis of the Belarusian case can tell about the nature and prospects of integration in the Eurasian region.

Chapter 11 addresses the issues of Kazakhstan’s approach to Eurasian integration. This chapter identifies the preconditions for the introduction of the Eurasian initiative with special emphasis placed on the transformation of Kazakhstan’s vision of the issue. As a result, the conclusion of this chapter is focused on the further prospects for integration between the Eurasian states within the frameworks of Nazarbayev’s Eurasian concept.

Chapter 12 analyses the main characteristics of the EAEU – SCO partnership as a model of interstate interaction that can provide an institutional and value platform for Russia’s “Greater Eurasian Partnership”. The chapter provides the comparative analysis of the two regional associations, forms, and mechanisms of cooperation, identifies areas of intersection of their activities, and determines the synergetic effect of their interaction.

Chapter 13 identifies the common interests between China, the European Union and Russia in Eurasia and highlights to what extent cooperation between them is possible in Central Asia. In doing so, the chapter points to the main opportunities while outlining the main bottlenecks, which mostly stem from the underlying geopolitical rivalry between these three actors, as well as their diverging beliefs and approaches to connectivity and development.

Chapter 14 reviews the prospects of cooperation between the EAEU and the Association of South-east Asian Nations (ASEAN). The author regards the dialogue in Eurasian format and believes that it

can accelerate cooperation between states of the EAEU and Southeast Asia and create more benevolent conditions for alignment of the EAEU and the ASEAN.

Chapter 15 analyzes the negotiation process for the creation of the Free Trade Zone (FTZ), as well as promising areas of cooperation between the EAEU and Iran. The EAEU is interested in developing a special relationship with Iran not only in trade but also in the development of the infrastructure of the International North-South Transport Corridor. The chapter also provides an analysis of the Anzali Free Trade Zone as one of the most successful and rapidly developing economic zones of Iran and an important link in the development of the International North-South Transport Corridor.

The content of the monograph may be interesting to the expert community, academics and students of Russian and Eurasian Studies, as well as Regional Studies and International Studies.

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Section 1

Theoretical Basis of Eurasian Integration

Chapter 1

A Concept of Eurasia: From Classical Eurasianism to Pragmatic Eurasianism

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ABSTRACT

This chapter analyzes the process of the Eurasian idea's evolution in historical retrospective, as well as the identification of the general and special in the basics of classical Eurasianism and neo-Eurasianism, on one hand, and modern pragmatic Eurasianism, which underlies the implementation of the Eurasian strategy of Russia and other EAEU countries and the "Greater Eurasia", on the other. The author identifies the basic principles of the ideology of modern Eurasian integration, explains the motives and reasons for the beginning of the integration process, and defines its features.

INTRODUCTION

Today, the "Eurasia" appears to be one of the most popular terms in current political discussions both in Russia and abroad. On the one hand, it bears evidence to the fact that the Eurasian ideas are becoming more and more in demand, and, on the other hand, unfortunately, the "Eurasia" concept frequently becomes a subject of political speculations. (Lagutina, 2017) The spread of this term is mainly pre-conditioned by the intensification of integrational processes on the post-Soviet space and the establishment of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU). After having obtained independence the former Soviet republics, including Russia, were confronted with a serious issue – a search for a new identity and the attention of the majority was drawn to the Eurasianist ideas, which allows prying themselves away from the Soviet legacy and related stereotypes, which have been impeding integrational processes between the former Soviet republics for more than 25 years.

However, today the Eurasian idea turns out to be in demand not only by the countries of the post-Soviet space, but also by the leading world powers involved in Eurasian integration in the so-called "Greater Eurasia": along with the EAEU countries, Turkey, China and the EU countries also come up

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with their Eurasian or Euro-Asian projects. As a result, various “national” approaches to understanding the essence of the Eurasian concept were formed: from Russian and Kazakh Eurasianism to Turkish, Islamic and other versions of modern Eurasianism, (Mostafa, 2013, 161, 163-164) and the concept of “Eurasia” has acquired a broad interpretation.

Nevertheless, historically and conceptually, the Eurasian idea was developed mainly by the Russian geographers, historians and philosophers throughout the 20th century and underwent a serious transformation during its development: the evolution of the concept of “Eurasia” in the 20th century can be interpreted as “a path from a view of the world and philosophy (1920) through academic research (primarily in the works of L. Gumilev) to politics and ideology (since the late 1980s)” (Timofeeva, 2006) and at the beginning of the 21st century to the ideology of integration.

The Eurasian vector in Russia’s foreign and domestic policies has been gradually becoming ever more pronounced since the second half of 1990s due to strong support by the then Foreign Minister Y. Primakov. However, the integrational processes with Russia’s involvement in those years did not get ahead significantly. When V. Putin came to power, Russia began to form the long-term strategy in contemporary Eurasia.

According to M. Laruelle, the sharp increase in the interest of the Russian political elite and the scholar and expert community in Eurasianism in the mid-1990s was due to the need to “rethink the catastrophe” (Laruelle, 2001, 71) - the collapse of the USSR, - after which the question of defining Russia’s new identity arose and identity, which had to replace communism and Cold War ideology, its further path of development - as the successor of the USSR, which had lost a large part of its former geopolitical weight and economic power.

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the process of the Eurasian idea’s evolution in historical retrospective, as well as the identification of the general and special in the basics of classical Eurasianism and neo-Eurasianism, on the one hand, and modern pragmatic Eurasianism, which underlies the implementation of the Eurasian strategy of Russia and other EAEU countries and the “Greater Eurasia”, on the other. It seems important to identify the basic principles of the ideology of modern Eurasian integration, explain the motives and reasons for the beginning of the integration process, as well as define its features.

Background

After the collapse of the USSR, Russia, as its successor, was faced with the need to rethink its role in the world, determine new priorities and values of its foreign policy. In the late 1990s - early 2000s Russia actually refused to accept the unipolar system of international relations proposed by the United States and its allies, putting forward the concept of multipolarity, which was reflected in the official foreign policy documents of the Russian Federation. (Kontseptsiya vneshney politiki Rossiyskoy Federatsii 2000, 2008, 2013, 2016) In practice, the multipolar concept is now being implemented by the Russian leadership not only at the global level, but also at the regional level. So, one of the most important foreign policy priorities of modern Russia is the post-Soviet space - a region whose countries are geographically, historically, economically and culturally closely connected with Russia. As the geopolitical tension in the world arena grows, while the threat of isolation persists, the Russian Federation is increasingly interested in finding some “brackets” for the effective development of integration processes in the region, creating common spaces of cooperation and smoothing out contradictions between its member states.

Finding economic grounds seemed to be the simplest step towards rapprochement. However, such approach put Russia, in most cases, into the position of a donor, which was forced to keep its allies by

A Concept of Eurasia

making significant financial injections and providing trade and economic preferences. The fragility of the ties created in this way, the crisis in relations with the West, the emergence and vigorous activity of external players (China, the EU, and even the USA) in the last years in the post-Soviet space and the need for filling the ideological vacuum created by the collapse of the USSR pushed the Russian leadership to make the need to search for a common integration idea and to revise the policy of post-Soviet integration. As a result, the idea of creating a common Eurasian space came to the fore.

“The Eurasian idea”, “Eurasia”, “Eurasianism” have become popular in post-Soviet political and expert circles against the backdrop of a common desire to form new ideological foundations for integration processes in the region and finally break away from the Soviet and even post-Soviet past, identify new guidelines in the development of regional integration, taking into account not only regional specifics, but also global development. By the beginning of the second decade of the 21st century, it became obvious that the term “post-Soviet space” no longer corresponds to the geopolitical realities in the region and new terms and approaches were needed to define new geopolitical space. The Eurasian idea, which was based on the idea of a special Eurasian way of developing a space that coincides with the borders of Russia, the Russian Empire, the USSR, and, finally, the post-Soviet space, different from the western and eastern ones, as well as the idea of civilizational pluralism and diversity, turned out to be in demand also in the context of implementation concepts of a multipolar world. So, the Eurasian space, institutionally established in 2015 in the EAEU, has become defined as one of the poles of this multipolar world. After the geopolitical catastrophe of the XXth century - the collapse of the USSR, unfortunately, neither Russia nor its neighbors were able to lay claim to full-fledged leadership in the world individually. Over time, it became obvious to the leaders of a number of post-Soviet countries that only by uniting it will be possible not only to carry out the modernization of national economies, but also create a new ‘pole’ in the world system. Otherwise, the countries of the post-Soviet space are threatened with “dissolution” in the geopolitical projects of China (the “Belt and Road” initiative), the EU (“Connecting Europe and Asia”) or the USA (“New Silk Road”).

However, the restoration of stable, strong ties between states that once constituted the republics of the USSR becomes more complicated because of a number of factors: too high level of cultural, linguistic and religious diversity, the growth of nationalism in the post-Soviet space, skepticism about post-Soviet regionalism, low efficiency of the already created regional structures, etc. All this makes achieving this goal a very difficult task, requiring new approaches to its solution, which they tried, in particular, to take into account when creating the EAEU, setting the task of creating supranational institutions and the development of the “external contour” of integration and the exit of Eurasian integration out of the post-Soviet space.

MAIN FOCUS OF THE CHAPTER

What is on the agenda today is the question of developing the basic principles of the ideology of a new generation of Eurasianism – “pragmatic Eurasianism”, which in many ways is substantially different from both its classical version and neo-Eurasianism. In this regard, this chapter proposes to conduct a comparative analysis of the main provisions of three generations of the Eurasian ideology and determine the content of modern Eurasian ideology, which formed the basis of modern Eurasian integration in the EAEU format and the concept of the “Greater Eurasian Partnership”.

In this chapter, we will proceed from the thesis of three generations of Eurasianism: classical, neo-Eurasianism and pragmatic Eurasianism.

CLASSICAL EURASIANISM

Classical Eurasian movement was born into the white Russian emigration community in Europe which was formed after the 1917 Russian revolution. The founders of classical Eurasianism defined the main goal of the new movement as finding a way out of the ideological and political crisis that had emerged in Russia, reconciling “historical Russia” with the radical changes that had taken place in it, the new socialist reality, and Marxist ideology.

The Eurasian idea as a philosophical and political trend had developed by 1920, and it was associated with the publication of “Europe and humanity” by N. Trubetskoy. (Trubetskoy, 2015) The representatives of the classical period of Eurasianism are P. Savitsky, P. Suvchinsky, L. Karsavin, G. Florovsky, etc. They were the first to come up with the concept of “historical Eurasia” as an integral ethnocultural space, while putting into the concept of “Eurasianism” its fundamental meaning and defining Russia as Eurasia. The reason for the turning of the Eurasians to geopolitics was the desire to find a justification for the historical unity of a vast territory. In practice, classical Eurasians wanted to reorganize the USSR by changing its ideology from communist to Eurasian.

According to the Russian researcher O. Lushnikov, (Lushnikov, 2018, 17) three main periods can be distinguished in the development of classical Eurasianism:

- the fundamental period (1920-1926), during which the basic postulates of Eurasianism were stated and the historical and cultural uniqueness of Russia as the embodiment of the “Eurasian world” was substantiated (in particular, in the first program document of the Eurasianists “Eurasianism: The Experience of Systematic Presentation (1926), (Evraziystvo: opyt sistematicheskogo izlozheniya, 1997, 580-588)
- the political period (1927-1932), during which an attempt to create a political party on the basis of the Eurasian movement (“Eurasian Union”) was made; (Lushnikov, 2018, 17-18) a notable feature of this period, which ended in the split of the Eurasian movement into the right and left wings, are attempts to rethink and partially accept the political and social transformations that took place in the USSR (Hauchard, 1996, 359-360) and “strengthen the pro-Soviet elements of ideology”; (Isaev, 1994, 44)
- finally, the intellectual period (1933-1988), characterized by the refusal of the Eurasianists to directly participate in the political process and the adjustment or amendment of the already existing achievements of Eurasianism. (Lushnikov, 2018, 18)

Nevertheless, it should be noted that some researchers believe that the development of Eurasian thought after the death of N. Trubetskoy in 1938 refers rather to the neo-Eurasian period, the most striking representative of which was L. Gumilev, (Pushkin, 1999, 24) then to the classical one.

In their papers, the representatives of classical Eurasianism, having studied the peculiarities of geography, religion, history, culture and philosophy, the Eurasians substantiate the uniqueness, originality and special position of the region that the Russian Empire embraced over almost four centuries of its existence. According to the Eurasianists, this particular “middle world” between Europe and Asia cre-

A Concept of Eurasia

ated a special sociocultural world, the “middle continent”. They refused to recognize the universality of European culture, hoping that “we must recognize ourselves as Eurasians in order to become Russians” (L. Gumilev), and that Russia is rooted in the East and not the West.

On the basis of the analysis of the works of the Eurasianists, we can put forward the following provisions of classical Eurasianism. Firstly, the idea of the uniqueness of the historical path of Russia (“Russia represents a special world. Its fate is largely different from that of the countries to the West of it (Europe), as well as to the South and East of it (Asia)”) (Evraziystvo, 2008) and its special “mission” (for example, P. Savitsky argues: “The mission of the Eurasian peoples is to attract other peoples of the world to take these paths (the paths of “*mestorazvitiye*” (‘place of development’), (Savitskiy, 1997, 232) that is, the “unselfish” development of peoples within their civilization according to the model, which can be called “integration””)” (Savitskiy, 1997b, 302). Secondly, classical Eurasianism has an anti-European character: in the works of the Eurasianists there is often an idea of the hostile environment by which they primarily mean Europe. (Trubetskoy, 1925, 313-314) Thirdly, the dichotomy of the West and East converging in Russia and the confrontation of the Steppe and the Forest plays a very important role, which, on the one hand, emphasizes the dynamic nature and the contradictory path of its development, and on the other, allows us to state that it is Russia that can serve “a connecting link” between Europe and Asia.

From the Eurasianists’ viewpoint, Eurasia represents an exceptional world, from which they conclude that it personifies a geographical unity, separated from Europe and Asia, whereas “Russia-Eurasia” is regarded as the core of the Old World. (Savitskiy, 1997, 297) The Eurasianists brought into the academic discourse the term “Russia-Eurasia”, and they put an emphasis on the continental nature of Russia itself, virtually denoting it as a separate civilization – the Eurasian civilization.

Today, the ideas of the classical Eurasianism still represent a logical, complete and undoubtedly original teaching, and many of their ideas are still relevant. So, for example, the geographical features of finding Russia at the junction of the East and the West, of course, should not be left without attention when building integration projects, as well as the fact that the East plays a significant role in the development of Russia. Nevertheless, over time, under the influence of changes both in the world and in Russia itself, a number of the provisions of classical Eurasianism underwent an objective revision.

NEO-EURASIANISM

Primarily it should be emphasized that the concept of neo-Eurasianism has carried out a radical and systematic development of the ideas of classical Eurasianism. Neo-Eurasianism, which theoretically was based on the revival of the classical principles of Eurasianism, revised the basic regulations of the concept in accordance with a qualitatively new stage of history and transformed these principles on the basis of ideological, philosophical and political agenda. A new stage in the evolution of Eurasianism was driven by the works of L. Gumilev, V. Kozhinov, N. Moiseev, B. Erasov, A. Panarin, A. Dugin and others.

It seems possible to distinguish at least two periods in the development of the neo-Eurasian stage:

- the first stage in the development of the neo-Eurasian idea (1989 -1993), the beginning of which is associated with publications of L. Gumilev’s book in the late 1980s; these books were based on the geographical approach of the Eurasian academic school to explaining history; subsequently, a surge of interest in Eurasianism at that time was accompanied by the reprint of the classical

authors of the Eurasian idea, as well as the publication of extracts from their heritage in scientific journals and on the pages of popular newspapers;

- the second stage of new Eurasianism, or “neo-Eurasianism” (1994–1999), began under the influence of the October events of 1993 — the artillery shelling of the Supreme Council of the Russian Federation, which raised doubts among a certain part of the scientific intelligentsia about the correctness of the historical development path chosen by Russia in 1991. Numerous studies devoted to various aspects of Eurasianism, as a possible path for the development of Russia, allowed this idea to acquire some features of a scientific theory and turned into a peculiar way of explaining social development. In the same years, through the efforts of academics, the Eurasian idea became one of the directions of the geopolitics in Russia, since it contained knowledge about geopolitical processes. The division of the theoreticians of Eurasianism into representatives of the “civilizational” and “geopolitical” approaches is connected with this.

L. Gumilev, who introduced the theory of passionarity and the theory of ethnogenesis into Eurasianism, is often referred to as “the last Eurasianist and the first geopolitician”. (Gumilev, 1991) While the founders of Eurasianism ascribed the main role in the formation of Eurasia as a “middle world” with a special mission, to the Mongols and Genghis Khan, L. Gumilev showed in his writings exactly how the multifaceted Eurasian world was born. The main idea of all his works is the unification of the Eurasian peoples around Russia, the understanding that Eurasia is a “full-fledged *“mestorazvitiye”* (‘place of development’). Gumilev believed that “Russia will be saved only as a Eurasian power”. (Gumilev, 1993)

In our opinion, one of the most important provision in the works of L. Gumilev is that he considered polycentrism as one of the most important principles of Eurasianism, (Gumilev, 1991) according to which the plurality of world of civilizations and cultures is recognized. It is this very position that is reflected in the concept of neo-Eurasian ideologists, and it is on this basis that the formation of the Eurasian Economic Union is formed today.

Currently, three main groups of supporters of Eurasianism are singled out within the framework of neo-Eurasianism. (Laruelle, 2004, 12) The first is “academic Eurasianism,” the most prominent representatives of which are A. Panarin, F. Girenok, B. Erasov. This group is characterized by an emphasis on the theoretical aspect of Eurasianism; they pay great attention to the role of Russia in the system of international relations, which, in their opinion, consists in realizing the concept of a multipolar world (Silvius, 2014, 53) and opposing the US claims to hegemony. (Schmidt, 2005, 92) The second is Eurasianism, close to E. Bagramov (the journal “Eurasia, Peoples, Religions and Cultures”) in which the priority issues are traditions, folklore and cultural characteristics. (Kineva, 2009, 2) The third is the so-called “right-wing Eurasianism” of A. Dugin, whose concept appeals in many respects to the ideas of the Empire, (Mileski, 2015, 180) the Third Rome and the Bridge between Europe and Asia. In particular, A. Dugin writes: “Outside the Empire, the Russians will lose their identity and disappear as a nation.” (Dugin, 2000, 251) A. Dugin believes that the creation of a “Eurasian strategic bloc” should be the solution to the problems that modern Russia faces in a globalizing world. Russia should become its heart, (Shaykemelev, 2010, 184) which should be implemented in three stages: first, through the consolidation of the post-Soviet space, then through rapprochement with a number of Middle Eastern countries (for example, Iran), and finally through joining the formed bloc of Europe and Japan, without which the “Eurasian unity” would not be complete. (Dugin, 2004b, 133) A. Dugin’s ideas are currently very popular in the West; however, in Russia it is increasingly estimated as too radical and somewhat idealistic, hardly applicable to modern realities. (Barros, 2019)

A Concept of Eurasia

Let's consider the main ideas of classical Eurasianism that were reviewed by the representatives of neo-Eurasianism. Firstly, the reconsideration of the concept of "Eurasia", which has received a wider geopolitical sense, was undertaken: Eurasia from the point of view of classical Eurasianists was a geographical habitat and basis for the Russian Empire, while in neo-Eurasianism, Eurasia is the future poly-confessional and multi-ethnic continental union of peoples and countries, a sort of super state, unequal in world history. According to A. Dugin, Russia and the Russian people should become the core of this state. However, in terms of equality of religions and ethnicities, only common Eurasian ideology can become the core of this Empire. It is important to note that according to the neo-Eurasianists, Russia as Eurasia should be based on national principles, on the complete rejection of any kind of Western ideology or even its elements. Secondly, neo-Eurasianism prefers the priority rejection of the Anglo-Saxon world, particularly the United States to the "critique of Romano-Germanic civilization". According to them, "Western world" is divided into the "Atlantic USA and England", on the one hand, and "Continental Europe", on the other, where "Continental Europe" is being seen as a neutral geopolitical phenomenon and is likely to become positive. In its turn, classical Eurasianism considered "the West" as a complex phenomenon alien to Russia. Thirdly, while neo-Eurasianists propose the idea of religious diversity and equality, in classical Eurasianism there was a certain hierarchy of religions: first, Orthodoxy, then the traditional religions, and then all the rest. In neo-Eurasianism all religions are on a par. Finally, the elements of radicalism were introduced in the theory of Eurasianism. Recently, the statements about the creation of the Eurasian Empire have been heard more and more often.

From the foregoing it can be stated that neo-Eurasianism revised almost all of the main principles of classical Eurasianism. Nevertheless, there are still a quite a few common ideological features, the most prominent of which is the assertion that Russia has a special path in its development that is different from the West.

It is important to note that in the 1990s the influence of the Eurasian idea on the political processes taking place in Russia and in the post-Soviet space increased. In those years, it manifested itself in the formation of Eurasian political parties and movements (Eurasia, Eurasian Party - Union of Patriots of Russia, Great Russia - Eurasian Union, Red Eurasia, International Eurasian Movement, etc.) and also in the creation of international integration associations and organizations - Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC), Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). In the conditions of an ideological vacuum, created after the collapse of the USSR, politicians "from A. Sakharov to G. Zyuganov" (Pushkin, 1999, 24) resorted to Eurasianism, since "Eurasian rhetoric" well explained issues such as Russia's position in the new world order, the need to strengthen ties with post-Soviet countries, strengthening Russia's positions and enhancing the status of Russia in the international arena.

PRAGMATIC EURASIANISM

As it had been already noted, after the collapse of the USSR, the path of seeking national identity for Russia and its neighbors was not easy. A number of countries of the post-Soviet space actually faced a choice: to become "another Europe", a certain adept of the West or to work out their own development strategy, as a result of which, in some countries, including Russia, the idea of Eurasianism was again in demand.

The appeal to Eurasianism among the post-Soviet political elite is mainly connected, on the one hand, with the desire to preserve to some extent the ties that had developed between the new independent states over the years of their joint Soviet past, and, on the other hand, giving more and more importance to the integration of the post-Soviet space, which needed an appropriate ideological “design”. However, in the early 1990s, the Eurasian idea was not accepted as fundamental for the development of integration processes in the new geopolitical space. So, the proposal of N. Nazarbayev on the creation of the Eurasian Union (EAO) in 1994 was not supported by the leaders of the post-Soviet states. This was largely due to the openly pro-Western foreign policy of the then Russia, and the economic and political weakness of the post-Soviet states, their unwillingness to implement some common projects, while the main task was to overcome the crisis as a result of the collapse of the USSR and form of its statehood.

The return to Eurasian ideas took place at the beginning of the XXI century, when a number of post-Soviet countries began to claim an active and independent role in world politics. The first Eurasian integration initiatives, undoubtedly, were largely based on the ideas of neo-Eurasianism, which took into account mainly the principles of traditional coexistence and mutual respect for the rights of peoples, their cultural, linguistic and ethnic characteristics - throughout the Eurasian space. In this regard, the contours of the unification policy were also considered as “a philosophy of integration of the post-Soviet space on a democratic, non-violent and voluntary basis, without dominance of any ethnic or religious group.” (Dugin, 2004)

Nevertheless, over time, a key factor in the development of post-Soviet Eurasian integration and the creation of the EAEU was the realization of the need for post-Soviet states to join the global economic space, not as raw materials appendages and peripheral states, but equal partners in terms of mutually beneficial cooperation. Economic motivation forms the basis for the development of Eurasian integration initiatives. So, paradoxically, in the context of the imposed sanctions against Russia by the EU and Russian counter-sanctions against EU countries, but the fact is: the EU continues to be one of the most important trade and economic partners of Russia. (Vneshnyaya trgovlya Rossiyskoy Federatsii po osnovnym stranam..., 2018)

The first of the political leaders of the post-Soviet space who turned to the Eurasian idea was N. Nazarbayev: he not only declared his commitment to the Eurasian model of state development, but also developed his own Eurasian concept. Back in 1994 he voiced the idea of creating the Eurasian Union (EAO). (Lapenko, 2013, 70) Later N. Nazarbayev published a number of articles in which he outlined his ideas about the Eurasian project, (Nazarbaev, 2011) which should be implemented through integration in the post-Soviet space with an emphasis on economic benefits. N. Nazarbayev’s model suggests an evolutionary path of development, rejection of any attempts to speed up integration, forcing any state to participate in it or putting pressure on public opinion, the support of which is considered to be one of the necessary conditions for the implementation of the project. (Nazarbaev, 2011) Another distinguishing feature is the multi-vector integration in the post-Soviet space: N. Nazarbayev advocated the development of integration not only within the EAO, but also under the auspices of other regional organizations. (Lapenko, 2013, 71) It is noteworthy that the Eurasianism of N. Nazarbayev does not look on Eurasia as a unique historical and cultural community, nor does he give Russia the role of a cultural or ideological center of integration processes in the post-Soviet space. Speaking of Kazakhstani identity, N. Nazarbayev emphasizes that the West and the East (Nazarbaev, 1997, 27) were manifested equally in it, thus regarding the Eurasian identity as a product of mixing Western and Eastern cultures and self-perceptions, and not a phenomenon that has a more integral and distinctive nature.

A Concept of Eurasia

The project of the Belarusian leader A. Lukashenko - “integration of integrations” (Lukashenko, 2011) - is also based on the idea that the economic aspect of integration is the main basis for rapprochement of the post-Soviet states, but the European vector of foreign policy remains quite large for him, first of all, economic - attractiveness. (Shevtsov, 2012, 31-33) In his article called “Fates of our integration” there are practically no references to the cultural or ideological foundations of integration; by contrast, the President emphasizes that integration has a purely economic sense, is not an end in itself, but is aimed at improving the quality of life of the citizens of integrating states, strengthening economic ties between the West and the East. (Lukashenko, 2011) The approach of the Belarusian leader, like the model of the Kazakh president, does not imply recognition by Eurasia of any exceptional or unique features; both approaches are purely pragmatic.

As for the Russian approach, the project of V. Putin says a lot about the importance of the symbolic and status functions of Eurasianism. Eurasianism was “adopted” by Russia during the 2011-2012 election campaign. Its important advantage in the context of an ideological crisis and a lack of trust in previously proposed political projects was the fact that it was largely consonant with the nostalgia for the USSR in the post-Soviet Russian society. The Eurasian project, to a certain extent, suggested the return of Russia’s lost spheres of influence through the integration and creating a “safety cushion” around the perimeter of its borders. In addition, in the current political environment, through the implementation of the Eurasian project, Russia can fully realize its potential as one of the centers of a multipolar world. For the Russian leader, the Eurasian strategy has not only an economic dimension, but also a geopolitical one and it is not only regional, it is global.

It is important to note that after the completion of the stage of economic integration in the EAEU format, it was originally planned to make the Eurasian Union as a confederate union of post-Soviet states. However, the leaders of Belarus and Kazakhstan at this stage do not support this idea, preferring to confine themselves to economic integration, insisting on its pragmatic nature.

Nevertheless, in spite of the above differences, the approaches of the founding Presidents of the EAEU have some common features: firstly, they suggest the development of the region along the path of voluntary institutional integration; secondly, the key importance is attached to economic integration, strengthening the position of Eurasia as an economically strong, competitive player on the world stage; thirdly, the Eurasian project is open and involves close cooperation with other integration projects. Thus, the approach of the founders of the EAEU has a pronounced pragmatic nature and does not have an anti-Western content.

Pragmatic Eurasianism is mainly dedicated to the pure mechanical process of post-Soviet economic integration, which by the will of its authors builds on the experience of the European Union. For this reason, one can rightly argue that pragmatic Eurasianism is not a continuation of the deep philosophical universalism that classical Eurasianism has to offer, but, in effect, is a mere development and further application of the European integration school.

Following the founders of the EAEU, the expert community turned to the development of the foundations of pragmatic Eurasianism. So, one of the modern theoreticians of pragmatic Eurasianism E. Vinokurov characterizes the pragmatic approach to Eurasianism as follows:

- “is aimed at securing “integration from below,” meaning that free movement of goods, services, labor, and capital is a guarantee of long-term stability and is crucial for the success of integration”,
- “it is an ideology of open regionalism that does not shrink into itself, but which is based on consolidation across the continent, both towards the West and the East.” (Vinokurov, 2013)

Thus, as far as the first point is concerned, this is a weak point of the current EAEU, since the countries of the Eurasian space have no rich experience in developing integration ties “from below” on the level of the business community and civil society. Moreover, a feature of the integration processes of the post-Soviet and Eurasian periods is that all initiatives come “from above” and are largely determined by the leaders of the EAEU member states. As for the second point, here the EAEU managed to achieve certain successes over 5 years of its existence: Free Trade Area Agreement with Vietnam; Interim Agreement leading to the formation of a Free Trade Area with Iran; Agreement on trade and economic cooperation with China; the EAEU has signed more than 25 Memorandums of cooperation and interaction with international organizations (CIS, UN Economic Commission for Europe, UNCTAD, etc.) and the governments of the third states, including Mongolia, Chile, Peru, Singapore and Cambodia, etc. In recent years, the expert community has voiced the idea of creating a “Greater Eurasia” that means the creation of a continental economic partnership from South-East Asia to Europe, based on a network of bilateral and multilateral trade agreements with different depth, speed and level of interaction - both in the format of free trade areas of the EAEU with the third countries, and in the format of inter-regional, inter-block trade and economic partnerships.

SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Today the main task of the EAEU’s members is to elaborate the main provisions of pragmatic Eurasianism as the ideology of modern Eurasian integration. In this regards the following recommendations could be listed:

- it is necessary to agree the EAEU countries’ approaches and views on common ideology of pragmatic Eurasianism and the future development of integration;
- the basis of current Eurasian integration should be the priorities of economic, social and cultural rapprochement;
- pragmatic Eurasianism should be based on the principles of multi-vector strategy and “open regionalism”;
- modern Eurasian integration should have both regional and global dimensions; Eurasian integration must go out the borders of the post-Soviet space;
- it is necessary to work out a “road map” for the practical implementation of the Eurasian strategy (with time constraints, terms, concrete mechanisms and instruments, etc.) based on the principles of “pragmatic Eurasianism”.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

It is important to study the prospects for the development of integration “from below” in modern Eurasia, which is a component of pragmatic Eurasianism. It is necessary to study the existing practices and projects in other regions, the experience of other regional structures in the development of cooperation between business structures and civil society for understanding the integration mechanism “from below” and assess the opportunities and prospects for the development of this level of integration in the framework of EAEU.

A Concept of Eurasia

The agenda also includes the issue of mechanisms of integration of a large number of countries and regional organizations (EAEU, ASEAN, SCO and others) into one project of “Greater Eurasia”, and creating a regional governance system in Eurasia.

CONCLUSION

Modern Eurasianism is heterogeneous and its interpretations are different: not only in historical perspective, but also in terms of the content. It is rather difficult to consider all modern trends in modern version of Eurasianism as a direct continuation of the classical Eurasianism of the 1920s, but there are a number of commonalities: recognition of the cultural and civilizational continuity and geopolitical self-sufficiency of Russia and Eurasia as a whole.

We have analyzed the process of the Eurasian idea’s evolution in historical retrospective and can conclude the following. Eurasianism was founded as an ideological and philosophical movement based on the thesis that Russia lies at the crossroads of two worlds - the East and West. Thus, Russia was regarded as a particular social and cultural world that combined both elements, with the dominant role of the Asian component. The second step of development of the Eurasian idea came into being during the disintegration of the USSR and it became a reaction to the liberal reforms of the new Russian government. Thus, neo-Eurasianism founded. At that stage, the politicization of the Eurasian idea took place, and Eurasianism began to be used in practice, becoming the ideology of political parties and social movements. Finally, today, at the third stage, Eurasianism becomes the ideological basis of the integration processes taking place on the territory of the former Soviet Union, while acquiring a pragmatic character, for which integration is not a goal, but a tool for “solving urgent problems of the states involved, the main of which is modernization of their economies”. (Vinokurov, 2013)

To conclude, we can point out the following. Firstly, at all stages of the development of the Eurasian ideology, interest in its main provisions, the idea of a “special path” for the development of the Russian state, was associated with a crisis of national identity in Russia. Secondly, in its evolution Eurasianism was transformed from an anti-Western ideology to a poly-civilization model that allows interaction with various political societies and systems. Thirdly, the key priority of pragmatic Eurasianism is development of economic integration, strengthening the position of Eurasia as an economically strong player on the world stage. Finally, in terms of pragmatic Eurasianism current “Eurasia” is not “Russia” or “post-Soviet space” anymore, this phenomenon has not only regional, but global dimension as well and is focused on active international cooperation with different parts of “Greater Eurasia”. Thus, it seems that pragmatic Eurasianism is influenced by the classical Eurasianism and neo-Eurasianism rather slightly and represents itself as an absolutely new stage in Eurasian idea’s development.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Eurasian Economic Commission (EAEC): The permanent regulatory body of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), which aimed to ensure the functioning and development of the EAEU, and developing proposals for the further development of integration.

Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU): An international organization for regional economic integration that has international legal personality and is established by the Treaty on the Eurasian Economic Union.

Greater Eurasian Partnership: The current Eurasian strategy of Russia, aimed at the formation of a complex, multi-level system of multilateral cooperation with the participation of the EAEU, ASEAN, APEC and SCO countries.

One Belt, One Road (OBOR), or 'Belt and Road' Initiative (BRI): The Chinese infrastructure mega-project which aimed at connectivity with Europe via Central Asia to increase trade between the Asia Pacific Region (APR) and Europe. It consists of two components: the land transportation infrastructure (known as Silk Road Economic Belt (SREB) or the One Belt), mostly via high speed trains and the sea transportation infrastructure (known as the Maritime Silk Road), via trans-ocean ships.

Chapter 2

Eurasian Regionalism: Specifics, Problems, and Prospects

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ABSTRACT

The term ‘Eurasia’ is an ambiguous concept that includes in different studies: ‘Greater Eurasia’, which is associated with the Eurasian continent; ‘Central Eurasia’ as a post-Soviet space; and the term Eurasia can be associated with specific integration projects in Eurasia, such as Eurasian Economic Union. This chapter defines Eurasian regionalism and prospects for its development. Authors analyze modern scientific discourse around Eurasian integration and Eurasian regionalism. They examine modern approaches to regionalism and identify some of the distinctive features of the construction of regions.

INTRODUCTION

Eurasian regionalism is certainly amongst the most complex phenomena to study (Obydenkova & Libman, 2019). A large number of works are dedicated to Eurasia and the processes of integration within it. ‘Eurasian regionalism’ is a term usually used in the English-language scientific discourse (Molchanov, 2005; Aris, 2011; Gast, 2017; Kavalski, 2012; Obydenkova & Libman, 2019). These authors apply the term ‘Eurasian regionalism’ to completely different integration projects: the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU). In Russian discourse, authors predominantly apply terms such as ‘integration in the post-Soviet space’ and ‘integration projects in Eurasia’ (Zhiltsov, 2016; Zinoviev & Troitskij, 2016; Vasilieva & Lagutina, 2017; Lagutina, 2017). Nevertheless, the terms ‘integration’ and ‘regionalism’ are quite different from each other. Integration can be viewed either as a unification process in world politics, which is used by different countries in order to effectively solve global and regional problems—the ‘challenges’

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Eurasian Regionalism

of globalisation (Lagutina, 2018)—or as a model of conscious and active participation by a group of countries in the process of global stratification of the world (Butorina, 2011).

The term ‘Eurasia’ is an ambiguous concept which manifests in different studies as ‘Greater Eurasia’ associated with the Eurasian continent; ‘Central Eurasia’ as a post-Soviet space; and finally, the term ‘Eurasia’ can also be associated with specific integration projects in Eurasia, such as the Eurasian Economic Union.

An analysis of contemporary Russian scientific discourse demonstrates that researchers practically do not apply the concept of Eurasian regionalism. Eurasian regionalism is often synonymous with Eurasian integration, which is considered either as a project of the Russian Federation aimed at building macro-regional/trans-regional integration (Vinokurov & Libman, 2012a), or as a process of building integration organisations in Eurasia.

In this study, the authors set an ambitious task to determine what Eurasian regionalism is and what the prospects for its development are, by applying a regionalism-based approach. Regionalism is a complex concept that explains the process of political regional integration as a process of building a ‘relatively independent subsystem of interstate relations, united primarily in order to solve the concrete political problems, which are specific to this particular region’ (Voskresensky, 2012). However, it also explains the processes by which regions are made and unmade, i.e., regionalisation and region-building (Söderbaum, 2016).

The logic of the paper follows this structure: in the first part of the study, the authors will analyse the modern scientific discourse around Eurasian integration and Eurasian regionalism and determine the main concepts used in the study; in the second part, the authors will analyse modern approaches to regionalism and identify some of the distinctive features of the construction of regions at the present stage; the third part of the paper will analyse the distinctive features of modern Eurasian regionalism, challenges and the prospects for its development. At the end of the chapter, there will be some recommendations for the development of Eurasian regionalism.

The novelty of the research lies in the comparison of contemporary Russian discourse around Eurasian regionalism with the modern views of the theorists of regionalism, as well as in the application of theoretical experience to the implementation of Eurasian regionalism. Another objective of the study is to show that despite the common history and economic relations of the Soviet period, several regional projects are developing parallelly in the post-Soviet space, initiated by countries of the region and by non-regional actors.

Background

There is no clear understanding of what Eurasian regionalism is per se. While assessing the Russian Science Citation Index, there are only a few papers where the term ‘Eurasian regionalism’ is used at least in the title or in the list of keywords. In general, in Russian discourse, there is no clear differentiation between regionalism and integration. Practically all papers discuss the different forms of integration in the Eurasian space, such as the CIS, the SCO, etc. The only original approach to regional integration in the post-Soviet space is Vinokurov and Libman’s (2012a) approach of ‘holding-together regionalism’. This approach explains the regional integration of countries which were until recently a part of a single political entity.

The second challenge for researchers is how to define what ‘Eurasia’ is. Here the authors agree with Vinokurov and Libman (2012b) that Eurasia is a relatively clear concept in terms of physical geography,

but much less so for the social sciences. They suggested three ways of interpreting Eurasia: as a post-soviet Eurasia, Eurasia from the ideological interpretation of Eurasianism and ‘pragmatic Eurasianism’. Though this study follows this classification, the authors present their own understanding of these different interpretations.

The first interpretation is limited because it includes only the Former Soviet Union (FSU) countries and explains the integration processes on this territory. The second has grown from the Slavic Eurasianism ideology of the early 20th century, which was then re-interpreted by A. Dugin (2010) in the framework of so-called ‘neo-Eurasianism’. The third interpretation of Eurasia focuses on interdependencies between the European and Asian parts of the continent. Vinokurov and Libman (2012b) also mentioned that originally it was Nazarbaev (1994) who suggested a pragmatic approach to the future development of post-Soviet integration. It was a functional approach to develop economic and cultural integration with the inclusion of other parts of Eurasia besides FSU states.

Thus, in Russian scientific discourse, there are several variants of interpretations of what ‘Eurasia’ is. What is even more complicated is that in the Russian discourse there is a mutual substitution of several groups of terms, which are not synonymous from the point of view of the authors of this study. Firstly, this refers to the synonymous use of the terms ‘Eurasia’ and the Eurasian Economic Union. Most of the articles in the Russian Science Citation Index describe Eurasian integration through the prism of development, first of the Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC) and then of the EAEU. Secondly, the terms ‘regionalism’ and ‘integration’ are synonymous in the works of several experts. Therefore, there is a need to determine from the very beginning what regionalism is and then to define the features of Eurasian regionalism, based on the classification of the main features of regionalism as a scientific approach, in order to finally proceed to the analysis of the main challenges of Eurasian regionalism.

MAIN FOCUS OF THE CHAPTER

Issues, Controversies, Problems

In order to clarify what Eurasian regionalism is, it is fitting to begin with the explanation of what regionalism is and what features it has. In the second part, the authors will analyse the distinctive features of modern Eurasian regionalism and the prospects for its development.

REGIONALISM AS THEORETICAL APPROACHES

Regionalism as a scientific term is quite difficult to define. Following Söderbaum (2015), the authors agree that one of the main characteristics of studies on regionalism is that regionalism means different things to different people in different contexts and time-periods. The diversity of approaches demonstrates the different ways of regional formation and the pluralism of its forms.

The term ‘regionalism’ has become widespread because of the new vision of the emerging regional space after the end of the Cold War. It was initially related to the emergence of supranational regions in the aftermath of globalization. Nowadays, theoretical approaches to regional processes are divided into ‘old’ and ‘new’ regionalism; regionalism in the ‘first’, ‘second’, ‘third’ generation; economic, monetary, cultural and security regionalism; cross-, inter-, trans-, multi-regionalism; ‘pure’ and ‘hybrid’ region-

Eurasian Regionalism

alism; aggressive, extroverted, open, neo-liberal, offensive, introverted, closed, defensive, regulated, developing regionalism; low-level and high-level regionalism; North, South, North–South regionalism; informal and institutional regionalism (Börzel, 2011).

Regionalist approaches can be systematized differently. From the theoretical and methodological points of view, there are three classic logics of regional construction: strategic (realism), functional (liberal school) and normative (social constructivism). According to the strategic logic, regional integration processes intensify owing to the need for strengthening collective defence and security. The functional logic forms the basis for the creation of institutions responsible for the resolution of specific problems, dispute settlement and development of economic interdependence and integration. It also leads to the formation of cohesion and stronger representation in the world arena; the groupings of developing countries are an example as there are leads to the formation of a regional identity based on a common identity, culture and values.

In the paper titled ‘Explaining the Resurgence of Regionalism in World Politics’, Hurrell (1995) also identifies three clusters of scientific schools within the framework of regional studies according to three levels of analyses—world, region, nation. The first one involves system theories (neo-realism, the structural interdependence theory and the theory of globalization), the second cluster includes the theories of regionalism and interdependence (neo-functionalism, neoliberal institutionalism, and constructivism) and the third one is the theory for studying the internal processes in the states (theory of regionalism and the formation of the nation-state, the theory of modes and democratization and the convergence theory).

Referring to history, five waves of theoretical approaches to regionalism can be defined: ‘early’, ‘old’, ‘new’, ‘comparative’ and ‘post-revisionist’ regionalism. However, these terms can have several interpretations.

‘Early’ regionalism is associated with a rich variety of geographically confined empires, kingdoms, alliances, pacts, unions and confederations between assorted political units. Fawcett (1995) argues that in Europe, the existence of a ‘concert’ or balance of powers can be understood as a regional order. From a larger perspective, regionalism in different forms has always been with us.

‘Old’ regionalism is a symbol of scientific schools explaining the nature of the integration process during the Cold War (realism, functionalism and institutionalism). Other forms of integration (cultural and educational) and policy development were studied as consequences or spill-over effects of economic ties (Haas, 1970; Vayrynen, 2003). Realistic concepts examined the formation of the military–political integration and associations within the framework of the existing anarchical system of international relations. The term ‘region’ as a ‘subsystem’ was used within the framework of the system analysis of Kaplan (1957) and Waltz (1979). The subsystem had the same features as the global one, including polarity and balance of power allowing regions to have their own institutes and sub-regions (Wiener & Diez, 2009). The formation of integration blocks went under the dualistic confrontation of the East and the West.

Söderbaum (2015) and some other experts further divided ‘old’ integration into two types according to the ideas behind the construction of the regions: European/western and developmental. The first type is linked to the discussion about ‘regional integration’ in Europe, particularly to the formation of the European Communities Functionalism and Institutionalism, studying mainly the development of the economic integration model (Söderbaum, 2015). The second type grew up on the wave of anti-colonial movements and was associated with the integration in the developing world, especially in Latin America and Africa, but to some extent also in Asia and other developing regions.

The ‘new’ regionalism theory of the 1990s was a response to the decentralization of the international system (Fawcett, 2004). On one hand, there was the weakening role of the UN; on the other hand, there

was the activation of regional integration in Europe, Asia and America. Such a situation created an impetus for further studies. In the paper titled 'Theorizing the Rise of Regionness', Hettne and Söderbaum (2000) considered meta-theoretical approaches, such as global social theory, social constructivism and comparative area studies to be points of departure for the 'new regionalism'.

'New' regionalists emphasise on the concept of 'region' as an actor of international relations. Thus, regions stopped being objects of international relations and transformed into independent subjects as actors of international relations. As a result, a new niche in international relations studies was formed, different from both global and national levels. Regions thus transformed into some kind of 'powers' affecting both regional administration and regional solutions (Buzan & Waever, 2003).

Thus, 'new' regionalism is aimed to study the process of region-building. It is mostly an open variant of integration which involves different aspects including economic, environmental, social, political, etc. This approach focuses on the processes taking place within regions and the causes and origins of regional consolidation. Regionalism is interpreted as the practice of construction of regions, including stages from 'geographic space' to 'region-state' (Hettne, 2005).

It was not until recently that the term 'comparative' regionalism emerged. The authors using this term represent a new stage in the evolution of region-based approaches, which is a comprehensive study of regional processes. Nevertheless, scholars are yet to generate a widely accepted definition of 'comparative' regionalism. From one point of view, the term 'comparative' regionalism means a comparative analysis of different regional theoretical schools; from another, it is a comparative analysis of different regions or regional project types, etc.

In some interpretations, the term 'comparative' regionalism means the comparative analysis of different theoretical schools—realist, liberal, institutionalism, etc. (Laursen, 2003). By applying this term, Söderbaum (2015) demonstrates the variety of interpretations in the framework of all schools of regionalism. Acharya (2012), primarily studying the integration processes in Asia, calls into question the relevance of the EU's experience as an example of evolutionary construction. According to Acharya (2012), 'comparative' regionalism is a theory of regionalism in the broadest sense, taking into account the historiography of research in this area and going beyond theories of regional integration and comparative regional integration. Comparative regionalism is an approach offering to give up Eurocentricity while studying integration processes. Regional integration can take different paths depending on historical, cultural and linguistic traditions.

The 'post-revisionist' approach emerged owing to the understanding of the new role of EU as a global actor and the recognition of using some of the tools of region-building from European practice. In the work titled 'Interregionalism and the European Union: A Post-Revisionist Approach to Europe's Place in a Changing World' by Telo, Fawcett, and Ponjaert (2015), the authors raise this question: what is the current practice of regionalism and interregionalism? They derive three formulas for building regionalism and interregionalism. The first is an orthodox option, involving the construction of regional and interregional relationships based on the flagship experience of the EU; the second is a revisionist option, which questions EU experience and emphasises the role of other actors and models of building regions; the third model is post-revisionist, which is a synthesis of the previous two options, namely the recognition of the role of the EU as a model of integration and its influence and role in the formation of regions outside Europe, but also the recognition of the importance of other projects and the recognition that the EU is only one of many variants of regionalism (Telo et al., 2015, pp. 47–49).

Thus, one can see that the study of regionalism demonstrates serious rethinking of theoretical issues, such as the principles of forming regions, the criteria of regionalism, the role of institutions in the process

Eurasian Regionalism

of region-building, the role of external and internal actors, etc. There is no singular ‘good’ or ‘effective’ type of regionalism. The inefficiency of the ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach in this case becomes obvious. The fact that every case is unique should be noted. Despite the fact that each region has its own way to construct the regional project, it is necessary to identify the typological features of regionalism in order to determine the difficulties that Eurasian regionalism faces.

FEATURES OF REGIONALISM

In order to determine what type of regionalism is being built in Eurasia, it is necessary to identify the typical features of regionalism by summarising the modern theoretical approaches to regionalism.

The first characteristic of regionalism-based studies is that regional construction is a politically motivated action. The creation of a region can be caused by the need to solve specific tasks, which is initiated by countries within the region itself, or it can be the result of an hegemonic integration policy of a regional or world power. A distinctive feature of regionalism is that the initiators of the construction of a region can be not only states claiming to be a leader in the region, but also a group of state actors, as well as non-state actors.

The second distinctive feature of regionalism is the interrelation between the process of building a region (regionalism) and the inner processes of forming a region (regionalisation). Regionalisation is seen as the motivation of various participants in the region to form integration, common norms and a regional identity. Regionalisation could be defined as a process of change from relative heterogeneity and lack of cooperation to increased cooperation, integration, convergence, complementarity and identity in a variety of fields, such as culture, security, economic development and politics, within a given geographical space (Schulz, Söderbaum, & Öjendal, 2001). In general, ‘regionalism’ is understood as a strategy for the formation of a regional space and ‘regionalisation’ is simply the practical implementation of this strategy (Shulz et al, 2001; Lagutina, 2016).

In regionalism-based approaches, much attention is paid to the normative and ideological foundations of building a region. Söderbaum and Hettne (2002) introduce the term ‘regionness’ (regional cohesion) into scientific circulation. This is the process wherein a geographical area is transformed from a passive object to an active subject, capable of articulating the transnational interests of the emerging region (Hettne & Söderbaum, 2000). Regional cohesion may have several forms: regional space, regional complex, regional society, regional community and regional state. The level of ‘regionness’ can both increase and decrease (Hettne & Söderbaum, 2000). Therefore, researchers focus on how the region is formed and what factors can contribute to regionalisation. In this context, an important emphasis is placed on the normative component. Ideas and norms have begun to play a primary role in modern regional processes, often outpacing economic and political opportunities.

Regionalism can be of different types according to its dimension, actors and levels. Regional projects can vary in terms of monetary, economic, security-related, community building and other dimensions. Regions may have a different structure in the composition of the actors. It can be both states and non-state actors. States within a region may also have differences in their types of political regime, economic indicators and national interests. Moreover, the region itself can become an actor and enter into inter-regional relations. Regionalism could be lower-level and sometimes ‘be less formal and inter-state than formal macroregions; they may ultimately be more reflective of private sector interests than those of either states or civil societies’ (Hettne, 2005). Different types of trans-regional and interregional forms of

cooperation and interaction represent higher-level regionalism. Regionalism can be ‘open’ and ‘closed’. Open regionalism allows the project participant to participate in other integration projects without infringing on their rights. Closed regionalism assumes the choice of the project participants to partake in only the particular regional project. This is usually a type of region with the presence of a hegemon.

The most controversial issues amongst experts are the territorial borders of the region and the presence of a regional organisation as an important attribute of the region. A region is usually defined as a unity of two or more states having common borders and close intra-regional relations (Buzan & Waever, 2003). Despite the emergence of studies on ex-territorial regionalism or alternative forms of regionalism, such as BRICS (Telo, 2017; Sergunin & Gao, 2018; Mikhaylenko & Mikhaylenko, 2016), most researchers study specific geographic regions or regionalisms (European regionalism, Asian regionalism, East European regionalism, Central Asian regionalism, etc.). Among other reasons, this is because researchers study specific regional structures and institutions that were formed in a particular region with a specific set of participants. Regional institutes are traditional objects of research. However, it cannot be argued that a regional organisation is the final product of an effective regional policy. For researchers, on one hand, there is no direct relationship between the process of building a region and the creation of a regional organisation; on the other hand, the emergence or existence of a regional integration institute may be a sign of one of the stages of regionalism.

Summing up, a region is a definite construct, which can have different dimensions, a set of actors, a level of cohesion, a level of regionalisation, and may not always have specific geographical and institutional boundaries. The identification of the features of a regionalist approach allows us to find out and define the different types of regionalism in Eurasia.

DIFFERENT FORMS OF EURASIAN REGIONALISM

At the very outset, it is necessary to define what Eurasia and Eurasian regionalism mean within the context of this study. Since regionalism presupposes the implementation of a project, here the authors will consider those projects that were implemented by Russia and a number of countries in the post-Soviet space. The authors deliberately exclude the EU and China, since despite the fact that their projects can geographically be regarded as Eurasian, conceptually they are completely different projects.

In spite of the argument that regionalism and integration are not synonymous terms, regionalism may still include the formation of a regional integration institution. Hence, the study considers the evolution of regional projects in Eurasia, also relying on integration projects that emerged after the collapse of the USSR. In order to determine which type of regionalism was dominant in certain chronological periods, some criteria are established: aim(s) and the dimension of the project(s), the presence of regional institution(s), set of leading actors, a level of regionalisation and the level of ‘regionness’. According to these criteria, it is possible to identify six types of regions. The types are indicated in Table 1.

The first and largest in terms of the number of participants was the regional project of ‘natural integration’, which aimed to create the Commonwealth of Independent States. From the point of view of the researchers of this paper, the initiators and leaders of this project were the three states that initiated the signing of the Bialowieza Agreements. The treaty was discussed in December 1991. The idea behind concluding an agreement was the need to solve problems related to the self-dissolution of the USSR. It was an attempt to transform a federal state into an integration project. The level of regionalisation was quite high, as it was required to solve a large number of tasks, such as border control, establishing eco-

Eurasian Regionalism

Table 1. Different types of Eurasian regionalism

Period	Project	Aim and Dimension	Leading Actor(s)	Level of Regionalization	Level of Regionness	Type of Regionalism	Institution(s)
1991-1994 (1996)	'Natural' Integration	Aim: integration of the former-USSR states Multidimensional	Russia, Kazakhstan, Belorussia, Ukraine	High	Regional space	Closed	CIS
1995-1999	Deeper integration	Aim: multi-speed integration Dimension: economic and financial	Russia, Kazakhstan, Belorussia	Low	Regional Space	Closed	Custom Union (1995) Treaty on deep integration in the economic and humanitarian fields (1996) Treaty establishing the Union State (1999) The Treaty on the Customs Union and the Common Economic Space (1999)
1997 – 2008 / 2017	'Democratic' regionalism	Aim: democratic and economic development. Multidimensional: economic, cultural and political cooperation	Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine, Azerbaijan	Low	Regional space	Open	GUAM Advisory Body (1997) Charter of GUAM (2001)
2002-2004 / 2017	Central-Asian Regionalism	Aim: democratic and economic development. Dimension: identity building	Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan	Low	Regional space	Open	Central Asian Economic Union (CAU)
2000-2014	Russian-led Complex Regionalism	Aim: a New World Order Dimension: economic, political, military	Russia, China	Low	Regional Complex	Closed	SCO CSTO EuAsEc
2015-to present	Three-Level Regionalism or Greater Eurasian Partnership	Aim: a New Polycentric World Order Dimension: economic, political	Russia	In economic sphere – medium	Regional Complex (EAEU) Regional Space (SCO, BRICS)	Closed	EAEU SCO + BRICS

conomic relations, etc. The period of this project is limited to 1994 because the idea of 'natural integration', which was at the core of this integration project, met many challenges. New agreements in the framework of the CIS did not include all members. In 1993, the CIS member states signed the Treaty establishing the Economic Union, which, in particular, involves the free movement of goods, services, labour and capital and the implementation of agreed policies in areas such as monetary relations, prices, taxation, currency regulation and customs duties. In 1994, an agreement was signed to establish a free trade zone and in 1995 three CIS countries (Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan) signed an agreement of the Customs Union. However, the effectiveness of such contracts was low: not all states of CIS signed such documents and those who signed, did not perform; some states even made amendments to the signed documents.

The newly independent states began to actively build their national sovereignty and national identity, while resisting the mechanistic variant of integration. The economic situation of many countries did not allow to build an effective economic integration. However, the most important issue for the CIS was the question of the objectives of this regional project. It was in 1994 when speaking at Moscow State University, Nazarbayev put forward a new concept of Eurasian integration, the goal of which was a deeper economic and cultural integration association built on an equal basis for each participant. In November 1997, there was a serious conflict between some CIS Presidents and Yeltsin on the future development of the CIS. The CIS was called the territory of frozen conflicts (Tokayev, 2008, pp. 270–272). Thus, the CIS could not cope with internal problems and national interests. The absence of a conceptual content of integration has turned this regional project into an intergovernmental forum that exists till today.

The formation of the Customs Union allowed one to enter a new project within the CIS with a small number of participants. The term 'deeper integration' appeared in this period and the three states of Kazakhstan, Russia and Belarus began to develop more intensive economic and political relations. Highlighting this period, the authors wanted to emphasize that this was a period of a search for ways of integration without clear leadership. Some significant agreements were signed: Customs Union (1995),

Treaty on Deepening Integration in Economic and Humanitarian Areas (1996), Treaty on the Creation of a Union State (1999), Treaty on the Customs Union and the Single Economic Space (1999). Nevertheless, the level of regionalisation was not high; the scope of cooperation was mainly economic and financial and the type of “regionness” was likely to be regional space rather than regional complex. There was also an attempt to balance the bigger project of the CIS and the development of more intensive cooperation between these countries.

The third and fourth types of regionalism, ‘democratic regionalism’ and ‘Central Asian regionalism’, were connected to the emergence of alternative projects, such as the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development (GUAM) and Central Asian Economic Community (CAEC). The GUAM was established on 10 October 1997 during the Second Council of Europe Summit in Strasbourg. The heads of state of Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova adopted the Joint Communiqué of the Heads of State which stressed the need for the development of quadrilateral cooperation for strengthening stability and security in Europe, based on respect for the principles of national sovereignty, territorial integrity, inviolability of state borders, democracy, the supremacy of law and human rights. The Central Asian Economic Union (CAU) was initiated by three states: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. On 23 September 1993, an agreement was signed followed by a proclamation of a “single economic space” on 10 February 1994 and the establishment of an Interstate Council with an Executive Committee on 8 July 1994. In 1996, Tajikistan joined the Union. GUAM and CAU were created as projects independent from the Russian Federation. GUAM was aimed at creating a platform for the cooperation of newly independent countries with further integration into European regional institutions. CAU was created as a regional complex aimed at solving the problems of the region. These regional projects remained marginal for a long time because the countries themselves were not ready to resolve issues of cooperation due to their internal political and economic reasons (economic crises, colour revolutions, conflicts), as well as because of Russia’s rejection of independent projects, especially with the participation of the European Union. Both projects are alive and were reactivated in 2017–2018. Central Asian Economic Union was established as the Central Asian Union in 2007 and in 2018 there was a summit of five Central Asian countries, which identified new tasks for their cooperation. On 27 March 2017, a summit of member countries of the GUAM was held in Kiev, the main theme of which was full-scale cooperation along with creating a free trade agreement and a transport corridor within the GUAM. It is difficult to measure the level of regional cohesion within these projects; nevertheless, regionalisation is progressing, albeit slowly. Despite their long history as regional projects, they are still only at the beginning of their construction.

The fifth regional project, ‘Russian-led complex regionalism’ can be associated with the new Russian activities in the post-Soviet space, the emergence of new political and military institutions such as CSTO (2002) and SCO (2001) and the developing economic project of Eurasian Economic Community. A new regional project can be described from a quote from Dugin (2010) as a ‘tool for creating a new world order’. There are many disputes regarding whether the new concept of regional construction is a continuation of classical Eurasianism or neo-Eurasianism (Laurell, 2016); Lagutina & Temnyshev, 2016; Nikulina & Toropygin, 2017). The authors of this study consider this project as being implemented in the centre of Eurasia and having a new ideological justification, being only partially connected with the ideas of classical Eurasianism. The extension of NATO and the EU, the US presence in Afghanistan and accordingly, the strengthening of the US and the EU’s influence on the Central Asian countries pushed Russia to build its regional order in Eurasia and to strengthen the position of the Russian Federation in the world.

Eurasian Regionalism

The idea of a 'pragmatic' Eurasianism (Vinokurov & Libman, 2012b) or a new world order (Dugin, 2010) was to simultaneously use several regional institutions with the specific objective of strengthening the Russian Federation's role in different directions. Russia's participation in the SCO was aimed at the creation of a pluralistic world order with the active participation of Russia, China and later, India and Pakistan. The CSTO should be a new version of the Warsaw Pact and include not only the post-Soviet countries but also the countries of Eastern Europe. The Eurasian Economic Community had as its goal the continuation of economic integration within the CIS countries. In all these institutions, Russia had to play a leading role. The regionalism of the Russian Federation was aimed at raising the status of the Russian Federation in the world arena and creating a pluralistic or multipolar world order to counter the Anglo-Saxon world order (Dugin, 2010). From the point of view of this chapter's authors, the anti-Western character of regionalism and the Russian messianic idea of creating a pluralistic world order could be associated with Eurasianism, but in general it is a combination of complex regionalism, including three dimensions: military (CSTO), political and economic (SCO) and economic (EurAsEC), and inter-regionalism as a way to establish the global role of Russia. Despite the fact that this complex regionalism has an ideological background, it demands much effort, resources and attractiveness, which could push different partners to participate in this project. At the core of the project was an idea to create a regional security complex including SCO and CSTO and regional economic complex, such as the EurAsEC (Nikitina, 2009). In the beginning stages, the level of regionalisation was high; countries held annual meetings, created institutional infrastructure, invited other partners as observers (India, Pakistan in SCO). In December 2003, the EurAsEC was granted observer status at the UN General Assembly; in 2010, there was an agreement on creating the Eurasian Economic Union in 2015.

This large-scale project was met with resistance from a number of states, such as Ukraine and Georgia, that aimed to participate in Western European projects. Russia also faced the challenge of the enduring competition with other regional political and economic actors, primarily EU and China. China's active role and economic expansion in Central Asia, which had already resulted in the transition to Yuan payments and transactions, posed a serious threat to Russian regionalism. EU's neighbourhood program has also become a great challenge for Russia's integration attempts in the region. The problem of unsustainable political regimes within post-Soviet countries can be added to this. 'Colour revolutions' in Ukraine and Georgia led to a cooling of relations amongst post-Soviet countries.

During the period of 2000–2015, Russia initiated the creation of several organisations, but in some way, these regional structures have not been coinciding with Russian interests. Russian dissatisfaction with participation of regional organisations such as the CIS, CSTO, SCO, Customs Union is associated with the lack of common understanding of the goals of these organisations, the differently oriented activity of members, the lack of any real effectiveness of the organisations (the case of Kyrgyzstan's revolt in 2010) and the rivalry within organisations (China and Russia in SCO). In 2008, members of all these organisations formally supported the actions of Russia in South Ossetia and Abkhazia (Medvedev, 2008), but they didn't acknowledge the independence of these countries. The Ukrainian crisis has drawn a line under this project of the Russian Federation and, having appeared in new conditions, Russia began to put forward new projects.

The period of 2015–2019 has become the time of deepening crises in the post-Soviet space: economic, political, territorial. Russia's complex regional approach has met many difficulties. China has begun to play a bigger role in the SCO, having initiated a new mega-regional project called 'Belt and Road'. The place and role of Russia in this project is rather unclear. Additionally, the emergence of new members of the SCO, India and Pakistan, created a new balance of power within this regional association. The

idea of creating the EAEU emerged in 2010–2011, but by the time it was created in January 2015, this organisation was faced with the conflict of creating a common economic space under EU and NATO sanctions against Russia and contra-sanctions by Russia against EU and NATO countries. The CSTO continues to exist, but there has been no clear progress in the development of military–political integration.

However, Russia did not abandon the project to build a new polycentric world order. Since the previous version of integrated regionalism did not provide the expected results for Russia, a new format of regionalism appeared. The multiplying and overlapping regional and interregional projects around the world are a challenge for the Russian political elite. In its turn, Russia does not cease to generate projects of regional and interregional importance. The ‘Great Eurasian Partnership’ (GEP) project became a new construct of Russian-led regionalism. The idea of forming the Great Eurasian Partnership was first announced in the President’s Address to the Federal Assembly on December 3 2015. During 2016–2018, at various venues and meetings, the President of the Russian Federation V.V. Putin actively used the concept of the ‘Great Eurasian Partnership’. Nevertheless, there is no clarity about how and with whom this partnership will be built. Glazyev (2016), a representative of the President’s administration of the RF, formulated the ideology of this project. From his point of view, it is a project to create a common economic space of harmonious and mutually beneficial cooperation ‘from Lisbon to Vladivostok’ (Glazyev, 2016).

From this paper’s authors’ perspective, this project mainly relies on those institutions in which Russia plays the main role, to a large extent in the EAEU and to a lesser extent in the SCO. This is predominantly an interregional project that—through the work of regional institutions with the participation of the Russian Federation—allows to define a new role for Eurasia as a linking project for Europe and Asia with an active and leading role by Russia. The orbit of this mega-project includes not only China, but also regional institutions such as ASEAN, the EU and others. Today, the GEP project raises scepticism from European partners; nevertheless, this idea has been repeatedly mentioned in all official speeches by the Russian government. This demonstrates the process of seeking new ideas and forms of regionalism in Eurasia. Thus, Russian-led regionalism works on three levels: regional, interregional and global. On the regional level, the EAEU is considered as a basis for integration; on the interregional level EAEU is expected to develop a relationship with other countries (free trade zones with Vietnam, Iran, etc.) and with regional organizations (SCO, CIS, ASEAN, EU and others); on the global level, Russia is counting on BRICS.

Nowadays, it is possible to witness a new vector of regional development in Eurasia, which is initiated by Russia. Russia takes an active part in new regional formation. What will be the form of regional development? Time will tell. However, new forms of regional integration impact the whole dynamics of regional and interregional development in Eurasia.

CHALLENGES TO EURASIAN REGIONALISM

The post-Soviet space is not an exception from this region-building process. There are many regional projects that are being carried out in the post-Soviet space now: the Commonwealth of Independent States, Organization for Democracy and Economic Development, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the new forms of old ideas of Eurasian Union. Nevertheless, the majority of these organizations, according to many experts, cannot be regarded as examples of efficient integration (Kubicek, 2009; Gower, 2014).

Regional integration in Eurasia is still marked by the processes of multiplication of treaties without any demonstration of real effectiveness in the fields of both of economic and security-related cooperation.

The criteria of regionalism chosen by this paper's authors include the idea that regionalism is primarily a project initiated by a specific actor, regionalism almost always depends on the success of the regionalisation process and the level of 'regionness' is important. As noted above, the territorial framework of the project and presence of regional institutions are the most controversial elements of regionalism; therefore, the presence of a large number of institutions on the former USSR territory is not a criterion for assessing the effectiveness of regionalism in the post-Soviet space. It is important to understand why these institutions do not work. Why is Eurasian regionalism still looking enigmatic or ineffective? There are both external and internal challenges to Eurasian regionalism.

Amongst the external challenges to constructing Eurasian regionalism, one could cite the activities of external actors as well as the relatively short time elapsed since attempts to construct the region began. Eurasian regionalism was started in a time when the European Union demonstrated effective development of multidimensional regionalism. European Union started involved post-Soviet countries in new programs. EU was the first to proclaim the Eastern partnership program with the aim of involving newly independent countries in different forms of cooperation. After September 11 2001 the USA initiated their security activity in Central Asia. China has taken a more prominent role in the framework of the SCO and proclaimed its global initiative, 'Belt and Road'. All these actors have strong interests in the post-Soviet space and they have enough resources to promote their activity. Therefore, external integration projects and the policies of the great powers in the region introduce challenges for Eurasian projects. Since 2014, the sanction policy against the Russian Federation and the counter-sanction policy of the Russian Federation against the EU and NATO countries has complicated the coordination of work within the EAEU (Vereschagina & Nevzorov, 2018). Despite a number of experts considering the counteraction of world powers as an important factor in restraining the development of integration in Eurasia (Kalmykov & Ogneva, 2017), there are also certain internal challenges.

Firstly, it is necessary to determine who and why initiates a project. In the previous section, the authors have tried to show that, since 1991, several different regional projects have been formed on the Eurasian territory. These projects were initiated by different regional actors. Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Ukraine, Georgia and some other newly independent states have their own vision of developing regional and interregional cooperation. The idea to re-build the USSR on the new foundations has not worked. The first idea of 'natural integration', which should ideally be effective and productive because all members of the CIS were the part of the federal state, has failed. Moreover, some experts argue that Soviet legacy could not work effectively for integration in the FSU (Libman & Obydenkova, 2018).

The problem is that the content of initiated projects is quite different. Russia is building a self-centred project or a neo-hegemonic project (Molchanov, 2018), which is being built from above, while assuming the significant role of Russia in Eurasia as a connecting element between the EU and the Asia-Pacific countries (Baranov, 2017). Other projects initiated by Kazakhstan, Ukraine and others show that these projects involve equal participation of participants, and these projects are open; they presuppose the participation in other projects with other countries and regions outside Eurasia. The study emphasizes that Russia is not the only active actor in the creation of regionalism and Russian projects also have numerous problems.

Russia has initiated several projects, starting from the 2000s, but the process of regionalisation is slow and regional cohesion is still low. There are certain reasons behind this: the irrelevance of the use of the Soviet historical legacy; the types of political regimes of newly independent states as most of them have

a transit type; economic, demographic and social differentiation of the countries in the region; and the lack of a coherent and attractive program for Russian-led regionalism.

For a long time, there was a view that the Soviet legacy and commonality of economic ties would allow for creating an effective integration project. A number of experts critically evaluated the possibility of relying on the Soviet past while building new regional projects. Eurasia is of course a prominent example of extremely high interdependencies created by the way Soviet economy was organized (Libman & Obydenkova, 2017; Mikhaylenko, 2015). However, this did not lead to the formation of the necessary level of interdependence or regionalisation that would contribute to building regionalism. The historical perception of the Soviet past is very different in Russia than in other countries of the post-Soviet space. Regarding building their own national states, Russia and the rest of the states interpret such important historical moments as the 1917 Revolution, the Patriotic War and other issues in rather different ways. Most post-Soviet countries view the USSR period as part of their own national history, not necessarily positive, and since the 1990s, they have been actively trying to form their own national identity, which should be different from the Soviet one. Therefore, in the countries of the post-Soviet space there is a very controversial attitude towards the promotion of the Russian language, the cult of the Second World War, and so on (Kogut & Nurkanov, 2017).

Several experts note that the difficulties of building a common regional space are also connected to the type of political regimes of the states and the unwillingness of political elites to form network cooperation. Eurasian regionalism is often called ‘authoritarian regionalism’, since most types of political regimes in the region are non-democratic. Experts tend to believe that such types of regimes are not ready to build common projects with a delegation of sovereignty to a supranational level (Libman & Obydenkova, 2017). Another feature of modern elites, for example in the Central Asian countries, is that they are represented by people of the younger generation who do not consider Russia as the only and most important partner for building regional cooperation (Molchanov, 2005).

The strong differences between the countries of the region also challenge the building of regionalism in the post-Soviet space. There are economic, demographic and social indicator asymmetries amongst post-Soviet countries. Russia is one of the strongest countries in the region; nevertheless, the economic crises of 1998 and 2008–2009 and the current confrontation with Western countries deeply affects regionalisation processes. Amongst these, there are still the opposite demographic trends. The countries of Central Asia have a high demographic growth, which creates certain challenges for the domestic labour market. Russia, on the contrary, has a decrease in population, which requires certain social reforms. Interactions in order to solve social problems and labour migration problems, amongst other issues, could become a driver of regionalisation and integration, but this requires a competent policy and the will of states.

The lack of a coherent concept of a regional project driven by Russia is a significant obstacle to regionalism in Eurasia. The construction of a polycentric world order can hardly serve as a basis for the formation of regional cohesion. Artificially revived ideas or speculations of Eurasianism also look unconvincing. In a number of new interpretations of Eurasianism, the idea of a community based on the Russian empire (Syzdykova, 2014; Goncharenko, 2017) is perceived controversially by a number of states. According to the authors of this chapter, deepening the search for a Eurasian idea can distract from the real content of the overall project. It is possible to agree with Laruell (2015) that Eurasia and Eurasianism are attractive as terms, but have little relation to the strategy and regional policy of the Russian Federation. The EAEU, unlike the EU, has neither an attractive ideology, nor a network of elites, nor hegemony for Russia’s leading position, which demonstrates the readiness to solve common problems (Kogut & Nurkanov, 2017). Are there any chances of a Eurasian regionalism?

PROSPECTS FOR BUILDING EURASIAN REGIONALISM

Participation in a regional project requires the serious efforts of all its participants. Despite the visible and obvious opportunities for practical cooperation, for example, amongst the countries of the former USSR, a regional project should be attractive. Countries and their elites should be interested and motivated to participate in such a project. In this case, by attractiveness, the same is meant as Nye (1968) wrote in his work about the prerequisites for integration, namely the formation of the initial conditions under which countries will seek to participate in a regional integration association.

It is not easy for Russia to compete with strong players in the post-Soviet space, both economically and politically. The revitalisation of China in Central Asia, by whom a significant part of the economic and trade market is occupied in this region, complicates the process of regional construction of Russia with Central Asian countries on one hand. However, on the other hand, Russia is a traditional partner for Central Asian countries. Russia can strengthen its presence in the region and consolidate its strength through the formation of common values and cultural community. Considering the disintegration factors and the different perceptions of the historical heritage, it seems that it is necessary to avoid certain ideological issues while building a common regional consolidation.

Firstly, the Russian elite should not be too optimistic about the historical heritage of the USSR as the fundamental idea of common values and cohesion. There are many studies on the perception of the Soviet past by different countries of the former USSR. An analysis of the national textbooks of the Central Asian states demonstrates that they refer to USSR as a 'colonial empire that collapsed in 1917'. This is the 'red empire' that completed the communist experiment in 1991 (Lyamzin, 2010). The Soviet past and the Second World War are especially considered a difficult time of trouble for the population. Despite its many achievements, the USSR regionalism experience does not cause an unambiguous positive response amongst the newly independent states. The ideology and values of the USSR cannot become the basis for the formation of regional projects with the participation of new states that received freedom and independence after the collapse of the USSR.

Secondly, despite the attractiveness of the terms 'Eurasia', 'Eurasianism', 'Greater Eurasia', etc., concrete filling-in of regional projects in the post-Soviet space is necessary. 'Pragmatic Eurasianism' seems to be the most rational approach for the construction of regionalism. This approach presupposes the functional approach to integration, reliance on economic cooperation, solving common problems such as migration and building sustainable links between the elites of countries. It is necessary to create a common market for oil and gas or to put forward proposals that will be beneficial to all participants of a regional project. The spill-over effect can occur after building strong ties and a sustainable regionalisation process.

Thirdly, Russia should find a way to overcome the extreme scepticism, towards implementation of agreements, by the member countries of regional integration projects in the post-Soviet space. Despite official statements by President V.V. Putin on his commitment to the principles of 'open' regionalism, in the post-Soviet countries, there is much suspicion towards integration projects initiated by Russia. In a message to the Federal Assembly on December 4 2014, V.V. Putin pointed to the basic principles of the Eurasian Economic Union: 'First of all, this is equality, pragmatism and mutual respect. It is the preservation of the national identity and state sovereignty of all member countries. I am convinced that close cooperation will become a powerful source of development for all participants of the Eurasian Union' (Putin, 2014). Nevertheless, the issue of trust remains important in the framework of relations between Russia and the countries of the post-Soviet space.

In the post-Soviet space, it is possible to observe a certain new type of regionalism, which is a variant of non-European regionalism. It has a lot in common with the regional projects of the newly independent states in Asia. In a certain way, such regionalism can be called post-colonial regionalism, which is characterised by the fear of losing sovereignty by the member countries, the fear of the creating of supranational institutions with automatic obligations and not wanting to have a dominant force amongst the participants. Russia should use not only the European experience to build regional projects, but also non-Western experience, such as, for example, the ASEAN experience in building open regionalism. This is known as ASEAN-way regionalism, which allows participants of a regional integration project to participate in other regional projects; there is no hegemon or any country dominating the regional group. ASEAN deals with a wide range of issues, including security, but the organisation does not oppose itself to other regional organisations. It is important to find such a method of cooperation, which does not consider participating in other regional projects as an attempt to return to the new 'colonial' system.

It seems that the project of the 'Greater Eurasian Partnership' is a good attempt to create a mega-integration project that can involve not only the countries of the post-Soviet space, but also the countries of Europe and the Asia-Pacific region. Nevertheless, it demands a very clear strategy on how to link regional cooperation at the level of the EAEU and SCO and also how to manage the interaction of these organisations with other regional institutions and countries.

Finally, not the least, Russia needs to find options for avoiding confrontation with Western countries. The confrontational model of relationships negatively affects the development of regional and inter-regional projects. In a situation where it is impossible to have a productive dialogue with the EU and NATO countries, Russia can use the OSCE institutions to build a dialogue. All countries of the post-Soviet space are members of the OSCE, as are the EU and NATO countries. The OSCE can become a platform for negotiating new agreements and coordinating positions on controversial issues.

Therefore, if Russia considers itself as a leader of the region, it needs to propose a pragmatic agenda for a regional project. The project should be profitable for its participants, aimed at solving the problems of the region and not at isolating the region. Despite competition with other powers in the region, Russia needs to have its own long-term program for the development of the region and concrete steps for its implementation. Building good neighbourly and partnership relations within other projects in the region and with neighbouring regions is also a prerequisite for the development of regionalism in Eurasia.

SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Taking into account that Eurasian regionalism is not a project of a single state, but rather a set of projects initiated both by the countries of the post-Soviet space and with the participation of extra-regional states, the following recommendations could be presented:

- to take into account the fact that the hegemonic version of the construction of regionalism can be a threat to effective regionalisation and therefore, it is necessary to implement a consensus-based mechanism for coordinating positions amongst the countries of the region;
- to follow a model of 'open' regionalism, which will allow the creation of a more polycentric model of regionalism in Eurasia;

Eurasian Regionalism

- to use the project of the ‘Greater Eurasian Partnership’ to link the already existing regional projects on the Eurasian continent, but it is necessary to develop principles and rules for the formation of this partnership;
- to initiate a new negotiating process within the OSCE to resolve controversial issues between the Russian Federation and its partners;
- to develop a more concrete and pragmatic basis for long-term cooperation by Russia in the framework of EAEU and SCO, which would be understandable to the partners.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Further study of Eurasian regionalism could be devoted to exploring the possibility of interaction between Russian-led regional projects and projects initiated by other actors in the region, as well as exploring the principles and norms that can be formed for intersecting and overlapping projects in Eurasia.

CONCLUSION

The study of Eurasian regionalism is not an easy task. There are many interpretations of what is meant by Eurasian regionalism. As part of this work, the authors have emphasised that Eurasian integration and Eurasian regionalism can be interpreted in different ways. To identify Eurasian regionalism, the research has turned to the concept of regionalism and has revealed the main features of regionalism.

By regionalism, what is meant is a regional project that is initiated by specific actors in a region, which can have a specific dimension (economic, political, military, etc.), a specific type (open or closed) and also have varying degrees of regionalisation and regional cohesion.

In this paper, the term Eurasian regionalism largely comprehends projects that are initiated by the countries of the post-Soviet space. Thus, this study has conditionally identified six projects that were initiated by the countries of the post-Soviet space and given them such names as ‘natural integration’ (CIS), ‘deeper integration’ (agreements within the framework of Eurasian Economic Community), ‘democratic Integration’ (GUAM), ‘Central Asian integration’ (CAC), ‘Russia-led complex regionalism’ (SCO, CSTO) and the ‘three-level regionalism’ or ‘Greater Eurasian Partnership’. Such a conditional division into types of regionalism was made to show that there is a competition for regionalism on Eurasian territory and Russia is not the sole leader of regional projects.

The paper identified the main problems of building regional projects in Eurasia, having divided challenges into exogenous and endogenous. Exogenous challenges include the activities of non-regional powers in the post-Soviet space and the success and attractiveness of already existing projects, such as the EU.

The endogenous (internal) challenges include the difficulties of regionalisation and the process of forming regional cohesion. The reasons behind such difficulties lie in the irrelevance of the use of the Soviet heritage, the specificity of political regimes and the differentiation of post-Soviet elites, economic, demographic, social differentiation and the lack of a coherent and attractive program.

As prospects for the development of Eurasian regionalism, the authors propose to abandon the closed and hegemonic model of regionalism and stress on the need to create a consensus-based position between the countries of the region on the principles and rules of building a common regional space and link-

ing existing regional projects. There is also the need to create an environment for productive dialogue between the Russian Federation and Western partners.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS): An international organisation (international treaty) designed to regulate relations of cooperation between states formerly part of the USSR. The CIS was founded by the heads of Russia, Belarus and Ukraine by signing the “Agreement on the Creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States” on December 8, 1991 in Viskuly (Belovezhskaya Pushcha).

Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC): A regional organisation between 2000 and 2014, which aimed for the economic integration of its member states. The organisation originated from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) on 29 March 1996, with the treaty on the establishment of the Eurasian Economic Community signed on 10 October 2000 in Kazakhstan’s capital Astana by Presidents Alexander Lukashenko of Belarus, Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan, Askar Akayev of Kyrgyzstan, Vladimir Putin of Russia, and Emomali Rahmon of Tajikistan. Uzbekistan joined the community on 7 October 2005; however, it later withdrew on 16 October 2008.

Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU): An international organisation for regional economic integration that has international legal personality and is established by the Treaty on the Eurasian Economic Union.

Greater Eurasian Partnership: The current Eurasian strategy of Russia, aimed at the formation of a complex, multi-level system of multilateral cooperation with the participation of the EAEU, ASEAN, APEC and SCO countries.


One Belt, One Road (OBOR), or ‘Belt and Road’ Initiative (BRI): The Chinese infrastructure mega-project which aimed for connectivity with Europe via Central Asia to increase trade between the Asia-Pacific Region (APR) and Europe. It consists of two components: the land transportation infrastructure (known as Silk Road Economic Belt (SREB) or the One Belt), mostly via high-speed trains and the sea transportation infrastructure (known as the Maritime Silk Road), via trans-ocean ships.

Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO): A permanent intergovernmental international organisation, the creation of which was announced on 15 June 2001 in Shanghai (China) by the Republic of Kazakhstan, the People’s Republic of China, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan, and the Republic of Uzbekistan. It was preceded by the Shanghai Five mechanism.

Chapter 3

The Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) From the Perspective of International Relations (IR) Theories

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ABSTRACT

This chapter examines the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) from the perspective of the main theories in the Discipline of International Relations (IR). The author sketches out the main stages of the development of the EAEU cooperation by highlighting the conceptualization of the scheme by President Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan in 1994, the establishment of the Customs Union (CU), and the Common Economic Space (CES) between Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan in 2010. Theories analyzed include Neo-Realism, Neo-Classic Realism, Hegemonic Stability Theory, Liberalism, Functionalism, Neo-Functionalism, Neo-Institutionalism, the English School, Constructivism, and Neo-Gramscian Theory. The author makes an overall evaluation and stresses the need for an eclectic approach for analyzing the EAEU experience.

INTRODUCTION

In terms of both its theory and practice, the discipline of International Relations (IR) has been shaped by a narrow focus on the Euro-Atlantic region. In modern times, Anglo-Saxon powers have set the main rules of the international order. Consequently, the theoretical frameworks have been dominantly developed to account for their behaviors. The integration theories in IR illustrate this point well. Whereas Functionalism of David Mitrany and Neo-Functionalism of Ernst Haas center on the experience of the European Union (EU), Karl Deutsch's concept of security community focuses on the experience of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). However, the center of gravity is shifting towards Eurasia now. Moreover, we have recently seen many developments that cast doubt on the Euro-Atlantic inte-

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gration and cooperation, such as BREXIT and Trump's harsh criticisms on NATO. In this context, IR theories on integration need to pay close attention to the integration and regional cooperation in Eurasia.

For the researchers focusing on Eurasia, integration schemes and regionalism are hotly debated issues. As the main framework of integration in the region, the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) attracts remarkable attention from academic circles. The high number of studies examining the subject illustrates the significance of the issue. However, there are only a very limited number of studies with a theoretical perspective. Moreover, the existing studies with a theoretical insight examine the EAEU by relying on a single theoretical tradition. They predominantly utilize Realism to analyze the subject. Due to avoiding an eclectic approach, the literature is devoid of a rich analytical tool to account for the Eurasian integration. It is necessary to go beyond the existing studies and utilize an eclectic approach, which is aware of the strengths and weaknesses of all relevant theories in IR.

This study aims to examine the EAEU from the perspective of the main theories in International Relations (IR). It follows an eclectic approach in examining the subject. The objective is to shed light on the explanatory power of each IR theory covered by the study. The study eschews giving precedence to an IR theory over others. The theories used for analyzing the EAEU are Neo-Realism, Neo-Classic Realism, Liberalism, Functionalism, Neo-Functionalism, English School, Constructivism, and Neo-Gramscian Theory.

The Global IR Approach of Acharya is a source of inspiration for the study. This approach calls for taking previously ignored sources of IR knowledge into account and integrating the study of regions and regionalisms into the main concerns of IR. Acharya also urges the IR community to move beyond Eurocentric regionalism and Westphalian world vision and consider the features of the emerging post-Western world order (Acharya, 2014, p. 647). Following this advice, the study focuses on regionalism in the Eurasian region to see in what ways this relatively less studied part of the world can contribute to the study of IR.

The study is structured as follows. After the literature review in the following section, the third section first sketches out the main stages of the development of the EAEU cooperation by highlighting the conceptualization of the scheme by President Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan in 1994, the establishment of the Customs Union (CU) and the Common Economic Space (CES) between Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan in 2010. Afterward, the section analyzes the EAEU from the perspective of IR theories. The theoretical analysis comprises Neo-Realism, Neo-Classic Realism, Hegemonic Stability Theory, Liberalism, Functionalism, Neo-Functionalism, Neo-Institutionalism, the English School, Constructivism, and Neo-Gramscian Theory. The conclusion makes an overall evaluation and stresses the need for an eclectic approach for analyzing the EAEU experience.

BACKGROUND

This section reviews the literature on the EAEU, which is marked by some trends. First, as illustrated by the studies of Andreichenko, Mostafa and Mahmood, Vinokurov and Libman, and Wirminghaus, it is common to draw attention to several attempts at regional integration before the initiation of the EAEU. As another important trend, there are some studies (Bordachev and Skriba, 2014; Dragneva and Wolczuk, 2012; Sergi, 2018; Lagutina, 2015) that differentiate between the regionalism before the initiation of the EAEU and the regionalism of the EAEU. Third, the future trajectory of the EAEU attracts significant attention and there are both optimistic (Dragneva and Wolczuk, 2012; Sergi, 2018; and Lagutina, 2015;

Vinokurov, 2017) and pessimistic (Inozemtsev, 2014; Knobel, 2015; Kuzmina, 2016; Treschenkov, 2015) views on it. Fourth, it is rare to utilize certain theoretical frameworks in IR to analyze the EAEU. Whereas Realist views (Dreyer and Popescu, 2014; Karaganov, 2018; Perović, 2018; Roberts, Cohen, and Blaisdel, 2013) prevail in the literature and conflict and competition between Russia on the one hand and Western powers and institutions on the other are widely discussed, an eclectic approach using all relevant IR theories to analyze the EAEU does not exist at all. This section examines all these trends.

As Wirminghaus (2016, p. 25) notes, with the end of the Cold War, the post-Soviet space embraced the trend of regionalism. This was old regionalism and was different from the new regionalism of the EAEU. While the old regionalism started in late 1991 with the Belavezha Accords establishing the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), 39 regional integration schemes resulted in the establishment of 36 organizations between 1991 and 2010 (Wirminghaus, 2016, p. 25). Even when one considers that some of these organizations were the improved forms of earlier organizations, 20 organizations are left (Wirminghaus, 2016, p. 25).

Mostafa and Mahmood also touch upon the issue of rising regionalism in the Eurasian region in the post-Soviet period and emphasize that the EAEU is an attempt to reach better economic growth in line with this trend. Having pointed out that the establishment of the CIS was the first attempt to realize regional integration, they argue that the CIS turned to be ineffective due to regional wars, political and ideological disagreements, and lack of distrust among its members (Mostafa and Mahmood, 2018, p. 164). Although these scholars do not distinguish between the old and new regionalism, they contribute to the understanding of the reasons behind the ineffectiveness of old regionalism.

In his bid to account for the rise of regionalism in the post-Soviet period, Andreichenko argues that when 15 new states appeared on the political map of the world with the disintegration of the Soviet Union, they faced the challenge of finding their place in the already established international system. He emphasizes that as the new states were critical about their Soviet past, they could not appreciate the ties they forged in the Soviet period in the beginning. However, the breakdown of traditional economic, political, and cultural ties soon started to take its toll on the former Soviet Union members. It became obvious that without using the advantages of the historically established cooperation links and division of labor, it would be difficult for young post-Soviet states to ensure sustainable development. Having realized the importance of regional integration for their development, in 2000 the heads of state of the Republic of Belarus, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation and the Republic of Tajikistan announced the creation of an international organization, the Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC) (Andreichenko, 2011, p. 35).

Vinokurov and Libman note that the Soviet Union republics had been extremely interdependent. Factories in different republics had been connected through a special set of suppliers and customers. Moreover, these republics had shared a comprehensive system of technological standards, which differed from the rest of the world. As a result, post-Soviet states have remained highly interdependent after the collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) (Vinokurov and Libman, 2014, p. 344). For them, this interdependence has led to the establishment of regional organizations starting with the CIS. Yılmaz also points out that the disintegration of the USSR created an uncertainty in the post-Soviet space. The establishment of the CIS was an attempt to address this uncertainty. However, as the CIS proved to be insufficient, establishing a union to fill the vacuum in commercial, economic, cultural, and security spheres became necessary (Yılmaz, 2017, p. 2).

Although Andreichenko, Vinokurov and Libman, and Yılmaz contribute to the literature by emphasizing the role of interdependence in the Eurasian integration process, they remain short of discussing

why some post-Soviet states opposed the integration schemes despite the interdependence among them and the uncertainty created by the disintegration of the USSR.

As Bordachev and Skriba note (2014), it is necessary to distinguish between the integration attempts before the EAEU and the integration process beginning with the EAEU. The EAEU can be considered within the framework of a new regionalization or a new integration concept. With this new integration or the EAEU, Russia has turned to support new institutions that are instrumental for pursuing Russian national interest. Starting with Putin, the subsidies for the former Soviet states were diminished. Russia was still willing to cover the costs of reintegration, but only on the condition that reintegration materializes. Russia would not be satisfied with the promises of presidents of former Soviet countries any more (Bordachev and Skriba, 2014, p. 18). Under new integration, Russia ensures that its partners abide by the agreements and emphasizes economic cooperation instead of historical and ideological ties (Bordachev and Skriba, 2014, p. 20). For Bordachev and Skriba, Russia shifted to the new mode of regionalism due to its anxieties over the Eastern Partnership initiative of the EU, which aimed at promoting cooperation between the EU and six post-Soviet countries (Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine). This initiative led Moscow to suspect that it was an anti-Russian scheme with the hidden agenda of pushing it out of Europe. (Bordachev and Skriba, 2014, p. 19).

As another development escalating tensions between Russia and the West, it is necessary to assess the impact of the Ukrainian Crisis on the Eurasian integration process. Lapenko argues that the accession of Crimea and Sevastopol to the Russian Federation unleashed a campaign in the West and Kazakhstan to portray the EAEU as a Russian imperial project and direct threat to the sovereignty to Kazakhstan and other Central Asian states (2014, p. 131). However, as she points out, the impact of this campaign on the participants of the integration project proved to be limited. Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan expressed their approval, and the integration process proceeded based on the original plan (Lapenko, 2014, pp. 131-132). She adds that the crisis can also both deepen and widen the integration. It can bring about “the strengthening from the within”, improvement of defense capacities of the Union, and the invitation of new members, like Turkey (Lapenko, 2014, p. 135).

There are also other scholars that differentiate between the earlier post-Soviet integration attempts and the EAEU. Dragneva and Wolczuk point out that since the collapse of the USSR, several projects to integrate the post-Soviet states were launched. They emphasize that these attempts proved to be unproductive. For them, the Eurasian Customs Union, which led to the establishment of the EAEU, is different. It has a strong institutional structure, and its decisions are implemented (Dragneva and Wolczuk, 2012, p. 2).

Sergi also focuses on the inefficiency of previous Eurasian integration frameworks (2018, p. 52). He argues that until the creation of the EAEU, many ambitious plans were drawn out for Eurasian integration, but they were unreasonable (Sergi, 2018, p. 52). For him, the EAEU is likely to succeed because it is pragmatic. For its participants, the benefits are greater than the costs (Sergi, 2018, p. 53). Lagutina argues that the EAEU seeks to “fill the integration gap” that emerged in the post-Soviet region after the collapse of the USSR. She emphasizes that the region lacked an effective international organization to solve global and regional problems until recently (Lagutina, 2015, p. 6). Vasil'yeva and Lagutina note that while the failure of the old regionalism schemes has led the EU, the US, and China to underestimate the EAEU Project, it has a high potential for success. For them, the current international system is marked by a shift from a state-centered system to a global system where regional organizations play important roles. As the EAEU is a response to this modern trend, these experts are optimistic about its future (Vasil'yeva and Lagutina, 2013).

There are also pessimistic views on the future of the EAEU. To start with Treschenkov's assessment on the issue, he points out that the critics of the EAEU have good reason to be ambivalent about the future of the Union (2015, p. 107). For him, the driving force of the Eurasian integration process is the political will of the national leaders of the participating countries. Agreements reached by presidents enable quick progress in the vertical integration model of the EAEU. However, the vertical nature of the integration makes the fate of the EAEU highly dependent on the will of the political leaders in power (Treschenkov, 2015, p. 107). In the face of constant disputes among the members and sanctions against Russia, the EAEU is most likely to experience fragmentation rather than further integration (Treschenkov, 2015, p. 113).

In his article focusing on the EAEU's development prospects, Knobel notes that there are two economic motives for the participants of integration projects: creative and redistributive (Knobel, 2015, p. 88). Creative motives are about removing barriers to trade. This practice creates new resources by increasing competition and efficiency (Knobel, 2015, p. 89). Redistributive motives concern providing benefits to newcomers. He argues that one or several participants of an integration project will be interested in widening it. To ensure widening, these interested members would be willing to attract new members by transferring part of their resources to them through trade agreements. In this case, the other participants would be interested in the integration scheme due to the redistribution of resources in their favor (Baier and Bergstrand 2004 quoted in Knobel, 2015, p. 89). Knobel argues that the main problem with the EAEU is the dominance of the redistributive motives over the creative ones. For him, in the agreement of the EAEU, opportunities for the movement towards the creation of new resources thanks to increased efficiency are far from being fully exploited (Knobel, 2015, p. 102).

For Kuzmina (2016), there are some stumbling blocks to the development of the EAEU. Firstly, the economies of the largest EAEU countries have identical sectors and are more likely to compete rather than cooperate in the domestic and global markets. Secondly, the Eurasian institutions are developing quite quickly, but there are very few joint production projects. Already existing projects are most often bilateral, and less often they are launched as part of the Eurasian Union. Thirdly, integration is mainly located in traditional industries that are exhausting their potential. Fourthly, one of the main objectives of the EAEU, as enshrined in the agreement, was the possibility of joint modernization and diversification of industry. While the movement towards this direction is really slow, there is also no focus on the formation of a common internal market within the Union, considering the specialization of member countries in certain types of products. The EAEU member countries make small investments in the real sectors of the Eurasian economies and industrial companies do not pursue an active policy in the territory of the members (Kuzmina, 2016, p. 49).

Another scholar dealing with the development prospects, Inozemtsev, is pessimistic, too. He argues that maritime transportation and trade gained importance at the expense of land transportation and trade recently. He points out that whereas landlocked CIS countries support the EAEU, those with direct access to high seas (Baltic countries, Ukraine and Georgia) opposed it. Against this background, the EAEU will not deliver any economic gains. He emphasizes that the EAEU is not productive and will result in the return of economically and politically obsolete Soviet-like frameworks (Inozemtsev, 2014).

Although several studies focus on the development of the EAEU, a limited number of them utilize a theoretical approach. Before discussing them, the studies that come close to Realist views on international relations due to their focus on competition in the Eurasian region will be examined.

The studies that consider the EAEU a reaction to attempts of the other powers vying for influence in the region can be regarded as Neo-Realist. For instance, Perović argues that starting with the early

2000s, Western powers and organizations have made inroads into the region. For him, NATO membership of the Baltic States, new pipelines built by the foreign companies and China's economic expansion have dealt a blow to Russia. For Moscow, the EAEU proved to be a countermeasure (Perović, 2018, p. 1). Adomeit also relates the EAEU to the competition in Eurasia. He regards the establishment of the EAEU as an effort to maintain Russian hegemony vis-à-vis the EU and China.

Karaganov's (2018) analysis of the EAEU also carries strong Neo-Realist elements. For him, the New Cold War prevails in the international system and Eurasia is the major battleground in this war. The US and some European powers are weakening. Amid increased competition, the world is heading towards a new bipolar system. In the new bipolar confrontation, whereas Eurasia assumes the role of a new pole, the West or the "Greater America" will be the other pole (Karaganov, 2018, p. 85). With its military and economic power and interest, Russia is in the non-Western or Eurasian pole. In the new confrontation, the EAEU is an important initiative, but Russia needs to go beyond it. It has to overcome the cleavages of the Cold War and cooperate with China (Karaganov, 2018, p. 90). To form a new community of Greater Eurasia, he calls for a cooperation among the EAEU, the EU, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) (Karaganov, 2018, p. 91).

Dreyer and Popescu's study is another example of the Neo-Realist stance in the literature. The authors posit that Moscow launched the EAEU initiative to counter the EU's Eastern Partnership and compelled Chisinau, Yerevan, Kyiv and Tbilisi to join the EAEU and give up their plans to conclude Association Agreements with the EU (2014, p. 1). Dragneva and Wolczuk also point out that the Eurasian Customs Union (ECU) is an instrument for reintegrating the post-Soviet space. For the authors, through the ECU, Russia poses a "normative challenge" to the EU by showing that the EU's Eastern Neighborhood framework is not the only alternative (Dragneva & Wolczuk, 2014, p. 2). In a similar vein, Roberts, Cohen, and Blaisdel view the EAEU as an instrument that Putin utilizes to neutralize the influence of rival actors, including the EU, in the post-Soviet space and consolidate its hegemony (2013).

Myers sees the Union as an expression of the ideology of Eurasianism, which influenced Putin and his inner circle, besides the increasing conservatism in domestic politics (Myers, 2015, p. 889). As this scholar considers both the rivalry in the international arena and the impact of domestic politics to be the driving forces behind the establishment of the EAEU, he can be regarded as utilizing Neo-Classic Realism to analyze the EAEU. As a result, he offers a broader perspective than the Neo-Realist studies, which limit their analyses to international dynamics.

Åslund offers a Liberal perspective on the EAEU. He argues that because of the EAEU, Russia wasted its chance to benefit from the trade liberalization that its World Trade Organization membership in 2012 should have offered. For him, the EAEU hinders Russian integration into the world economy. Moreover, he points out that the EAEU costs too much to the Russian Treasury. Therefore, for him, Russia has to end its relations with the EAEU (Åslund, 2016, p. 37). Kofner is another expert utilizing liberalism to account for the evolution of the EAEU. However, in contrast to Åslund, he makes use of Liberalism to praise the EAEU. While doing this, Kofner focuses on the EAEU sugar deal. He argues that this deal illustrates that rather than being a neo-imperial plan of Russia, the EAEU is a product of liberal inter-governmentalism. He arrives at this conclusion because this deal demonstrates two important things. First, the EAEU can systematically remove internal barriers and provide equal competitive conditions within the Union gradually. Second, the member states can protect their national interest by negotiating for the best conditions (Kofner, 2019).

Kirkham uses the concept of hegemony to account for the experience of EAEU, but instead of abiding by the Realist framework, she opts for the Neo-Gramscian Theory. Her study is significant because

it is the first to apply the Neo-Gramscian Theory to the analysis of the EAEU. As she argues, in the Neo-Gramscian approach to hegemony, there are four key features of hegemony. These are institutional design, material capabilities, security invulnerability and leadership in the cultural domain (Kirkham, 2016, p. 1) The EAEU is a part of institutional design in this framework. She holds that while Russian regional hegemony has not yet been established, it has the potential to be achieved. For her, Russia has built a hegemonic order inside the country, and it uses the EAEU as an instrument to establish its hegemony in the region (Kirkham, 2016).

To conclude, while the EAEU is not an old scheme, the literature on its development is vast. As discussed, many scholars focus on the post-Soviet regionalism and it is common to distinguish between the old regionalism starting with the CIS and the new regionalism of the EAEU. However, it is still premature to distinguish between earlier integration attempts and the EAEU. As discussed, scholars making this distinction are optimistic about its future, but it will take time to see whether the EAEU will survive in the face of difficulties or will fail, as in the case of old regionalism attempts. As discussed, many scholars are pessimistic about the future of the EAEU and they have good reason to be so.

Looking from another perspective, Russia is determined to continue the integration and the West is in decline, but, as Karaganov points out, the Russian relations with China will be the decisive factor for the future of the Union. Russian and Chinese competition, instead of cooperation, will be counterproductive for the Union's future. Based on the guidance of Acharya's Global IR Approach and Karaganov's ideas discussed in this section, the study calls for discussing the future of the EAEU in the context of Russia's relations not only with the European Union and the US, but also with the rest of Eurasia.

As discussed, the literature is also characterized by the scarcity of studies that use IR theories to analyze the EAEU. Besides examining the existing studies that utilize IR theories to explain the development of the EAEU, this section pointed out that many studies focusing on the competition in the post-Soviet space follow Realism. While Realism has a dominant position in the literature, there is a lack of an eclectic approach that utilizes the strengths of different theories. In the following section, the study attempts to fill this vacuum in the literature.

MAIN FOCUS OF THE CHAPTER

The main focus of the chapter is the effectiveness of IR theories to account for the development of the EAEU. As the literature review has revealed, Realism is widely used to analyze the EAEU. Therefore, the theoretical discussion starts with exploring the effectiveness of Neo-Realism, Neo-Classic Realism, and Hegemonic Stability Theory. As in the case of other theories to be analyzed, both strengths and weaknesses of the Realist tradition will be evaluated. Then, the study will examine Neo-Institutionalism, the English School, Liberalism, Functionalism, Neo-Functionalism, Constructivism, and Neo-Gramscianism. After emphasizing the merits and weaknesses of each theory, the need for an eclectic approach will be highlighted.

However, it is necessary to first explore the development of the EAEU to be able to utilize these theories to analyze the development trajectory of the EAEU. Therefore, the following sub-section focuses on this trajectory before moving to the theoretical analysis.

The Development of the EAEU

The President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, was the first to formulate the idea of the Eurasian Economic Union. While the idea was first announced at the Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House) on March 22, 1994, its details were articulated at his visit to the Moscow State University on March 29, 1994 (Sadykova, 2013, p. 382). His integration scheme was based on the principles of equality, non-interference in domestic affairs, sovereignty, and inviolability of national borders (Lapenko, 2014, p. 123). It is particularly striking that in his speech at the Moscow State University, Nazarbayev emphasized that the Eurasian Union must be different from the CIS and be composed of supranational institutions to focus on the establishment of a single economic space and the formulation of a common defense policy (Sadykova, 2013, p. 382). The union he envisaged was more comprehensive compared to what the EAEU is now because he also wanted to include a common defense policy, an ambitious element for integration.

Nazarbayev remained committed to the idea of the EAEU throughout its whole development process and promoted the idea in Kazakhstan's domestic and foreign policy. The idea was publicized in several addresses, articles and books by him. He also initiated the establishment of the Eurasian National University, named after Gumilev, the founder of Neo-Eurasianism (Lapenko, 2014, p. 123).

In June 1994, a comprehensive integration plan was submitted to the presidents. The draft plan entitled "On the formation of the Eurasian Union of States" of June 3, 1994, was the first official document to use the name "the Eurasian Union" ("Timeline", n.d.). In 1995, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and the Russian Federation concluded the Treaty on the Customs Union, which intended to remove the barriers to economic cooperation among the signatories besides guaranteeing free trade, fair competition, and sustainable development. The Treaty on Deepening Economic and Humanitarian Integration, which was signed on March 29, 1996, followed this. Tajikistan joined the Treaty two years later. Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, and Tajikistan signed the Treaty on the Customs Union and Single Economic Space on February 26, 1999 ("Timeline", n.d.).

To support the Customs Union and Single Economic Space, Custom Union members established the Eurasian Economic Community on October 10, 2000, in Astana ("EurAsEC", 2014). On September 19, 2003, Belarus, Kazakhstan, the Russia Federation, and Ukraine signed the Treaty on the Establishment of the Single Economic Space (Eurasian Economic Union website). This was followed by the decision to establish a customs union within the EurAsEC structure. At the Sochi Summit of 2006, it was decided that while Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Russia would deepen their effort to establish the Customs Union, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan would join when their economies are ready (Yesevi, 2014, p. 1987).

In 2007, the Agreement on Creation of the Single Customs Territory and Establishment of the Customs Union was signed by Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Russia. In January 2010, the signatories started implementing the common customs tariff and canceled customs procedures and controls at domestic borders. In 2011, having announced the effective implementation of the Customs Union, the three states declared that they would move to the next stage: The Single Economic Space ("Timeline", n.d.).

The Single Economic Space (SES) was initiated to build a common market for goods, services, labor, and capital and to ensure the coordination of monetary, financial and tax policies as well as energy and information systems. In July 2012, the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC), the supranational executive organ made up of deputy prime ministers, was founded in Moscow (Mostafa and Mahmood, 2018, p. 165). The EEC was mainly charged with improving both the scope and depth of economic integration

in Eurasia. The Commission focused on the establishment of the common customs area and the implementation of the SES, which eventually was put into force on January 1, 2012 (Kinyakin, 2016, p. 465).

Putin (2011) had initially designed the SES to go into effect by January 1, 2012, and to accomplish a complete union based on the EU model by January 1, 2015. However, this plan was not realized, as an economic union rather than a full-fledged union was formed (Mostafa and Mahmood, 2018, p. 165). On May 29, 2014, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Russia concluded the Treaty on the Establishment of the Eurasian Economic Union. The Treaty focuses on improving cooperation, lifting barriers to the free movement of goods, services, capital and labor; and coordinating and harmonizing policy in key sectors of the economy (“The Treaty on the Establishment of the Eurasian Economic Union”, 2014). On January 1, 2015, the EAEU was born as an international organization after the agreement was ratified by the signatories’ parliaments (“The Treaty on the Eurasian Economic Union is effective”, 2015).

Theoretical Analysis

Having discussed the development of the EAEU briefly, the discussion now turns to how effective IR theories are to account for this process. As discussed in the background section, many studies explain the reasons for the establishment of the EAEU by using key Neo-Realist premises. Although most of these studies do not express that they utilize Neo-Realism as the theoretical framework, as they highlight the conflict of interest between Russia and the rival powers such as the European Union, they fall under the category of Neo-Realist studies.

It is necessary to emphasize that these studies surely have a point. First, Neo-Realists do not attribute a role to the societies in the member states in the development process of the EAEU; they view states as unitary and autonomous actors pursuing national interest. While Neo-Realists merely focus on international rivalry, Neo-Classics focus on the role of elites in the development of the EAEU. As the countries in question are highly authoritarian and the societies in these countries do not have much influence in the formation of foreign policy, such kind of an attitude on the part of Realists makes sense.

Moreover, starting with the early 2000s, Russia has entered a process of reasserting its great power status in the post-Soviet region. Russia’s attempts to this end have become apparent especially after the South Ossetia Crisis of Georgia in 2008 and the Crimea Crisis of Ukraine in 2014. If one considers Russian determination to prevent the EU and NATO to attract states in its Near Abroad, the EAEU emerges as a practical countermeasure. Therefore, the studies utilizing Realist frameworks have a certain degree of ability to account for the development of the EAEU.

Notwithstanding this guidance provided by Realism, it is a bit challenging for the Realist Theory to explain what drives a major power like Russia to bind itself by the certain rules and the regulations of an international organization like the EAEU. However, the Realist Theory has frameworks to account for the behavior of stronger states like Russia, which can be classified as a regional hegemon. Hegemonic Stability Theory is instrumental for analyzing the Eurasian Economic Union policy of Russia. This theory has both Realist and Liberal variants (Snidal, 1985, p. 579). As representatives of the Realist variant of Hegemonic Stability Theory, Gilpin and Krasner are concerned with the self-interest of the hegemon (Gowa, 1989, p. 309). They discuss that hegemons shoulder the burden of providing some public goods like free trade because free trade benefits them most. As a result, hegemons set and enforce rules to create a system that favors their interest. It is necessary to examine the Russian hegemony in the post-Soviet space to illuminate how the Hegemonic Stability Theory can be used to understand the development process of the EAEU.

It is not wise to consider Russia a hegemon in the post-Soviet space immediately after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Being weak and preoccupied with the challenges of post-Soviet transition, Moscow was not ready to play the role of a regional hegemon at the beginning. Therefore, when Nazarbayev first came up with the idea of a confederative union, Russian attitude was lukewarm at best. As Kassenova points out, Moscow was not ready for the initiative at the beginning; however, it was already in the process of reconsidering its policies of “going West” and getting rid of the burden of Central Asia at that time. While Nazarbayev expressed his plan for a Eurasian Union in March 1994, Russia lent its support to the initiative as early as August 1994 (Kassenova, 2012, p. 7). However, it was Putin who gave the real impetus to the integration process. During his presidency, EurAsEC and Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) took the form of stable formats for cooperation, but they fell short of providing integration. In October 2011, in the run-up to his third presidency, Putin engaged in a real post-Soviet integration process: the EAEU (Hoffmann, 2012, p. 2).

Russia consolidated its power in the post-Soviet space and gained the position of the regional hegemon in Putin’s presidency. To utilize the Realist version of Hegemonic Stability Theory in order to analyze Russian hegemony, it is first necessary to identify what Russia provides as a common good. What comes to mind as a first option is low gas and oil prices. Armenia, Belarus, and Kyrgyzstan need such a favor. However, this does not apply to Kazakhstan because it has energy resources. Kofner offers an answer to this question by using the cooperative hegemony framework developed by Pedersen. In cooperative hegemony, the hegemon establishes a regional order in which it exercises soft control by employing cooperation agreements based on a long-term plan. When it comes to Russian cooperative hegemony, the EAEU can be considered a binding contract between Russia and the other member states of the EAEU. Russia pursues a policy of self-control in return for the loyalty of the other member states (Kofner, 2019).

Most of the Neo-Realists view international organizations as a reflection of power dynamics in international relations. They do not attribute to international organizations a role to act as independent actors. For Neo-Realists, international organizations are the instruments of states. This attitude is particularly evident in Mearsheimer’s analysis of the European Communities (EC), the predecessor of the EU. For him, the EC managed to thrive thanks to the bipolar structure of the international system during the Cold War. He expected that the EC would not survive once the Cold War ended. Given the fact that the European Integration both widened and deepened with the end of the Cold War, his analysis proved to be largely misleading (Archer, 2001, p. 125).

While Mearsheimer’s analysis of international organizations is not guiding, another Neo-Realist, Grieco, provides the students of the EAEU with a relevant analysis of the issue. He argues that when the members of international organizations negotiate the rules of cooperation, the weaker states seek to create rules that will enable them to raise their demands and escape from the domination of stronger states in the organization (Archer, 2001, p. 125).

Grieco’s ideas offer insight into Kazakhstan’s policy on the EAEU. As discussed in the preceding section, the former president of Kazakhstan, Nazarbayev, suggested creating the Eurasian Economic Union. Moreover, his commitment to the project has continued over time. Nazarbayev argued that the establishment of the Union would ensure the preservation of economic linkages established in the Soviet period besides offering a new model of relations. As discussed by Vinokurov, without the critical support of Kazakhstan, the CU was likely to fail like its predecessors (2014, p. 342).

One can understand Nazarbayev’s commitment to the EAEU by focusing on his bid to control stronger Russia and limit Moscow’s domination by making use of rules institutionalized within the framework of the EAEU. In line with Realist understanding, power politics holds in the Eurasian region. However,

Kazakhstan, as a weaker state compared to Russia, utilizes the EAEU to construct the rules of interaction that enable voicing its demands and ameliorating Russia's domination. Such an understanding of the EAEU comes close to Keohane's Neo-Institutionalism. Different from Institutionalism, which ignores power politics and attributes excessive power to international organizations, Neo-Institutionalism offers a synthesis of Realism and Liberalism. Neo-Institutionalism accepts that states are the principal actors in the international system and pursue their self-interest in world politics (Keohane, 1993, p. 271). Different from Realism, in Neo-Institutionalism, weak states are not helpless in the face of pressures from powerful states. For Keohane and Nye, weak states use international organizations as a forum to set agendas, form coalitions and link issues (Keohane and Nye, 1977, p. 37). In this light, Nazarbayev's support for the EAEU can be regarded as a reflection of his desire to counter Russian dominance in the region by utilizing the institutionalized framework of the EAEU.

Neo-Institutionalism acknowledges that it is difficult to achieve cooperation in international relations due to anarchy, lack of a world government to enforce rules. In the absence of a worldwide authority to enforce rules, cheating and deception are widespread in international relations. Notwithstanding this, states sometimes cooperate in international relations (Axelrod and Keohane, 2013, p. 226). For Neo-Institutionalism, international organizations play a critical role in ensuring cooperation under anarchy because they reduce uncertainty. They argue that states that have continuous interactions with each other opt for cooperation because they are aware that they will have future interactions with the same actors. International organizations offer a regular platform for interactions. They also provide mechanisms for decreasing cheating by monitoring the actions of its members and providing transparency and punishing defectors (Karns and Mingst, 2010, p. 39). In line with this understanding, it can be argued that compared to the old Eurasian regionalism, monitoring mechanisms are stronger in the new Eurasian regionalism. As a result, cheating is less in the EAEU compared to the CIS because anarchy is mitigated by the strong monitoring institutions of the Union.

Although the English School is based on a rich theoretical tradition that can illuminate certain points of post-Soviet integration, the literature on the EAEU lacks a study utilizing this tradition. Being an eclectic approach, the English School charts a middle course between Machiavellian and Kantian traditions in IR. It points out that both conflict and cooperation exist in international relations (Bull, 1992, pp. XII-XIII). In line with this thesis, the Eurasian region has become the scene of both conflict and cooperation since the fall of the Soviet Union. Whereas the EAEU is an example of cooperation between former Soviet states under Russian leadership, conflicts, as in the cases of Abkhazia, Nagorno Karabakh, South Ossetia, Transnistria, and Ukraine have also been experienced. Moreover, anarchy prevails in the post-Soviet region, but members of the EAEU can cooperate, supporting the premises of the English school. Contrary to what Realist Hobbes argues, anarchy does not bring about endless conflict.

Liberalism is also relevant for exploring the EAEU. Thanks to its emphasis on cooperation and international organizations, Liberalism is a useful tool to analyze the EAEU. Moreover, Liberalism comprises integration theories such as Functionalism. The main advocate of this theory, Mitrany, argues that today states need to perform new functions. State boundaries have lost their meaning. States have to change their governance styles and cooperate with other states (Mitrany, 1975, p. 99). Transportation, communication, and industrialization are not carried out within the borders of states anymore. Rather, these functions are performed on a regional basis. Therefore, instead of states, these activities need to be supervised by international organizations for effective performance (Archer, 2001, p. 137).

Functionalism has a lot to say on the EAEU. As discussed, soon after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, former Soviet states faced hardship when the links formed in the Soviet period were severed.

For post-Soviet governments, it was practical to cooperate. The functions imposed upon the newly independent states in the areas of transportation, energy, trade, and industrialization required regional cooperation given the previously forged links. For the members of the EAEU, one motivation to join the organization was the need to manage certain policy areas on a regional basis.

Functionalism and Neo-Functionalism advise launching international cooperation in less problematic areas instead of the area of security. Functionalism posits that since international cooperation is fragile, it is wise to start it in less problematic areas like the economy. Over time, states can expand their cooperation to other areas such as foreign policy and security. From the perspective of the EAEU experience, it is striking that members of the organization have preferred to start the regional integration with the Customs Union and the Common Economic Space. Time will show whether the cooperation under the EAEU will ramify as the theory suggests

Functionalism has a weakness, too. Mitrany argued that technocrats would be the main agent of international cooperation. However, as discussed, the EAEU was initiated and advanced by presidents: Nazarbayev, Putin, and Lukashenko. Therefore, the reality does not meet Mitrany's theory on this point. As Haas argues that elites would be key actors for international cooperation, Neo-Functionalism of Haas provides a better analytical tool for this aspect.

As Constructivist Theory offers important insights into post-Soviet affairs, it is also necessary to examine it. Alexander Wendt, as the prominent representative of this school, argues that anarchy is not uniform for each state in the international system. In his widely cited phrase, he states "anarchy is what states make of it" (Wendt, 1992). Each state constructs its behavior differently under anarchy. This idea is instrumental in understanding the post-Soviet space. Post-Soviet countries behave differently under anarchy. The members of the EAEU choose to cooperate under Russian leadership. Some others, namely Georgia and Ukraine, tend to favor cooperation with Euro-Atlantic institutions and vehemently oppose Russian attempts at regional integration. Two states of Central Asia, namely Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, also resist regional integration schemes.

As discussed in the background section, Neo-Gramscianism is a useful and sophisticated analytical tool. Applying this analytical framework to the EAEU, one can claim that Russia, having established hegemony inside the state, has turned to form its hegemony in the international arena. In this context, the EAEU can be seen as an instrument to legitimize Russian hegemony through establishing an international organization. The EAEU can also be interpreted as a counter-hegemonic initiative to replace the declining US as the new hegemon.

SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The background section has shown that the literature lacks a study utilizing an eclectic approach to analyze the development of the EAEU. This creates a problem because only an eclectic approach can provide an effective tool to understand various aspects and stages of the EAEU integration. As discussed in the previous section, Neo-Realism, Hegemonic Stability Theory, Neo-Classic Realism, Liberalism, Functionalism, Neo-Functionalism, the English School, Neo-Institutionalism, Constructivism, and Neo-Gramscian Theory can illuminate certain aspects of integration in the EAEU. As a result, it is necessary to follow an eclectic approach to understand the process in its fullest sense. It is not wise to waste the guidance provided by any theory in IR.

Against this background, rather than abiding by a single theoretical framework, the study recommends following an eclectic approach comprising all relevant IR theories.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

The EAEU can be considered a new international organization. The study has examined both optimistic and pessimistic views on its future. Various theories of IR will offer insights to understand the EAEU whether it develops further or weakens and disintegrates. Following an eclectic approach, this section addresses potential venues for research for different IR theories.

To start with Neo-Realism, continuing rivalry in the post-Soviet region among the EU, Russia and the US will present opportunities for researchers to analyze this competition through Neo-Realist lenses. Realist Hegemonic Stability Theory will observe the changes in the capacity of Russia and the impact of these changes on the ability of Moscow to set and enforce the rules regulating post-Soviet integration within the framework of the EAEU. If the EAEU weakens and collapses, the Realists will resort to the Realist thesis that cooperation within international organizations is almost impossible among self-interested states vying for power in the international system.

As its name indicates, integration in non-economic fields is beyond the scope of the EAEU at the moment. If the cooperation within the framework of the EAEU spreads to other areas, more specifically from economic to political areas of cooperation, Functionalist and Neo-Functionalist frameworks of Liberalism will effectively address this development. Since Functionalism focuses on the role of technocrats in spreading the cooperation to political areas, if technocrats play a role in the potential 'ramification', Functionalism will be an appropriate framework for analyzing the cooperation within the EAEU. If foreign policy elites assume an active role in the potential 'spillover', then, Neo-Functionalism will be useful.

As theories charting a middle course between Realism and Liberalism, the English School and Neo-Institutionalism will be used widely to explain the cooperation in addition to conflict in the Eurasian region. These theories will effectively account for cooperation under anarchy. As they envisage such a coexistence, the eruption of conflicts besides cooperation among the EAEU members will not weaken these theories.

CONCLUSION

The study has analyzed the development of the EAEU by employing several analytical tools that International Relations theories provide. The background section has identified some trends in the literature. As the first trend, many studies draw attention to several regional integration attempts before the initiation of the EAEU and their failures. Second, many scholars are keen to evaluate the future of the Union. Third, an important number of studies try to account for the reasons behind the initiation of the EAEU. Fourth, there are a limited number of studies that utilize certain theoretical frameworks in IR to analyze the EAEU. Most importantly, an eclectic approach for analyzing the Union does not exist. To address this problem, the study has explored the development of the EAEU and the effectiveness of various IR theories to account for it.

The subsection dealing with the development of the EAEU examined the introduction of the scheme by President Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan in 1994, the establishment of the Customs Union (CU) and the

Common Economic Space (CES) between Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan in 2010 and the establishment of the EAEU as an international organization in 2015.

The theoretical analysis assessed the effectiveness of Neo-Realism, Hegemonic Stability Theory, Neo-Classic Realism, Liberalism, Functionalism, Neo-Functionalism, the English School, Neo-Institutionalism, Constructivism, and Neo-Gramscian Theory to account for the evolution of the EAEU. Neo-Realism is useful for analyzing the competition in the post-Soviet space. It explains how Moscow uses the EAEU to counter the influence of Western powers in the region. Hegemonic Stability Theory is the key to understand what drives a major power like Russia to bind itself by the certain rules and the regulations of the EAEU. Neo-Classic Realism is important for its focus on internal dynamics in the analysis of foreign policy. It provides Realist analytical tools to appreciate the roles of Lukashenka, Nazarbayev, and Putin in the development of the EAEU. With its emphasis on cooperation and international organizations in international relations, Liberalism is also quite relevant for exploring the EAEU. Neo-Functionalism helps to understand the roles played by Lukashenka, Nazarbayev, and Putin in spreading cooperation in the EAEU to different areas. The English School can effectively analyze the coexistence of cooperation in the EAEU and military conflicts in Abkhazia, Nagorno Karabakh, South Ossetia, Transnistria, and Ukraine. Neo-Institutionalism can explain why the members of the EAEU can cooperate under anarchy. Lastly, Neo-Gramscian Theory makes it easy to understand how the EAEU helps Russia to gain legitimacy for its hegemony in the Eurasian region.

As a concluding remark, the study argues that each theoretical approach examined in the study offers an important insight into the development process of the EAEU and it is necessary to follow an eclectic approach to analyze the development of the EAEU effectively. As each theory can illuminate different aspects of the process, it is not wise to waste the insights that different IR theories offer by utilizing a single theory to understand the EAEU.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Customs Union: Customs Union is a kind of arrangement that removes or reduces the tariff barriers between two or more participant states while keeping tariff barriers against imports coming from the non-participants (Viner, 2014, p. 2).

Hegemony: Hegemony is a preponderance of power in the international system of one state in a way enabling it to dominate the rules and arrangements which shape the international political and economic relations. The state with such kind of power is called a hegemon. Hegemony generally refers to supremacy on a global scale, however, sometimes it can also refer to regional domination (Goldstein and Pevehouse, 2014, pp. 57-58).

Integration: Integration mainly means intergovernmental cooperation through international organizations and treaties (Vinokurov & Libman, 2014, p. 355). It makes sense to view integration as a process. This process starts with increasing cooperation between the states. It continues with a gradual transfer of authority to supranational institutions, a gradual homogenization of values; and the emergence of new forms of political community. The final destination is the emergence of a federation composed of states in the region (Roach, Griffiths & O'Callaghan, 2014, p. 170).

Protectionism: An economic policy aiming at protecting domestic industries from international competition. It is generally implemented by levying taxes, tariffs and quotas on imports (Devetak, George & Percy, 2017, p. 3065).

Region: Regions are composed of groupings of territorial units geographically close to each other (Hurrell 1995, pp. 333-334, Sbragia 2008 quoted in Goltermann, Lohaus, Spielau & Striebinger, 2016, pp. 4-5). However, for the students of international relations, the term has a different meaning going beyond geography. Regions are characterized by a certain degree of mutual interdependence (Nye, 1968 quoted in Goltermann, Lohaus, Spielau & Striebinger, 2016, p. 5). Some writers also view the term from

the Constructivist perspective and argue that regions are socially constructed spatial ideas that are based on the shared features of cultural identity like religion and language (Goltermann, Lohaus, Spielau & Striebinger, 2016, p. 5).

Regionalism: The concept refers to the intensification of political and/or economic cooperation among states and other actors in a certain geographic region. It includes different aspects of regional cooperation, such as the growth of social and economic interaction and the formation of regional identity and consciousness. The increasing flow of goods, people, ideas, and money bring about regionalism by making the region more integrated and cohesive. Regionalism can come from below (in the form of decisions of companies to invest in the region or of people to move in the region) or from above (in the form of political and state-led efforts to establish regional bodies and formulate common policies) (Roach, Griffiths & O'Callaghan, 2014, pp. 280-282).

Regionalization: Regionalization can be defined as intensification of intra-regional social and economic interactions (Goltermann, Lohaus, Spielau & Striebinger, 2016, p. 5).

Chapter 4

Eurasian Economic Union as the Space of Security in the Context of English School of International Relations: Theoretical and Practical Aspects

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ABSTRACT

Regional integration creates a common economic, social, and political space, which is based on inter-state dialogue. A common integration space forms the territory of security, since the security sphere is not only to solve specific tasks, but also to create permanent instruments for preventing various risks. The Post-Soviet space remains a complex territory, the states of which have gone through a period of political destabilization, faced various threats, and come to the idea that only collective security mechanisms in the framework of constant cooperation are capable of preventing risks. Therefore, the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) is not only an economic project, it is a project that forms a common security space for all participants, and not only for its member states. In this regard, this chapter is structured around two key problems: established conceptual approaches in the field of security in relation to integration processes and tools of the EAEU for the formation of a common and indivisible security space for all its participants.

INTRODUCTION

The English School of International Relations presents research tools for understanding the role of international structures and institutions in the context of forming the general rules of the game for participants in international society. One of its new, but already quite successful players has become the EAEU, and

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since its members are located in a key region of the world - Eurasia - this alliance is capable of solving multi-component security tasks. Their implementation depends on stability in the Post-Soviet space. The Post-Soviet space is made up of the territories of the states that were part of the USSR, which are now part of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). The collapse of the USSR, called by the Russian President V. Putin a geopolitical catastrophe, led not only to the emergence of new independent states and to the formation of a new region on the world stage, but also to the emergence in the region of a set of security problems, primarily in the sphere of interethnic and interreligious interaction in North Caucasus, Transcaucasia, Central Asia.

Russia plays a central role in this territory; therefore, ensuring security in the region depends largely on Russia's actions, and it is not surprising that Russia's interactions with countries outside the Post-Soviet space also influence the state of the region. So, the general regional security is influenced by the growing competition in the global economy, in which sanctions imposed by the United States on an ongoing basis become an economic tool of unfair competition. Russophobic attitudes in a number of Post-Soviet states, actively encouraged by Western mainstream media, the strengthening of NATO's position on its borders with Russia, NATO's desire to cooperate with some new states in the Post-Soviet space, which causes concern for Russia, cannot be ignored. The expansion of NATO in itself led to the destabilization of the Post-Soviet space, and it was largely aimed at preventing reintegration processes in the region, so several countries of the former USSR were taken under the wing of NATO and the EU. The combination of internal and external threats in the Post-Soviet space poses the task of uniting the efforts of states in solving security problems, thanks to interstate dialogue and trust. Dialogue and trust are possible through collaboration and joint projects in all areas of life. Thus, the example of the EU shows that economic cooperation allows the development of institutions and legal frameworks for jointly addressing security issues. For many countries of the former Soviet Union, which face common and identical security problems, this task is also relevant. Thus, the EAEU should be studied not only in the context of the economy, but also from the point of view of solving the complex security problem in the region.

The purpose of the article is to determine the approaches to understanding security problems and challenges in the context of the postulates of the English School of International Relations. To achieve this goal, it is necessary to solve the following tasks: to determine the main provisions of the English School of International Relations on the role of integration entities in shaping the security space; and the capabilities of the EAEU to effectively address security challenges. At the same time, in the presented research it is necessary to concentrate on the conceptual approach associated with the formation of the regional security complex proposed by B. Buzan and O. Wæver. These authors have convincingly demonstrated how natural international anarchy can be institutionalized and streamlined. In this context, the EAEU, influencing the security agenda, relying on a specific region (Eurasia), is not associated only with it, but provides inter-regional cooperation, creating an international organization of a new type that is capable of solving security problems at all levels.

Security for the EAEU countries is a cumulative concept in which all aspects are important and interrelated. In this chapter, therefore, without considering specific security threats and individual aspects of security, we define it as a single, indivisible and cumulative concept. Moreover, it is precisely a common understanding of security in the post-Soviet space that is characteristic of both the leaders of the participating in the EEA states and their citizens, judging by opinion polls. The Ukrainian crisis only reinforced this understanding of threats and security. Therefore, we are talking about a common understanding of security and common security approaches for the EAEU countries, since in this case,

Russia's positions regarding security threats are similar to those of the other EAEU members. In addition, we should keep in mind that the EAEU is not the Collective Security Treaty Organization, which means that it does not have specific tools for directly affecting the security sphere. The EAEU solves security issues by forming a common platform for interaction and strengthening the countries' trust to each other, and therefore we cannot consider specific actions of states in the field of security within the EAEU, but we explore this organization as an essential element in building a common security space.

BACKGROUND

Literature Review: Basic Approaches to Security Issues

Security issues can be investigated in the context of military-strategic, anti-terrorism, diplomatic and other tasks, which, moreover, are solved at different levels. This inevitably gives rise to a multiplicity of approaches, and in them the positions of the state and the international organizations in which they cooperate are displayed in different ways. To rationalize views on the issue of security, researchers tend to focus on the security policies of individual states and their collective activities within international institutions. At first, security problems were investigated in the context of the bipolar system, then from the point of view of the unipolar world led by the so-called collective West, and now in the context of the transformation of the world order. The emergence of powerful new players, the expansion of the nuclear threat and the exacerbation of other security problems raise many new questions for researchers about the possibilities of compromise and agreements between states in determining the hierarchy of threats and combating them.

It is also necessary to note that the main ideas expressed by the authors very often consist in evaluating the actions of the United States, their approaches to security issues and in fact revolve around the United States and their foreign policy. Of course, the perception of the world through the prism of the North American approach seriously simplifies the real picture and depletes theoretical approaches in interpreting security problems and tasks. But right now in the theoretical discourse periodically there appear ideas challenging the American security monopoly, criticizing the actions of the USA and proposing a new theoretical understanding of the security problems. Currently, researchers are increasingly turning to national security issues in the context of the interaction of different participants within the international structures to which they belong, seeing in them a new organizational way of solving security problems (Gledhill, 2017; Juncos, 2017; Plank, 2017).

The study of the cooperation of the "region with the region" in the field of security to achieve a cumulative result comes to the fore. In this case, the theory of political regimes, the concept of inter-regional interaction ("interregionalism"), the theory of conflict resolution, and some others are used to investigate efficiency. In this perspective, much of the research is presented by European scientists who concentrate on the EU's interaction with the countries of Asia, North and South America, and Africa, proving that international organizations are capable of effectively solving all security tasks. Although the conceptualization of the issues of "interregional interaction" ("interregionalism") or "interaction of organizations" ("interorganizationalism") began in the late 1980s, primarily in the works of economists who explored the ability of companies to establish connections with each other, despite at the borders (Galaskiewicz, 1985), only in the last ten to fifteen years, the authors began to argue that international organizations, in fact, are tools for solving complex security issues.

From the very beginning, international organizational structures in the business world have been viewed as a factor of international relations from the point of view of the formation of a security space within which various interactions can be developed (Börzel, vanHüllen, 2014; Koops, Tardy, 2015). The effectiveness of interaction depends on the degree of confidence of the parties and coordination of efforts (Bergmann, Niemann, 2015; Gledhill, 2017). Accordingly, the more states belong to the same regional group, the more fully and correctly the security tasks are implemented. Moreover, it is within the framework of such a system that it is possible to develop institutionalization in the field of security tasks (Brosig, 2013).

Literature Review: Security and Integration

A number of integration theories and concepts prove that integration formations solve the problem of regional and, in some cases, even global security. Thus, from the point of view of E. Haas's classic neofunctionalism, there is always a conflict between the need of the underdeveloped countries for modernization and the desire of the international system for stability, which dictates the need for interaction between states.

And the integration group, thus, is capable of ensuring the overflow of not only finance, labor, but also various socio-economic and political processes that stabilize the situation both in the region as a whole and in individual Member States. In turn, the success of the integration process ensures the effective functioning of supranational institutions. The cornerstone of neofunctionalism and the basis of its security theory is the idea that cooperation in technical and economic fields should eventually spread to foreign policy and defense (Haas, 1968).

From the point of view of a liberal intergovernmental approach, states are aware of the benefits of interaction, as this allows them to make optimal decisions and reach agreement with other states. On the example of the European Union, we see that within the framework of integration it became possible to form a common security space based on economic interaction and political dialogue. Thus, regional integration confirms that security is directly dependent on its sustainability, while integrating states form common perceptions of risks and security mechanisms.

The choice of regional integration implies a certain scenario of interaction between states and partners. The integration group provides a stable economic development, the necessary protectionism, which is important for stabilizing the space and allows us to form a common security agenda. In addition, the interaction of states within the framework of one integration entity allows them to more fully interact in other integration structures. For example, the participants of the EAEU cooperate within the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and with other international organizations.

Safety in the modern world is a complex and multi-level concept. And given the fact that the main goal of integration is to create the foundations for maintaining security in the region, which can be called strategic stability (Powell, 1989), it is integration that allows to form a security space in which the states of a single organization give a general assessment of the existing risks.

Therefore, it was international organizations that became the most successful in resolving crises and conflicts in different regions. In addition, integration processes are a manifestation of regionalism. Regionalism creates the conditions for strategic security. It ensures the complementarity and "sufficiency" of integrating states, solving, inter alia, security objectives.

Although security has always been the main goal of the integration process, security and integration are usually studied separately. Unfortunately, security researchers do not often pay attention to integration education. However, it is integration entities that are, in fact, new regional security systems. Advances in this issue began at the end of the twentieth century, when security began to be understood widely, not associating it primarily with military conflicts and territorial disputes. In addition, it was at the end of the last century that the European Union achieved great success in integration, which made it necessary to draw attention to it as an actor in creating regional and global security systems. For example, there are papers that have explored the EU as a security community (Security communities, 1998; Deutsch, 1957).

Therefore, in a broad sense, the concept of security is a question of being, self-identification and trust of participants of international relations to each other. Not by chance, when discussing international dialogue, scientists talk about ontological security. Accordingly, security is associated with the perception of threats and the ability to counter them. Mutual understanding and even a sense of security depend on the dialogue and stability of interstate interactions in a particular region. The basic trust is most quickly and efficiently achieved thanks to the formation of an interstate union, an integration group, etc. organizations.

The combination of integration, regional approaches and security issues has led to the emergence of new security concepts. Thus, B. Buzan and O. Wæver showed that national security in all aspects cannot be solved independently from other states, but is most fully realized in the framework of the regional security complex. One of the options for its formation is regional integration associations.

According to B. Buzan, a regional security complex can exist in four ways: 1) a “normal” regional complex, in which a regional structure is built that promotes competition and the struggle for power within it; 2) a regional complex in which one power is leading, as a result of which security cannot be exercised; 3) a highly integrated regional complex, which can be considered as a single actor in global security; 4) a regional complex in which the system of interdependence is not developed, which does not allow creating a single security space (Buzan, 1991: 197). Representing security as a regional security complex, B. Buzan in 1983 defined it as a group of states whose security relations are so close that their national security cannot be considered separately from each other (Buzan, 1983: 106). Thus, if we evaluate integration education as an actor in a regional and even global security system, it is important to take into account the existing hierarchy within it, the sustainability of partnership interactions of the state, and the compromise factor in decision making. In the most capacious form, the presented ideas received design in the format of the English school of international Relations.

MAIN FOCUS OF THE CHAPTER

This part of the chapter will be devoted to the main security issues in Eurasian integration.

English School of International Relations: Main Aspects

The English School represents a successful attempt of submitting a new approach to studying the system of international relations, which, on one hand is based on classical paradigms, but, on the other hand, gives different interpretations of international relations, accents and a new conception of them. It is not surprising that the English School, which proved to be quite flexible and capable of combining diverse approaches and views, rapidly started to gain recognition.

This school is well known among the academic community, primarily owing to the concept of “international society” and a sociological approach in identifying the potential of interstate relations in various configurations, including interstate anarchy, which imply the importance of addressing precisely the interaction of communities. Thus, B. Buzan declares that modern international relations represent a situation of anarchy, since their main characteristic is the absence of the single government, that could overarch states (Buzan, 2009: 146). It is obvious that the English School is trying to solve the problem of actorness precisely from the perspective of international society. Here, such concepts as chaos, order and balance are determinative. At that, it rests upon the achievements of sociology, history, international law.

Therefore, international (global) society is the key concept for the English School. States, as well as people, exist, live and develop within a community. In order to belong to a community, states must recognize each other. In other words, it is necessary to institutionalize shared interests and identities, which bring up an issue of forming and approving norms, rules and institutions of international relations, recognized by all participants.

International society, as a community of states, as distinct from domestic societies, does not have any government and manifests itself through more complex and indirect mechanisms aimed at forming international order and cooperation. These mechanisms help the most influential players to carry out the so-called interstate socialization (Bull, 2002: 71, 194-222).

Approaches of the English School of International Relations are of great interest, preeminently, by addressing the matter of recognition of the status of the great power, which was identified, any given actor within international society counts upon. Since the English School considers an interstate interaction literally, in the context of public relations, its representatives emphasize the social and material dimensions of power. They serve as indicators or criteria, which identify the degree and nature of this interaction. The social dimension involves studying the positions both of societies of states and of international society. The material dimension of power here implies military force, economy, population, resources, and territory. It also includes the factor of a state being recognized as a member of an influential international club by other countries. At that, an actor must necessarily agree that the rules are inviolable, and in the event of any state falling out of the system, which might happen for one reason or another, the rules of the international participation for participants of the system remain unrevised (Butterfield, 1972: 341).

The international community, which mainly consists of modern nation states, should not be regarded as an exact analog of the concept of “domestic society”, since the large territories face more complex problem of identification. Here, many factors, including history, culture, political consciousness, etc., come into effect. At that, all states are considered as communities with their own identity, their own conceptual system, culture and religion. Their interaction is based either on similar or different perceptions of rules and regulations. Comprehension of the common rules and interests affects not only the behavior of society but also of states and various institutions.

According to the representatives of the English School, the comprehension of development of international society derives from the historical events. As an illustration of establishing the common cultural spaces, which cover large territories, members of the English School often cite an example of the expansion of European international society and its dominance over the planet, which assured the significant role of European culture in the world politics and an opportunity of forming the stable order within the liberal interpretation of justice.

Awareness of cultural commonality assures the high level of interaction and allows to establish a common international system. Here, M. Wight’s approach to the unity of European civilization, which is based on Christian principles, can be considered as indicative. He practically has submitted a civilizational

approach to the identification of states and territories. M. Wight believed that a single civilizational space means the cultural homogeneity, which allows to establish and develop the common system (Wight, 1977: 4). As for the political structure of a state, it is precisely the consequence of a certain vector of cultural development, which also allows to form common international institutions, supported by all members. Such positions remain most stable and important, since the modern world is represented by states, transnational corporations, various actors, as well as by multiple, sometimes contrary, processes, which shape not just the international society but the global one. Undoubtedly, the awareness of the common culture ensures some unity, though, of the rather amorphous nature.

There are two theses, important for international relations, which were declared within the English School. The first thesis establishes that the legitimacy of modern international society is based on principles of sovereign equality and equality of peoples and nations. The second thesis establishes that there is a discrepancy between the hegemony of some powers and the sovereign equality of states (author's note: the reference is made to the hegemony of the USA). At that, according to representatives of the English School, the hegemony of a single state should be avoided, otherwise it is impossible to create solidary international society. Hegemons constantly demand the legitimacy in order to maintain their unequal status of leaders (Clark, 2009: 23-36). H. Bull, analyzing international society in terms of anarchy and order, believes that there is no distinct or rigidly established interaction between states, and their interactions are inherently arbitrary and natural. However, since states share the common space, they have to reconcile their interests with those of the others in the context of the total order. Therefore, order is necessary, but at the same time, it is conditioned by some self-limitation of states which are aware of the value of this order. Here, we can notice the intersection with the ideas of the liberal democratic world, declaring that the prevention of conflicts between states is facilitated by the awareness of common values, since only the democracies can never allow any major conflicts between each other, let alone wars. The joint recognition becomes the key to the system, allows to form it and develop institutions and the rules of the game. It is mutual recognition of each other accomplished by all members, that is required for maintaining all of the aforesaid.

Mutual recognition is reflected in another important concept submitted by the English School, i.e. in the balance of power, which can be achieved only in the context of the system and serves for maintaining the world order.

Thus, the concept of "security" in the English School is based on the conception of the international system, the states play by common rules of the game in, which allows to maintain the balance of power (Bull, 2002: 102, 201-220). It is the collective recognition and approval given by the members of the international society to the existing rules and regulations that is important for safety. In order to achieve it, states must coordinate their interaction. Therefore, according to representatives of the English School, the threat to security appears as an immediate result of even the slightest negative impact on the existing norms, institutions and concepts of the international order. Here, according to T. Dunn and M. McDonald, states, which have leadership skills and mandatorily share values of the liberal democratic world, are capable of providing solutions to an emerged problem to other states, hence, restoring international security (Dunne and McDonald, 2013).

It was Barry Buzan who made a significant contribution to the development of theoretical approaches developed within the framework of the English School of International Relations. However, since B. Buzan developed many security provisions as a project manager for security at the Copenhagen Institute for the Study of Peace, it is not surprising that the complex of his approaches was called the "Copenhagen School of Security".

Within the English school B. Buzan has submitted the very fresh approach to the security problems, which allowed to distinguish the interrelation between developing of international relations (in particular, forming of the regional integrative groups) and the problem of the security assurance. B. Buzan detected three levels within the system of international relations, i.e. transnational, state and individual ones. Along with three levels of security, B. Buzan has also detected such five security sectors as political, military, economic, public, and environmental (Buzan, 1991: 433). All of them are interconnected and they influence each other. According to B. Buzan, the threats of military, political, economic, public, environmental nature are constant and, yet, all of them affect functioning of a state and potential of security assurance.

Establishing the global society demands both mutual recognition of states and their interaction. The same assures the implementation of security at all levels. Undoubtedly, this idea was confirmed by the tragic events, i.e. terrorist acts, which swept the modern world and demonstrated that they can be resisted only through the interaction of all levels of governance and the entire global community. Attempting to solve these problems alone inevitably turns out to be ineffective, which argues for the idea of interdependence of states in the field of security (Buzan, Wæver, 2003: 46). It is important to note, that it was B. Buzan who pointed out what exactly is determined as a security problem in modern society, since he highlighted the very process of decision-making on a threat, which is based on the existing political culture and the situation in any given country. According to him, the process of securitization starts from the moment a threat is declared and ends with the argumentation about this threat, which gets accepted by the society. It is obvious, that it is ideas and values which have an impact on the recognition of a threat as the existential one.

Thus, security is linked precisely to relations and interactions between states, and national security depends on international security. This multi-level picture becomes most evident in the conception of regional security. Here, according to B. Buzan, concepts of friendliness and hostility, which states hold for each other, are of great importance. These concepts are based on historical events, ethnical and national processes, territory, culture, religion, and other factors. All together, they represent a complex (assembly of elements) of security. Hence, there are certain gradually forming regional groups of states, which share common interests and perception of common security (Buzan, 2009: 190). However, the regional security complex gets formed only if the states of a certain region are dependent from each other in the field of security (Buzan, Wæver, 2003: 47).

The resulting security complexes can be defined not only as the practice of state policy, but also as tools of research, required for analyzing interstate interactions in any given region. Therefore, it is important for any state to study the security issues of its region, to be aware of the threats and interests, existing in this region. According to B. Buzan, such approach will allow a state to pursue the optimal policy, since in this case; the elements of the national security strategy are linked with elements of international security (Buzan, 2009: 335).

States belonging to one international regional group prefer to use common instruments and base on common concepts of strategies to preserve stability at regional and even at global levels. For example, the concepts of “resilience” and interregional security cooperation as a heart part of the EU foreign policy strategies correspond to the idea of a regional security complex that underlines acknowledgment of the common security tasks of the region by all the neighboring states that allows to elaborate the common mechanisms to deal with security problems (Juncos, 2017; Plank, 2017).

It is impossible for members of one regional security complex, at the same time, to be members of other regional groups and organizations. At that, the entire world is divided into mutually limiting re-

gional security groups, which differ in the degree of connectivity and interdependence of their members in the field of security (Buzan, Wæver, 2003: 8-49).

Thus, states receive not just additional guarantees of their own security, but also guarantees that countries, included into the same regional bloc, jointly assure common regional security, in the context of mutual dependence in the field of security, recognized by all members. Moreover, the security regime, established by the partners within one regional integration group, also allows to broaden the space of security. Nevertheless, a single state, under certain conditions, is capable of influencing security greater than an international organization. Due to different interests, a few security complexes can be formed in different regions, and global challenges or geopolitical changes contribute to establishing a certain configuration of these structures.

Integration Processes in Post-Soviet Space

Integration forms regional security. Therefore, let us turn to the question of how the EAEU affects the solution of security problems in the Post-Soviet space.

Taking into account the provisions of the English school of international relations, security is realized through: 1) the formation of a regional organization (regional security complex); 2) mutual recognition by states of each other and their development of common approaches to security, and these approaches depend on the historical and cultural aspects of interstate cooperation; 3) the activities of the state leader in the regional organization, which is primarily responsible for security.

Integration processes in the Post-Soviet space are highly significant for countries that recognize a single and inseparable historical fate with Russia. Integration in this region, despite slips and problems, is still tangible, as it has different facets and dimensions, ranging from the military-political interaction of countries within the Collective Security Treaty Organization, ending with the formation of a single customs space with elements of in-depth integration, for example, in the Union State and Eurasian Economic Union. At the same time, now, at the beginning of the 21st century, Eurasian integration is being formed not so much in the context of a collision of cultures, as in the search for new models for integration. Thus, Eurasian integration, based on respect for the sovereignty of the participating States, can become an alternative to the integration processes of the so-called Western world. The Eurasian Union is founded by sovereign states, aware that their security and well-being depend on interaction, readiness for dialogue and compromise. Integration processes in the Post-Soviet space unfold gradually, as they pass through the filter of sovereignty of each participant. And in these processes, Russia does not intend to play the role of a supervisor, but, on the contrary, affirms the idea of co-creation and co-development, and, accordingly, co-prosperity of all the EAEU countries. Ukrainian dismantling of statehood showed how fair these approaches are in modern conditions.

Moreover, the EAEU is regarded as a model of a new type of Eurasian civilization that is being formed in the Post-Soviet space, since Eurasia is the crossroads of Eastern and Western cultures. And from this point of view, i.e. on the basis of respect for cultural pluralism and sovereignty, according to the Treaty on the Eurasian Economic Space, the joint development of the participating countries is built and multipolarity is established. In addition, over a long period of time, the core of Eurasian integration was formed in the face of Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia. Despite conflicts and contradictions, it is obvious that for Russia, for Belarus, and for Kazakhstan, integration is not only possible, but necessary. According to public opinion polls, the number of people supporting integration in the allied countries is always more than half and sometimes reaches 70% (Eremina, 2019; Zadorin, 2016; Starichyonok, 2016).

Gradually, integration in the Eurasian space gained its own pace. In 1995 Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia started the formation of the Customs Union. In 1996 Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Russia signed the Treaty on the deepening of integration, the purpose of which was to create a single economic space (Dogovor mezhdru Respublikoy Belorussiya, Respublikoy Kazakhstan, Kitgizskoy Respublikoy I Rossiyskoy Federatsiyey ob uglublenii integratsii v ekonomicheskoy I gumanitarnoy oblastiakh ot 21 maya 1996, 1996).

In 1999, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan signed the Treaty on the Customs Union and the Common Economic Space (Dogovor o Tamozhennom soyuze I Yedinom ekonomicheskom prostranstve ot 26 fevralya 1999 goda, 1999). In 2000, these countries founded the Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC) to influence various sectors of the economy within its framework. In 2006 Uzbekistan joined this organization. In 2011 Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russia signed the Declaration on Eurasian Economic Integration and defined January 1, 2012 as the starting date for the operation of the Common Economic Space (with the principles of free movement of goods, services, capital, labor) (Deklaratsiya o yevraziyskoy ekonomicheskoy integratsii 18 noyabrya 2011 goda, 2011).

At the same time, an agreement was signed on the establishment of the Eurasian Economic Commission as the regulatory body of the Common Economic Space and the Customs Union (Dogovor o Yevraziyskoy ekonomicheskoy komissii ot 01 dekabrya 2011 goda, 2011). In 2015 the Treaty on the Eurasian Economic Union began to operate (Dogovor o Yevraziyskom ekonomicheskom soyuze, 2019). According to this Treaty, the integration base is economic cooperation, which creates grounds for dialogue in other areas and also forms common security tasks. This means that the disintegration processes in the Post-Soviet space have been largely halted.

In addition, the integration association within the framework of the EAEU allows building extensive free trade zones with various countries, ranging from Serbia to Vietnam. At the same time, Russia is indeed becoming a new unifying center in Eurasia.

In general, the formation of the EAEU is seen as a gradual process, starting with integration in specific segments. As stated by Russian President Vladimir Putin, Eurasian integration is a long-term project that does not depend on the political situation (Ptoyekty evraziyskoy integratsii dokazal svoyu effektivnost', zayavil Putin, 2019).

The task of integration is to consolidate the region of the Post-Soviet space, which should act as an intermediary between the Euro-Atlantic and Asian-Pacific regions. Eurasia has always historically formed as a transit zone from the East to the West and, thus, is fully capable of fulfilling this role even now. This also requires a strategic partnership with the main geopolitical players in Eurasia. At the same time, the burden of the main engine of integration historically inevitably falls on Russia, which is becoming a leader in this region. Foreign political scientists and experts, for this reason, as a rule, give a negative assessment of the integration processes in the Eurasian space, although sometimes they are perceived as a counterbalance to the influence of China (Tharoor, 2018).

All the existing integration structures in the Post-Soviet space interact with each other: the EAEU, the Union State interacts with the BRICS and the SCO, which makes them structures that ensure security not only in Eurasia, but also in the global system. Participation in these structures obviously strengthened not only Russia, but also all its allies and partners (Vasilyeva, Lagutina, 2016). It is not without reason that the question of greater integration (the Greater Eurasia project) is traditionally raised within the framework of the Eastern Economic Forums.

It is also appropriate to recall here that at the G20 summit in Hangzhou in 2016, experts voiced the idea of an “interconnected global infrastructure” (Kommyunike liderov «Gruppy dvadtsati», 2016). And

the officials of Russia and China are already constantly discussing the prospects for greater Eurasian integration and the possibility of concluding relevant agreements.

In general, Eurasia is a huge territory where two thirds of the world's population live and produce about 60% of world GDP (Vinokurov, 2013). And the Eurasian states' awareness of the common interests and tasks really contributes to the establishment of multipolarity in international relations, which allows us to make predictions about their successful co-development.

Threats in Post-Soviet Space

The main security threats to the Post-Soviet space are the remaining unresolved territorial disputes, internal political problems and external influences, primarily from NATO.

In addition, one should take into account a number of difficulties in the Eurasian integration process, which arise in relation to the formation of a common budget, a unified information system with the closure of national data, a common visa-free space (since, for example, Kazakhstan has a "visa-free" agreement with Saudi Arabia) control mechanisms, harmonization of legal systems in general. A lot of concern also arises among Russian citizens who would not like to turn Russia into the main sponsor of Eurasian integration.

The EAEU, by not proposing specific mechanisms for solving individual problems, creates a common security space. This Union forms the institutions of economic and political interaction, allows to harmonize the legislation of the participating States, which creates a common security agenda for all countries, forcing them to develop common approaches to prevent destabilization in the Post-Soviet space, as cooperating states need stable development. In addition, the EAEU is becoming not just the core of the Post-Soviet integration processes, it argues the idea of multipolarity and intergovernmental dialogue over large spaces, since the Union itself is being formed as an open structure actively promoting the idea of jointly solving common tasks States.

The EAEU project is intended not only to jointly resolve economic issues and reconfigure the Post-Soviet space, it is also a project aimed at solving security problems in the context of a constant increase in geopolitical tension. Over time, it became clear that it was the general understanding of security that created the basis for interaction between countries in the field of economics and politics. Thus, at the heart of deepening integration lies precisely the security and the awareness of participating States of the need to jointly support it. Leaders of participating states prove the common approach to security and underline importance of the EAEU. In 2006 Russian President V. Putin said that "Both the Eurasian Economic Community and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) are an example of an effective model of interaction between states that are close in their interests and goals. In modern conditions, the stable development of the economy is impossible without ensuring its sufficient security. In this regard, the establishment of closer cooperation between the Eurasian Economic Community and the CSTO is one of the most urgent tasks, which will help protect integration processes from various threats". Here, the EAEU is the most important element of the common unified security system in the Post-Soviet space (Prezident RF, 2006). President of Belarus A. Lukashenko also repeatedly stated that in conditions of global instability, close cooperation with partners is necessary, including joint military exercises (RIA Novosti, 2019). Also, representatives of Kazakhstan have always represented the EAEU as a significant element of security. So, the first president of Kazakhstan N. Nazarbayev, having resigned, will remain the life-long head of the Security Council, which is vested with powers in both domestic and foreign policies of the country. It is symptomatic that at the same time N. Nazarbayev was awarded

the title of Honorary Chairman of the EAEU Supreme Eurasian Economic Council. The combination of these posts allows him to evaluate the integration processes in the EAEU through the prism of security.

Moreover, the common economic space, formed on the principles of free trade in goods and services, free movement of capital and labor, coordinated antitrust policy, harmonization of legislation in the field of labor, taxes, migration, is developing steadily because it provides security in the region.

The Post-Soviet space faces several pressing security issues (Meshcheryakov, 2013; Security Dilemmas in Russia and Eurasia, 1998). First, the region became in some sense “a field of competition between the US (the collective West) and Russia, while the US often played a destructive role in this region, since they formulated the task of preventing the restoration of any resemblance to the USSR. So, in 1998, US Secretary of State M. Albright declared: “our task is to manage the processes of the collapse of the USSR” (Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright, 1998).

Therefore, the EAEU plays an important role as a stabilizer in the region, since only the collective interaction of several countries is capable of preventing political destabilization (Irkhin, 2014). For the countries of the EAEU the policy of NATO and the EU in the post-Soviet space is not entirely clear and understandable. In addition, it is in the security context that Russia is considering the EU’s Eastern Partnership program, which in 2009 was joined by Armenia and Belarus, that are the members of the EAEU. The EU, in its turn, also perceives the EAEU as a competing integration project, which prevents the EU from penetrating deeper into the Post-Soviet space (Babynina, 2013). This competition violates the security system in Eurasia as a whole, especially if one considers that most of the EU countries are members of NATO. For this reason, Russian officials have repeatedly declared necessity of the harmonization of integration processes in different regions of the world. For example, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said about this at the UN General Assembly in September 2016 (Vystupleniye Ministra inostrannykh del Rossii S.V. Lavrova na 71-y sessii General’noy Assamblei OON, N’yu-York 23 sentyabrya 2016 goda, 2016).

Secondly, the issue of internal political destabilization, through which many countries of the Post-Soviet space have passed, is also perceived as a threat to the security of the region. At the end of the 20th century, we observed the development of new types of conflicts in Ukraine, the Transcaucasus, and Central Asia, which are based on religious, ethnic, linguistic, and clan problems. The problem of boundaries remains important. Their transparency within the CIS contributes not only to the communication of citizens and the movement of goods, but also to illegal migration, international crime, arms trafficking, drug trafficking.

The problem of border security is particularly acute in the region of Central Asia, adjacent to the main centers of international instability. However, specific economic cooperation programs are able to counter domestic political and foreign political destabilization and form a common economic space in which it will be unprofitable for member states to conflict with each other, and it will be beneficial to jointly solve pressing security issues.

And in this context, the integration mechanism ensures the prevention of exacerbation of military-political problems. The EAEU is intended to resist the processes of disintegration and the emergence of both new conflicts within Post-Soviet states and between them. Joint economic development creates the basis for political dialogue, and any system of international legal circumstances reduces the likelihood of conflicts in the Post-Soviet space, and contributes to the formation and implementation of the idea of collective security.

The need for collective efforts in solving security problems is obvious. Collective efforts to ensure national security can reduce the financial and economic burden on the economy and budgets of individual

countries. The deepening of cooperation forms the space of common security and guarantees not only stable socio-economic development, but also the protection of the national interests and sovereignty of all participating States.

Thirdly, economic success within the framework of the EAEU is the most reliable tool for creating a security space. To date, we can talk about integration successes associated with streamlining migration processes, increasing trade turnover between the countries - members of the Union, changing the currency structure of mutual settlements, etc. About 85% of all products of the union market are covered by a single regulation. The growth of mutual trade of the EAEU countries in the first 10 months of 2017 amounted to 26.7%, with the outpacing dynamics of trade in non-commodity goods. The positions of the EAEU countries in the markets of third countries have strengthened, the overall growth of the foreign trade of the “Eurasian Five” was 24.6%. The increasing role of local currencies in the mutual settlements of the EAEU countries continues. This process is most indicative in comparison ruble - dollar - euro. Over the past five years, the share of the ruble in mutual trade between Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Armenia and Kyrgyzstan increased from 61.8% to 75%, the dollar decreased from 30.3% to 19%, and the euro decreased from 6.8% up to 5% (Tochkirosta EAES: ekonomika, bezopasnost', obshchestvo, 2018: 4-5).

The results of this work are directly related to the security of the countries of the Union. The stable development trajectory of these states ensures the sustainability of the social and political life of the “Eurasian Five”. Positive socio-economic dynamics reduce the likelihood of the spread of extremist ideas and movements. Unification of legislation, clear and transparent rules for the movement of goods, capital and labor reduce the level of corruption and crime in the EAEU space. Therefore, consideration of integration issues without formulating answers to current security challenges in the countries of the Eurasian Economic Union is currently unpromising.

SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Among the main problems in the development of the security agenda within the framework of the EAEU are the following: adjusting the priorities and positions of the member states in their foreign policy; development of new forms of cooperation of states in the field of security; the formation of mechanisms to prevent external pressure, primarily from NATO and the EU.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

It is necessary to continue research on the impact of regional integration processes on the national security of states, since it is important to understand the relationship between security and integration. Obviously, in the Post-Soviet space, it is security that enables states to interact with each other and creates the basis for mutual understanding and cooperation.

CONCLUSION

Thus, in the context of approaches elaborated by representatives of the English School of International Relations, security is studied directly from the perspective of interstates' interactions forming a regional

organization. International institutions, established and recognized by member-states within the integration group, create the order and the system with established rules. Being involved in a system and recognition of customary norms and rules allow to implement the so-called socialization of states and establish international society. The existing status quo of a state in this context should be considered a necessary condition for maintaining internal and external order and security. At that, according to representatives of the English School, order helps to exercise justice and security, and they, in their turn, allow to arrange order. Order is exactly that basic condition, which is required for maintaining security at all levels, and security, as such, is nothing more than a result of interaction of various international actors, influencing the emergence of a security problem as well as its solution.

In this context, it is not surprising, that a state is recognized as one of elements of assurance not only of national but also of international security, since it is an integral part of international society. But a state always remains just a part of international society and, therefore, does not act alone, but solves security problems in interrelation with other members of this society, sharing a common concept of challenges and threats. The absence of a common concept of peace and security automatically means a security threat.

The picture of international security is painted, on one hand, by a variety of historical and identification factors, and, on the other hand, by a complex of specific challenges associated with military, political, economic, social, environmental realms (Eremina, 2016). These factors and challenges generally appear to be quite similar for states of certain regions. In the context of the necessary state socialization and recognition, states seek to be part of a regional structure, at the very least. Here, the reference is made not only to seeking and assuring security through integration of a state into certain structures, but more to the fact, that it is common concepts of security and threats, that have that effect on states, which favors forming alliances (regional security complexes). At that, states cannot join two regional security complexes at the same time.

The interesting point is that the representatives of the English School insisted that equality in such alliances (regional complex, block) is a positive factor. However, mutual security becomes possible only in the context of mutual recognition, which requires compromise. Compromise is based on common values and norms. In the context of recognition of interdependence made by states, the tasks of national and international security are combined. Moreover, national security is impossible without international security, and international security is not assured in the event of a national security crisis.

Yet, it is obvious that the problem of prevention of various types of conflicts (security threats) is not fully elaborated within the English School. The recognition and socialization of states, forming international society, guarantee neither absence of conflict nor finding a solution to it. It is more indicative of the division of the world into blocks, made with regards of common ideas of “what is due”. The world is still seriously fragmented culturally, politically, economically and socially. Therefore, states rather project their historical comprehension of partnership based on “friendliness” or “hostility” on international society, than establish alliances in response to emerging problems.

The EAEU seems to be a heterogeneous security complex, the participants of which have different economic and social, military-political potential and resources, but they have experience of economic and political, cultural interaction within the USSR, established economic ties, common risks and security threats. In addition, the anti-Russian sanctions regime has a negative impact on all EAEU states. The agreement and compromise between the EAEU states allow building partnerships that take into account the interests of all participants. In such a format, the EAEU as a regional security complex solves the problem of security, affects the issue of security and the development of common approaches, the interdependence of securitization processes. At the same time, it is the economic and legal rapprochement

within the regional security complex that forms the security space in the spaces of the former USSR. The securitization process shows that security is not only the military-political sphere, but also the economy, as well as identity. Integration forms the basis to resolve conflicts in adjacent territories, changes the security perception of participants in international relations, allows realize mutual security(Adler and Barnett 1998: 119).

The EAEU countries understand that security in the Post-Soviet space is not only and not so much the protection of borders as a permanent intergovernmental interaction, which allows to avoid military conflict and provides mutual benefits to all participants, within the framework of the concept of “mutual security” - a key theoretical element in the English school of international relations. Tight integration allows the formation of a transnational region, the development of which in itself implies collective security (Flemming,2013).The integration process de-securitizes threats inside and even outside the union. Further integration within the EAEU in the economy affects the harmonization of law, which in turn forms a common space in the field of security and justice.

The EAEU also has the tools to solve the problem of de-securitization of external risks. First, the EAEU is building an attractive integration space, with the number of observers growing. The EAEU enters into agreements with growing economies, raising its status as an international player and creating new opportunities for integrating countries. Secondly, the EAEU has the tools of economic influence on all players in the Post-Soviet space, preventing its possible destabilization. The process of integration into the EAEU itself creates general patterns in the awareness of the security problems of the group’s states.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Globalization: Strengthening of the interdependence of international actors at all levels, globalization provides the conditions for the formation of integration associations.

Global Security: Measures taken by states and international organizations to provide security for all international actors.

Interregional cooperation: Cooperation of non-border regions.

Post-Soviet Space: The territory of the former Republics of the USSR.

Regional integration: The interaction of states that form a common economic space and implement political forms of integration.

Regional Security: Security that is provided by cooperation of the states belonging to the certain region.

Regional Security Complex: Cooperation and dialogue between the states belonging to the regional integration group that have common perception of threats and facilitate common measures.

The Eurasian Economic Union: An integration project in the Eurasian space, the goal of which is the economic and political rapprochement of the post-Soviet countries, consists of Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Armenia, Kyrgyzstan.

Section 2

The Main Directions of Eurasian Integration

Chapter 5

The Main Stages of Eurasian Integration Development

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ABSTRACT

The scholarly approach toward the analysis of the issue of stages of Eurasian integration has to offer not only a timeline data with milestones and the key events, but also conceptualized logic of Eurasian integration alongside with explanation of the consequent steps that were undertaken by the regional countries on their way to create the current level of integration. The chapter starts with the point that Russia, as the biggest political, economic, and military power in the region played a fundamental role in the integration of the post-Soviet republics. Practical steps in this way were made only when Russian leadership embraced this idea as the best alternative to the other forms of interaction and cooperation for the post-Soviet space under the umbrella of the CIS.

INTRODUCTION

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of newly independent states created a very unique political atmosphere in the region. This atmosphere was widely associated with the term “civilized divorce”. However historical reality proved that the newly established Russian elite headed by the ‘young democratic reformers’ led by Boris Yeltsin have seen the post-Soviet republics as new political entities on the geographical map which would inevitably remain in the Russian sphere of influence. Just because the Russian Federation will remain the most powerful country that holds the majority of resources. This thesis was clearly outlined in several documents issued by Yeltsin’s administration. Specifically so-called ‘Burbulis memorandum’. The concentration of the greatest portion of natural resources, strategic military might, and core Soviet industrial potential within Russian borders created an illusion in the minds of Russian political elite that this made it the center of gravity for the former Soviet republics without the economic obligations and responsibilities inherited from the USSR. Drastic consequences of economic reforms in Russia, the war in Chechnya, social and political instability made it impossible to apply the

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The Main Stages of Eurasian Integration Development

smooth scenario of restructuring the USSR into the CIS as a new more adaptive and comfortable form of regional cooperation with the central role played by the Russian Federation.

Dramatic economic crises, as well as political turbulence in Russia and many other regional states, have ruined those hopes of Yeltsin's administration and CIS did not become a new efficient form of regional cooperation. On the contrary, it very soon evolved into a very bureaucratic and rigid mechanism with very limited efficiency. At the same time, the exploitation of ideological constructions of common history, joint cultural and linguistic space, cross-border social and family ties among former Soviet republics soon proved to be useless as a platform for starting the real reintegration process during the early 90s.

Then in the late 90s, and the early 2000s regional integration process led by Russia evolved into a mixture of tools and mechanisms used by the Russian Federation to reinforce its role as a locomotive of regional integration. This mixture consisted of the variety of economic, energy-associated and military tools used as a policy of 'carrot and stick' supporting the countries that were willing to remain as Moscow's close partners and punishing those who were not so pliant and manageable in terms of their policy toward Russia. Among those instruments, we could see playing with prices of Russia's natural resources (primarily oil and gas), privileged access/denial to the Russian internal market, using Russian peacekeeping forces for ensuring Kremlin's influence in the series of regional conflicts, etc.

Such an ambiguous Russian policy was sending a very controversial political and economic signals to post-Soviet republics. This negatively affected the overall strategic situation in the region and provoke strong disintegrative accords (creation of alternative projects such as GUUAM (later GUAM), OEC) and velvet revolutions in some countries of the region, etc. This is how the region faced the new phenomenon of 'multi-speed and multi-level' integration. It became obvious that some of the former Soviet republics do not share the logic and substance of integration process the way it was seen by Moscow. In sum, these measures of economic and political pressure on some neighbors combined with fostering and rewarding the others did not bring a strong integrative accord to the region.

To avoid this negative trend it was decided that selective measures of pressure and support have to be replaced by the more consistent strategy. That strategy should include systematic measures and pragmatic economic approach to replace obsolete ideas of common history, cultural and social unity as the justification of integration's necessity. With the revisited idea of Eurasian integration, goals of the integration process were changed as well: to create a stronger regional economic center that would help to face negative global economic threats. The new integration entities and structures started to take pragmatic and practical forms. So the new stage of Eurasian integration takes place in the mid-2000s alongside with fundamental rethinking of its integration strategy by Moscow.

This stage gave the start of the new logic of interstate cooperation based on the principles that economic cooperation will be the backbone of any future forms of long-term cooperation. 2011-2015 opened the new era of post-Soviet integration even though at that moment it was the initiative supported by only three republics of the former USSR. Since that time, we are facing the evolution of integration strategies and practices executed and applied by Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Russia (later Armenia and Kyrgyzstan).

However, the change of the paradigm does not necessarily mean that all the issues were solved and we should expect steady progress. The new paradigm and the creation of the Eurasian Economic Union in 2015 provoked a number of new issues and obstacles, which are still needed to be addressed in the years to come. The main idea of the chapter is to present the dynamics and key stages of Eurasian integration in its historical retrospective, with a certain emphasis on the role of political elites in shaping this process and correcting its substance, speed and, nature. Our argument consists of the hypothesis that the success and failures of Eurasian integration depended on the post-Soviet political elites eager to

achieve their strategic and tactical, political and economic goals, using the Eurasian integration project as an instrument.

BACKGROUND

On January 1, 2020, we are celebrating five years since the creation of the Eurasian Economic Union. This regional organization aims to promote the economic integration of its member-states. EAEU helps to ensure the freedom of trade, movement of capital and labor force, as well as to coordinate national policy in a variety of economic sectors. Now, the EAEU includes five members: Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan Kyrgyzstan, and the Russian Federation. The Union supposed to represent a new level of regional integration of the post-Soviet states. It is possible to assert that Eurasian Economic Union has become the most complex and universal form of Eurasian integration once articulated by President Nazarbayev back in 1994 during his famous lecture at Lomonosov Moscow State University (Nazarbayev, 1997 pp. 32-38).

During the almost 20 years of different kinds of attempts to organize a viable and efficient form of cooperation, post-Soviet countries passed through several stages and attempts to agree on several issues. On the initial stage, it was the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), which concentrated all the forms of economic, political, social and cultural cooperation under its umbrella. Almaty Declaration of 1991 opened the new page in the history of post-Soviet regional cooperation and fixed some major principles that constitute some new forms of integration among former Soviet republics “creation and development of common economic space, joint European and Eurasian markets (Almaty Declaration of the CIS, 1991). Later in 1993 the Statutes of the CIS it was explained that the Commonwealth confirms that its members are looking for integration in a variety of spheres. (The Statutes of CIS, 1993) In other words, it has become a fundamental basis for integration.

Looking at the theoretical basis for regional integration it is necessary to stress that scholarly debate on this issue started with theories of federalism, functionalism and, neofunctionalism (Hettne and Söderbaum, 2008). The functionalist approach stressed the existence of common goals and interests among regional states. In achieving those goals, states at some point may need to create some supra-national institutions and mechanisms aimed at solving these specific tasks (Mitrani, 1948, p.356). Later these ideas were elaborated into a theory of neofunctionalism, which explained a so-called ‘spillover’ effect. This effect means that integration in one sector of the economy inevitably creates an effect of gravity, gradually involving the process of integration some other sectors of economy, political institutions and social groups (Haas, 1961, pp.377-379).The neoliberal approach to the process of regionalization reflected in very important works of Joseph Nye, Jr. (1968, 1971).

During the last three decades, the theory of ‘new regionalism’ has become very influential. It is linking the processes of regionalization and globalization as mutually connected and involves multiple factors of the economy, socio-political development, changes in global agenda, etc. (Hettne, 1999, p. 21-23; Söderbaum, 2009, p. 481-482). A very important input into the study of Asian and comparative regionalism was made by influential scholars like Amitav Acharya (2001, 2002) and Peter Katzenstein (2005) who stressed the peculiarities of regional integration in East Asia and the Americas. Special attention should be paid to the work of neorealists Barry Buzan and Ole Waever, who outlined regional security complexes as very specific platforms for regional cooperation (Buzan and Wæver, 2003). All

The Main Stages of Eurasian Integration Development

the above-mentioned theoretical approaches help to understand some general mechanisms of Eurasian integration.

Analyzing the initial stage of Eurasian integration (1991-1999) we may detect several attempts to set up formal legal frames for regional economic integration, political and military cooperation. Among those the Agreement on Common Economic Space in 1994, The Treaty on Free Trade Zone, 1994, Unified Payment Union of the CIS in 1994, Agreement on the Customs Union in 1995, Union State of Russia and Belarus in 1996, etc. However, none of these agreements produced a strong form of practical cooperation and integration. The member-states were much more concerned about preserving their sovereignty and independence instead of searching for real integration mechanisms. (Zevin, 2004. pp.127-128)

The second and third stages of Eurasian integration were much more successful in terms of the creation of a working mechanism of regional cooperation. The second stage (2000-2010) was marked by the formation of so-called 'integration triumvirate' or the 'integrative core' of Belarus, Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation, which reinforced their efforts by signing a number of remarkable documents that outlined the contours of Eurasian Economic Community (2000), and the Customs Union (2007) based on practical measures to integrate their economies into a single economic space. These decisions opened the road toward a more complex and structural integration with specific elements of the regional integration community. All these served as productive steps toward the third stage of the creation of integration institutions (2011-2019). It resulted in foundation of the Eurasian Economic Union (2015) and its structural development with Eurasian Economic Commission, the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council, the Eurasian Bank of Development, as well as some other institution, which make it possible to treat the EAEU as fully-fledged regional Economic integration complex, which unified five countries with more than 180 million customers.

The results of more than 25 years' history of Eurasian integration provoked a very vibrant discussion among scholars, pundits, and politicians over its results, successes, and failures. Some of them insist on the thesis that this is the only possible way to reorganize the post-Soviet space and should serve as a basis for the future political and economic strength of Eurasia in a global competition. (Primakov, 1994, 1996; Nikonov, 2018; Glaziev, 2013; Bykov, 2011; Gustov and Man'ko, 2007) Others insist that isolationist and anti-Western sentiments of Eurasian integration create very controversial prospects for its success in the future. (Trenin, 2006, 2011; Inozemtsev, 2012). There are also some voices arguing that Eurasian integration is a result of Russia's revanchist neo-imperial project. (Mankoff, 2009, Mc Paul 2008, Legvold, 2014) Some scholars, however, stressing difficulties in the integration process, are focusing our attention on the obvious progress and development of integration initiatives, which brings some real benefits to the members of EAEU (Lagutina, Lapenko, 2017 Vinokurov et al., 2017).

From the Soviet Union to CIS: First Attempts to Start a New Chapter in Eurasian Integration

Conceptual sources of Eurasian integration has a very close connection to several internal trends that emerged during the last few years of the USSR. The first trend is related to the fact that by the end of the 1980s, as a single political entity, the Soviet Union has come to the stage of deep political and economic crisis. The Union gradually lost its ability to be a strong platform for the regulation of the massive geopolitical space of Eurasia. To overcome the ongoing crisis a fundamental political reform especially in the area of redistribution of administrative powers and regional sovereignty within the Union was needed. The second trend could be associated with the process of self-identification and the self-

organization of new political elites within the USSR. All the reforms started by Gorbachev during the time of 'Perestroika' not only revealed some deep contradictions between Moscow and the regions but also has become a trigger of the process of disintegration among the new political elites within national republics of the USSR (Zamostianov, Nazarov, 2016, pp.114-115).

It is possible to assert that all the process of Soviet disintegration and later Eurasian integration was, and it is still closely related to the dynamics of the transformation of political and economic elites in former Soviet republics. This is mostly valued for the Russian Federation itself. In other words, to address the issues of post-Soviet integration in Eurasia, we should closely trace the evolution of political class that was fighting for power and the influence during the last years of the USSR, and especially after its consequent collapse.

Between 1989 and 1991 it was three major groups of Soviet political elites that were competing with each other for different projects on how to overcome an obvious political, economic and ideological crisis within the USSR. The first group could be identified as the 'Centrists' led by the Secretary-General (and later the first President of the USSR) Mikhail Gorbachev. His idea was to reorganize the spheres of responsibility between the Moscow and national republics by signing an adapted Treaty between the federal center and the other Soviet republics. Development of a draft for a new Treaty started in June 1990 by the special working group led by Rafik Nishanov under the authority of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union (Lukashin, 2012, p. 6).

The first draft was ready by November 1990 and suggested to rename the Soviet Union into the Union of Soviet Sovereign Republics where all the members to be granted enhanced sovereignty rights, such as an independent social policy and administrative control over the major political and economic matters of republics. Moscow, at the same time, would preserve its right to manage the Union's economy, army, and foreign policy, protect borders, and coordinate fundamental issues of energy, social and humanitarian policy, as well as economic development and planning (Shahrai et al, 2016, pp. 672-677).

Thus, the new Treaty suggested establishing a *de facto* federal structure with enhanced political rights and status for sovereign republics. At the same time, the Soviet Union, under the Treaty, remained a united political entity and a state with all its major attributes. Moreover, the Soviet ideology supposed to continue playing its cementing role for the state. The influence of the Communist Party and the old Soviet political elite, remain unchanged too. This version of the Treaty was a real compromise between the groups of Soviet leaders striving for reforms led by Gorbachev and the conservative wing of the Communist Party functionaries, so-called 'nomenklatura', who did not want to lose their positions under the new circumstances.

However, this alternative did not match the interest of new regional elites, led by the heads of almost all the republics. In fact, by 1990 regional elites mostly consisted of leaders who wanted to sustain their power by abandoning the federal control and securitizing their regional influence without the leading role of the Communist Party. Boris Yeltsin, the Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Russian Soviet Federative Republic, without any doubts, was one of the most influential leaders of the new Soviet regional nationalist elite. As regional elites expected much more independent status instead of remaining a subject of Moscow's jurisdiction, the project that was being suggested by Gorbachev did not correspond to the changing political reality. Even though the late 80's did not produce a unified and well-organized nationalist political movement in most republics. South Caucasus republics as well as Baltic republics, forced Kremlin to build a special dialogue with them, to avoid an open social conflict (Shahrai et al., 2016, pp. 724-726).

The Main Stages of Eurasian Integration Development

The fact that Kremlin started to seek compromise with the regional political elite opened a new stage of Soviet disintegration. Gorbachev interested in the liberalization of the old Soviet system of governance and accepted to make serious concessions to nationalists. National political elites, at the same time, were struggling for wider and wider independence from the Center. The process of negotiations between Gorbachev and regional political leaders started in April 1991 and is known as the “Novo-Ogarevo Process” from the name of Gorbachev’s residence in near Moscow. During more than three months of multiple meetings and negotiations, it was agreed that the Union Treaty is supposed to be dramatically modified and transformed into the Union of Sovereign States with a wider autonomous status for all of its members (Shahrai et al., 2016, pp. 744-757). The final version of the Treaty between nine Republics of the Union was agreed in late July 1991. However, six republics, including Georgia, Baltic States, Azerbaijan, and Moldova refused to sign the document. This was the first step toward a *de-facto* loss of some territorial and economic potential of the Union.

That is why the compromise between Centrists and Nationalists did not match the expectation of the influential conservative part of the Soviet political elite; mostly consisting of senior military officers, Ministry of Interior leadership and the top KGB officials. They were disappointed with the inability of Gorbachev to preserve the interests of the Union, as they understood those. Gorbachev’s concessions were treated by conservatives as a sign of his weakness. This disappointment resulted in an attempt at a *coup d’etat* by the conservative leaders represented the Army, KGB, and MVD, who created the so-called State Committee on the State of Emergency (SCSE). The Committee tried to isolate and arrest Gorbachev and to initiate a new round of negotiations on the Treaty without giving autonomy to the Soviet republics and *de facto* restoring the Soviet model of governance (SCSE Address to the Soviet Citizens 18 August 1991. *Sovietskaya Rossia* 18.08.1991). However, the putsch attempt was not successful and triggered a much more intense process of disintegration of Soviet Republics. The process resulted in the signing of the Belovezha Accords that declared the official collapse of the Soviet Union on December 1991. Interestingly enough, the collapse of the Soviet Union opened the first stage of Eurasian integration, where the leading role automatically went to the Russian Federation.

The initial Russian plans of how to reorganize post-Soviet space were elaborated by the group of young Russian political reformers under the supervision of Yeltsin’s advisor Gennady Burbulis. The document “Russian strategy for a transitional period” is also known as “Burbulis Memo”. It suggested Russia secure its leading position in all the post-Soviet space through the “covert activity for initiation of joint economic community [for the Newly Independent States], where Russia would inevitably occupy the role of the informal leader due to its economic potential, geopolitical status and a large number of natural resources...” (Moroz 2013 P.535; Burbulis, 1995). At the initial stage, Russian activity meant to be very calm and moderate, and, to grant the possible integration community status of equal partnership with the informal dominance of Russia (Alekseev, 2017). The logic behind the Burbulis plan was quite clear. After the collapse of the USSR, Russia holds 93% of all the economic potential of the Union (Filipov, 2011. P.33) In 1988 almost all the Soviet Republics had a negative trade balance except for Russia and Turkmenistan (Gaidar, 2006). As Russia would be able to obtain a privileged status position in the new integration structure without undertaking political and economic obligations of the Soviet period, the conditions of starting a Commonwealth of Independent States were quite favorable for Moscow.

The last months before the collapse of the USSR showed that the new political elites in Russia and the other post-Soviet states has formed a special atmosphere when all the previous forms of cooperation were dismissed to be replaced with new mechanisms of regional interaction. For Russia, it supposed to be economic and political domination over the former Soviet republics. Other republics have seen this

as a chance to start building their nation-states and looking for new opportunities as an independent players in the international arena. Most of the institutions and agreements that were created and signed immediately after the collapse of the Soviet Union only nominally were integrative in character. In most cases, they were just formal platforms for all the interested parties in searching for a new political agenda in the changing region of Eurasia.

Searching for Integration Tools: Economic Ties, Ideology, Security and Peacekeeping Operations 1991-1999

The creation of the CIS and its development during the 90s was one of the most controversial stages in the process of Eurasian integration. It was founded on December 8, 1991, by Russia Ukraine and Belarus. On 21 December the other post-Soviet republics except for the Baltic States also joined the CIS at the meeting in Almaty. CIS Charter could be considered as a logical continuation of the Union of Independent States Treaty and the entire process of reorganization of the USSR. All the decisions that were made on the way toward the CIS led to the *de facto* disintegration. CIS Treaty just formalized this trend.

The gradual strengthening of centrifugal forces in Eurasia within the CIS continued during the early 90s. Expectations that old Soviet economic ties will inevitably bring post-soviet republics together were not realized. The deep economic crisis started immediately after the collapse of the USSR made it impossible for CIS to lay the foundation for the immediate rapprochement of the Newly Independent States (NIS). The NIS had to concentrate on their internal economic, social and political issues instead of building sustainable integration mechanisms. Not surprisingly, the volume of mutual trade between the CIS countries from 1995 until 2002 decreased from 28,5% to 18,6%, and the share of CIS in global trade dropped from 2,5% to 1,6%. (World Bank, 2003).

All attempts to reinforce the economic ties and cooperation such as series of Agreements on Economic Union in 1993, on Free Trade Zone in 1994 remained on the paper due to some fundamental disagreements on certain articles and details of import-export operations. Multilateral agreements on synchronizing regional economic cooperation were not successful because in many of CIS countries factors of nation-state building dominated over the interests of economic cooperation. The need for reforming the old Soviet economic system and structure also distracted attention away from integration. The other problem was that the countries of CIS were unable to apply joint decisions. The absence of joint regulative mechanisms combined with deep economic crisis ruined the initial hope for a smooth transition from the planned economy to the free market. Early institutions did not have integral structures, international jurisdiction mechanisms, and most importantly, have no supranational authority with an enforcement mechanism. (Vinokurov et al, 2017, pp. 20-23). Further attempts to establish some other regional economic structures such as: the Agreement on Widening of Cooperation in Economic and Humanitarian sectors between Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz Republic (1996), Union of Belarus and Russia (1997), and even the agreement between four above mentioned countries to create Customs Union and the Joint Economic Space (February 1999) – did not bring any serious breakthroughs in strengthening economic ties.

In other words, the initial stage of the CIS functioning ruined the idea that economic ties could be the driver for intense regional cooperation. It was also a serious miscalculation made by the Russian political elite, who expected to use economic and trade instruments to keep some form of a Union under the umbrella of Commonwealth of Independent States. On the contrary, internal political problems and conflicts (distribution of power, separatism, political and economic transition from communism

The Main Stages of Eurasian Integration Development

to capitalism) have dominated the national agendas instead of opening the routes of efficient regional economic cooperation. (Zevin, 2004. p. 127).

However, we may detect that the second half of the 90s was marked by the growth of Russia's activity in dealing with its neighbors. This was partly connected with the changes in Russia's political spectrum and strengthening of the influence of the conservative group of so-called 'gosudarstvenniki' [statists] whose leader Eugeny Primakov assumed the position of minister of foreign affairs in 1996. This group has gained influence because of several internal and external factors. The first factor was the war in Chechnya and disagreement of Russian military command with the methods of Kremlin's dealing with the conflict. The second factor was the political and economic instability and growing separatist trends not only in the North Caucasus but also in other Russian regions. The third group of factors was connected to the policy of the United States and the EU in Russia's neighbor states, which was openly oriented in pushing Russian influence off the former Soviet republics. Even in 1994, Yeltsin saying that "the West is artificially provoking conflicts between Russia and the other CIS countries (Yeltsin, 1994). The changes that occurred in Russian political elites resulted in a conceptual change of their attitudes toward Russia's foreign policy priorities. Previously oriented to rapprochement with the West, the Russian foreign policy course changed its vector to the closer relations with the CIS, India, and China. Some serious transformations appeared in the *modus operandi* within the Russian Government. Previously it was normal when Russian MFA, MOD, Presidential administration, or even some big corporations like "Gazprom" had different perspectives on the post-Soviet countries and Russian political and economic priorities in the CIS. (Yelena Kaluzhnova, Dov Lynch, 2000. P.16). Now they were able to elaborate more or less consolidated position on a wide range of international issues and processes.

The second half of the 90s also marked by some serious changes in ideological aspects of Eurasian integration. It is widely known that President Nazarbayev came with his idea of the Eurasian integration in March 1994. Despite the widely known fact that this idea was articulated during his lecture at Moscow State University March 29, 1994, he first presented some of his points in London during his speech at Chatham House a few days earlier (Nazarbayev, 1997, pp. 23-31). It was Nazarbayev who finally developed a detailed project on the establishment of the "Eurasian Union" (Nazarbayev, 1997. pp. 34-50). Nazarbayev and his supporters suggested that the Eurasian Union, created on the principles of equality, the sovereignty of all members with the central role of Russia stressed that it could be a new and innovative form of common development. Under the leadership of Primakov Russia suggested a new ideological construct that based on building a new multipolar world, where Russia and the CIS supposed to be a new independent pole of power, alongside the US, the EU, India, and China. (Primakov, 2009). The idea of the 'Multipolar world' and strengthening of Russian presence near and abroad have become a dominant line in Russian foreign policy until the very end of Yeltsin's presidency. It was Primakov, who also suggested the idea of multi-speed and multi-level integration within the CIS, seeing clearly that it was not possible to achieve common goals with all of the members of the Commonwealth. However, the economic and political situation in the CIS did not constitute favorable conditions to apply these ideas into some form of real integration.

Alongside its supporters within the political elites of some former Soviet republics. Eurasian ideas have become popular among some intellectuals, especially among conservative and mostly aggressive anti-Western wing of Russian philosophers (Panarin, 2006 Dugin, 2002 Erasov, 2017; and some others). This neo-Eurasian wave of thought focused mostly on geopolitical and state-centric aspects of Eurasian integration and unification. This, in their view, could help to protect Eurasia against the destructive influence of liberal ideas and forms of governance. They were sure that the Western-style 'consolidated

liberal democracy' is counter-traditional and even harmful for the majority of post-Soviet Eurasian nations. Even though these ideas were initially articulated during the early 90s, actual support from Russian political leadership and some social groups they received only at the beginning of the XXI Century.

Another impulse for the post-Soviet integration came from the area of security and emerged almost immediately after the collapse of the Soviet Union. When on May 15, 1992, six post-Soviet countries (Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan) signed a Collective Security Treaty. Later in 1993 Georgia, Azerbaijan and Belarus also joined the Treaty. The treaty was called to bring some legal clarity into the security sphere of interaction between the former Soviet Republics. Although all of them were oriented at building their military might and armed forces. There were many areas where were necessary to set up common rules and principles. First and foremost, participants were obliged not to join any military alliances or support aggressive actions aimed against any member of the Treaty. Also, it was agreed that aggression against any member will be perceived as a common threat, and all the members will support those countries by any means available, including a military force (Collective Security Treaty, 1992). However, five years later, in 1997 when the strategic situation in the region started to change Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Uzbekistan did not renew their membership in the Treaty, motivated this by the inefficient character of the Treaty.

It worth saying that by the end of the 1990s Russia started to use its exclusive role in peacekeeping operations as a tool for strengthening its influence and leverage in the region. Being actively engaged in all the ethnic and territorial conflicts in Georgia, Nagorno-Karabakh and Transdnistria, Moscow played a big role not only in preserving a ceasefire regime but also started to use its political influence to push its national interests in Eurasia (Kalyuzhnova, Lynch, 11-12). Later on, it resulted in notorious cases of Russia's military activity in Georgia in 2008 and Crimea in 2014.

The first decade of attempts of the reorganization of post-Soviet Eurasiadid not bring any significant progress on the way of constructing viable and efficient integrative institutions and mechanisms. Most of the attempts were marked with miscalculations, mistakes, and declarations without practical applications. However, the most important outcome was connected with changes in the attitudes toward the post-Soviet Eurasia as a new geo-strategic, geo-economic, and social reality, which require more active and energetic involvement to keep it useful for achieving national goals and protection of national interests. It is especially true for Russian political elites among whom started to dominate a 'statist' ideology supported by newly appeared 'militocratic' establishment. Those who seen Eurasia as an area of competition between the East and the West in the areas of policy, economy, and security. This to the greater extent has shaped the future logic of post-Soviet Eurasian integration in the first decades of the XXI century.

Stages of Eurasian Integration in the XXI Century (2000-2019): In Search of Practical Mechanisms for Regionalism

Changes of the presidential administration and Vladimir Putin's replacement of Yeltsin did not change the paradigm of Russian policy on the post-Soviet space set up earlier by the Primakov and his supporters. Russia remained to push an active policy in the region, competing with the United States and the EU. At the same time, the beginning of the new century was marked with more visible and remarkable steps on the way of deepening political and, especially, economic cooperation between interested members of the CIS. The formula of multi-speed and multi-level integration

First years Putin's presidency was marked with the signing and ratification of several important agreements, which could be considered as certain milestones in the entire process of Eurasian integra-

The Main Stages of Eurasian Integration Development

tion. It is a creation of the Eurasian Economic Community in October 2000 between Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, and Tajikistan. This was a very significant step forward in terms of setting up common rules of economic cooperation. Later in 2001, the Agreement on the Customs Union and the Joint Economic Space was ratified under the umbrella of the CIS. During 2002-2003 were years of foundation of the Collective Security Treaty Organisation and finalization of the process of building the formal military alliance of interested post-Soviet republics. Generally speaking the process of integration in the early 2000s represented an institutionalization of the initiatives that started during Yeltsin's period. Russia, however, now started to demonstrate much stronger initiative in championing the entire integration process thanks to positive economic conjuncture and growing price for oil and gas.

The new Russian foreign policy concept adopted in January 2000 proclaimed a more pragmatic course toward economic cooperation with former Soviet Republics with the emphasis on the expansion of capital and investment. National Security Strategy, also adopted in 2000 started to securitize the sphere of Russian strategic and economic interests in the Eurasian region. Ensuring bilateral and multilateral relations with the CIS states were proclaimed as a political priority. At the same time, the weakening of the integration process in the CIS was considered a national security threat. (National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation, 2000). This, of course, added some new fuel into the pushing forward a Russian vision of regional development and building new relationships with its neighbors. Undoubtedly, Russia remained the most economically powerful state in the CIS and its activity started to play a dominant role in the context of setting up some rules and logic of Eurasian integration. Having said that, it is worth to mention that the changing role of Russia raised some concerns among some members of the CIS, who were afraid that this process could put their sovereignty and independence at risk. Partly this explains the fact that Russia failed in its attempts to establish a Joint economic space with Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan in 2003-2004.

During the first years of functioning of the Eurasian Economic Community ambitious goals were set, namely, the creation under its umbrella a customs union, unification of tariffs, creation of joint market of energy, capital, transportation union, coordination in Community's agricultural policy, etc. (Prioritye napravleniia razvitiia EvrAzEs, 2003). However, all these goals were very difficult to achieve in a short-term perspective due to a weak basis for practical mechanisms of cooperation. Regional economies required a serious transformation and reforms to become compatible with some serious steps forward on the way of unification. Also, some important political processes became an obstacle.

Another important dimension in the process of Eurasian integration at the beginning of the 2000s has become an attempt to organize a common space under the umbrella of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization since its official establishment in 2001. As it was initially stressed, the Organization supposed to fill the security vacuum in Central Asia and Afghanistan after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The cooperation structures of the SCO supposed to focused on fighting against the terrorist and violent extremist activity, as well as transnational organized crime and separatism. In other words, ensure and promote the overall stability in the region (Tsyplin 2017). However, SCO up until now could be more described as an informal organization, serving as a platform for negotiation for a wide range of issues, just like G7 or G20. At the same time, SCO often associated with certain alternative security cooperation projects for the countries, which are not ideologically fit into the Western standards of liberal democracy (Nikitina, 2011, p. 49).

Interestingly enough, the process and character of Eurasian integration in the early and mid-2000s were affected by the internal political transformations going on within the post-Soviet states and Russia itself. First, it worth mentioning the so-called color revolutions. The 'Rose Revolution' in Georgia 2003 and

the ‘Orange Revolution’ in Ukraine 2004, the ‘Tulip Revolution’ in the Kyrgyz Republic 2005. These events have become a turning point for changing a political paradigm in these countries and choosing a political course for Euro-Atlantic integration.

Moscow has met these transformations very negatively, stressing the fact that Euro-Atlantic integration with NATO of countries like Georgia and Ukraine poses a serious threat to Russia’s national security. Russian political elite tends to see behind those revolutions attempts of the United States and the EU to intervene in Russia’s traditional ‘sphere of interests’ having a goal to push Russia out from the region. Discussion over the phenomenon of color revolutions and how to protect itself and some other countries of the region have become an issue for big political and scholarly debate in Russia after 2004-2005. (Manoilo, 2015, Solovey, 2011). Securitization of stability of pro-Russian regimes in the neighboring states has become one of the main priorities for Kremlin’s regional policy. The nervous and negative reaction of Russia to the events in Georgia and Ukraine could be explained not only by military and geopolitical reasons of NATO expansion to the East but also by the changing of the nature of Putin’s political elite. Most of the members of Putin’s political pool which appeared in Kremlin’s administration and the Russian government had a military and security service background (Kryshnanovskaya, 2002). Many of them considered the collapse of the Soviet Union as the greatest geopolitical catastrophe and the expansion of the West as an existential threat to the Eurasian integration project. This geopolitical mindset could be considered as one of the factors that accelerated Russia’s activity to build working integration institutions and mechanisms in Eurasia.

After the Orange Revolution, Russian priorities switched into a deepening of economic ties with the so-called ‘integration core’ of Kazakhstan and Belarus. On the EAEC Summit in August 2006, it was agreed that the Customs Union will be initially organized between these three states, and the others could join it later. During the 2007-2009 several acts were signed that shaped the legal basis for the trilateral Customs Union, including the declaration in December 2009 to create the Joint Economic Space between Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Russia. This allowed declaring the formal status of the Customs Union’s formal status in January 2010. The Customs Union has become a real milestone for the process of Eurasian integration and opened the way for more complex and sophisticated measures of economic cooperation among the interested countries.

It is necessary to mention that the global economic crisis of 2008 also made a great contribution to the willingness of some countries of the region to strengthen their economic cooperation on the more formal basis of multilateral institutions. It became obvious that in a situation of global economic instability common regional market with about 200 Million customers could provide a certain guarantee for the future sustainability of national economies at the time of shrinking of international investment into developing markets and the end of the era of cheap money and loans.

In other words, later stages of Eurasian integration between 2010-2015 was mostly caused by the necessity to set up a mechanism of protection of regional economies from the negative influence of global crisis rather than Russian neo-imperial phantoms, or the interest of revival of a certain form of USSR 2.0. As Dmitry Trenin correctly put it, “Russian policies toward individual CIS countries were not shaped by nostalgia or grand geopolitical strategy, but by Russian leaders’ practical interests and needs, and also by the changing environment. Inter-CIS integration became a priority due to the 2008-2009 global crisis and simultaneous major geopolitical shifts in Europe, the Middle East, North Africa, and the Asia-Pacific region, which prompted Moscow to prioritize a more insular approach”. (Trenin. 2013)

Since the 1st of January 2012, Joint Economic Space (JES) has taken its place and all the regulative and administrative functions of management for the Customs Union were sent to the newly established

The Main Stages of Eurasian Integration Development

Eurasian Economic Committee (EEC) with wide supranational authority to regulate the interstate economic collisions and arguments. Among its functions were support and coordination of horizontal cooperation of economic sectors in the countries of JES. One of the major focuses of EEC was to promote and develop a legal and administrative basis for the creation of the Eurasian Economic Union.

The final stage that finalized the institutional process of Eurasian integration, of course, must be associated with the Eurasian Economic Union which were announced in May 2014 after the signing of the trilateral agreement of the foundation of the Union. Under the Union's authority, it was ensured freedom of trade, movement of the labor force, and capital, as well as coordination of the joint economic policy of the Union members. The official starting date of its activity was January 1st, 2015. Later that year Armenia and the Kyrgyz Republic joined the Union *de facto* confirmed their intent to be a part of the Eurasian integration process.

The evolution of the Eurasian Economic Union now is far from its final form and remains a subject of future development. There is not only a success that we could see on the way of functioning of the Union since 2015. There are also some challenges appears out of the process of searching for mutually beneficial forms of cooperation within the Union. This process may contain serious risks for sustainable development for all the members. Despite a wide spectrum of opinions on whether the Eurasian integration project could be considered as successful or not, it has some obvious economic results. It also has some strategic visions of its development in the future. However, it is also true that EAEU has become a result of consensus among the ruling elites of its members and their strong political will. So it continues to contain some risks to be converted into a nominal organization just like the CIS if the above-mentioned consensus will be lost due to a variety of reasons.

SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Eurasian integration continues developing in many different ways, including regional level, as well as involving some partners outside the Eurasian core such as India, Pakistan, Vietnam, Iran, etc. However, besides the obvious advantages of the current stage of Eurasian integration, it recently started to demonstrate some clear limits and controversy in its dynamics. To avoid slowing down of the integration process we may present a few recommendations:

- The initial economic advantages brought by the Customs Union and EAEU connected to the freedom of trade, capital movement, migration of labor forces already brought their benefits to the members, however, these advantages are about to exhaust its potential for the member states. It is time to think about large-scale innovative economic projects, which would involve investors from different members of EAEU. So far, all the countries prefer to invest in their innovative industrial development and they tend to be very skeptic about joint ventures. The Eurasian economic committee planned to work on developing such projects and promote it to the member-states.
- The structural economic reforms and diversification of trade nomenclature within the EAEU should be the main goal for the Eurasian Economic Committee.
- Political turbulence and deepening of unresolved conflicts in Eurasia produce an atmosphere of distrust and suspicion in the region. Ongoing clashes in South-East Ukraine, remaining tensions between Russia and Georgia, and some other states in the region do not add any positive dynam-

ics to the Eurasian integration. It is a big task for Russia and its partners to find appropriate ways out of the deadlock. This is likely to be one of the central issues of the Eurasian political agenda.

- The improvement of Russian relations with the West remains one of the factors that will inevitably fertilize Eurasian integration. It is supposed to become one of the major priorities for Russian decision-makers shortly to find some diplomatic and political solutions for rapprochement, as well as lifting economic sanctions against Russia.
- Chinese initiative One Belt, One Road (OBOR) could potentially have both positive and negative consequences for the next stages of the Eurasian integration project. The EAEU member-states must elaborate on their vision and plan of how to merge the Eurasian integration project with Chinese activity in the region.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Given the complexity of the issues related to the current stage of Eurasian integration, it will be important to continue research on the vectors of multilateral cooperation between EAEU and non-regional partners like China, India and Iran and Turkey. The ongoing geopolitical changes in the Middle East, growing economic competition between the US and China opens the window of opportunities for the EAEU countries. It is important to construct a clear strategy on how to use new chances for Eurasian countries in a changing world. Another interesting field for further research might be the process of changing political leadership in some post-Soviet countries and the way it may affect the ongoing process of Eurasian integration in a mid-term and long-term perspective.

CONCLUSION

For more than 25 years, since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the idea of Eurasian integration occupied one of the central places in the post-Soviet political agenda. The newly independent states are looking for their place in modern international affairs. Of course, the Eurasian integration project can be seen as an instrument to achieve some new goals and some new political and economic advantages for those who decided to take part in it. It is still a scholarly question of whether those goals are achievable as they are seen by the leadership and societies of those countries. Reality proves that not all of the expectations that were formulated at the beginning of the process remain the same nowadays.

During its history Eurasian integration has passed through several stages. Some of those were successful; others produced nothing but conflicts and controversy. However, we may conclude that despite some series of troubles and mistakes, Eurasian integration has finally acquired some final form and dimension. Eurasian Economic Union has come to be a real integrative mechanism that now shapes the reality in a vast part of the post-Soviet space and has some visible results and prospects.

One can argue that the entire Eurasian integration serves the exclusive interests of the Russian Federation, which is striving to get the status of global power. Our analysis proves that this is not always the case. All the interested parties can benefit from the EAEU, and there is some clear evidence that this process has a strong potential to continue in a foreseeable future. It is also true that the speed and substance of the integration was, and still depending on Russia's political and economic activity in the region and Russia's strategic vision of the region. So we can expect that the evolution of the Eurasian

The Main Stages of Eurasian Integration Development

integration project and its future will be strongly (but not exclusively) depend on the nature of Russian political elites, their views, and activity.

All the stages of Eurasian integration that were mentioned in this analysis, as well as the actual periodization, are subject to further research. Nonetheless, we may assert that Eurasian integration has managed to reach some practical level of its implementation. It brought into being not only sub-regional institutions but also worked in the inter-regional dimension, embracing such countries like China, India, Iran, Turkey, and Vietnam. This may serve as clear evidence that the Eurasian integration project has some strong potential for positive development and success in the future.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO): An intergovernmental military alliance established as a Treaty among Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan on May 15, 1992, and converted into the Organization in 2002. Promotes cooperation in military and security spheres among its member-states. As of 2019, there are six member-states: Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan.

Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS): A regional organization established in 1991 by the former Soviet Republics. The organization promotes cooperation across the region in a wide range of issues from economics to politics and security. The organization also has some influence over trade, finance, social and cultural cooperation. There are nine countries are currently members of the CIS: Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

Customs Union: A trade agreement by which a group of countries charges a common set of tariffs to the goods produced outside the Union's members while granting free trade among themselves.

Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC): The permanent regulatory body of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), which aimed to ensure the functioning and development of the EAEU and developing proposals for the further development of integration.

Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU): An international organization established by Belarus, Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation in 2014. The Union aimed at increasing cooperation and economic competitiveness for the member states, and the promotion of stable development in order to raise the standard of living in member states.

Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO): An intergovernmental organization founded in Shanghai on 15 June 2001. The SCO mostly focused on regional security issues, its fight against regional terrorism, ethnic separatism and religious extremism, The SCO's priorities also include regional development. The SCO currently comprises eight Member States (China, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan), four Observer States interested in acceding to full membership (Afghanistan, Belarus, Iran, and Mongolia) and six "Dialogue Partners" (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Cambodia, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Turkey).

Single Economic Space: A single market that provides for the free movement of persons, goods, services, and capital within the Eurasian Economic Union.

Chapter 6

Common Market of Goods, Services, Capital, and Labor in the EAEU: Directions of Integration and Further Improvement

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ABSTRACT

The chapter examines the stages preceding creation of the common market of goods, services, capital, and labor within the EAEU, evaluates effects and proposes directions of improvement, considering the world experience. Attention is given not only to negative integration (elimination of barriers), but also to positive (signing of agreements, creation of institutions, mechanisms for cooperation, budget management and joint projects). The production cooperation, joint research, and digital economy are also considered. Based on the methodology of system analysis and integration design, the author identified problems of the EAEU common market and proposed aspects for improvement: deepening of negative integration and regulatory convergence; increasing positive integration; combination of integration with development; creation of the common system of protection; redistribution of benefits and costs; strengthening of supra-national regulation; improvement of statistics and monitoring; increasing of budget, stimulating innovations, structural changes, sustainable development and inclusive growth.

INTRODUCTION

The chapter is devoted to the EAEU common market (CM) peculiarities. Initially, the author considered the directions of CM formation, identified based on an analysis of the world experience. Then the author considered the stages preceding the creation of the EAEU CM. The main measures for the formation of the CM of goods, services, capital and labor are described, as well as the existing problems are identi-

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fied. The author also made a quantitative assessment of the effects of the EAEU CM. In conclusion, the author proposes the directions of improvement integration process, developed based on the methodology of system analyses, design of integration and generalization of the best experience.

Thus, the purpose of the chapter is to consider the peculiarities of the EAEU CM of goods, services, capital and labor, as well as features of integration in the production, digital, scientific and innovation spheres, to identify the problems, to assess the effects and develop directions for improvement, taking into account the experience of other integrations.

BACKGROUND

Institutionalism is the most appropriate theoretical approach to Eurasian integration as a whole (Allais, 1959; Balassa, 1961; Tinbergen, 1965; Myrdal, 1963), focused on the dynamic aspects of integration. Later there were interdisciplinary approaches, taking into account political theories, theories of economic growth and development: open (Bergsten, 1997) and new regionalism (Hettne & Söderbaum, 1998).

The theoretical basis of the CM was studied in several works. Thus, Baldwin (2012) studied the effects of the capital and labor CMs. Wooton (1988) investigated the benefits of the CU from the transition to the CM and proved that it depends on the level of the common external tariff. Michael (1992) has proved that the win is achieved only when the level of income taxes is the same for the participating countries, so the tax harmonization is important for the creation of a CM. Nielsen & Hansen (1992) showed that the differences in national direct and indirect taxes could significantly distort trade flows and hinder their development, as well as trade barriers. Pelkmans, Chang & Hanf (2008) conducted a comparative analysis of theoretical approaches to the definition of common (internal, single) market and goals of its formation. They concluded that the markets are integrated if the economic boundaries between them are eliminated and the price indices correlate (prices of goods and services, wages in the labor market, interest rates in the capital market). This chapter fully interlacing this point of view and use this approach as the basis for the analysis of the EAEU CM.

In the world scientific literature, the experience of the EU CM has been studied most widely. In recent publications the most attention is paid to the reform of CM in connection with Brexit (Lawson, 2019), migration crisis (Ludera-Ruszel, 2017) and energy market (Iulia, 2017). Besides, the experience of CM in other groupings is generalized: CARICOM (Gupta & Sahdev, 2018), EAC (Ombudo K'Ombudo, Echandi, Kusek & Polanco, 2014), GCC (Boughanmi, Al-Shammakhi & Antimiani, 2016), MERCOSUR (Sadhna, 2018). Researchers from the EAEU are also interested in the EU experience (Mishalchenko & Alekseev, 2019). Much less often studies are devoted to the experience of CMs in other integrations (Kalinichenko, 2015; Ozhigina, 2017; Kostyunina, G.M., Lomakin, N.N., 2014).

Scientists from the EAEU studied trend of Eurasian integration as a whole (Shuhno, 2017; Ozhigina, 2016). Also they studied the process of forming a CM only in certain areas: the CM of goods (Golubtsova, Maksimov & Shafiev, 2019), services (Il'ina & Mikhaylova 2017; Uval'zhanova, 2016), capital and financial services (Gordon & Lazarev 2016; Zvonova & Pishchik, 2018) and labor (Topilin, 2016; Ozhigina, 2018). But scientists from other countries pay little attention to these issues.

MAIN FOCUS OF THE CHAPTER

However, four freedoms of the EAEU CM simultaneously and general principles of their formation were not considered. The EU prevails in the study of world experience. Theoretical articles that would summarize the experience of other integration associations are not enough. The effects, as well as general principles of designing the EAEU CM are not studied. The interrelationship of the four CMs was not considered. All these aspects are the novelty of the study conducted in this chapter. So, the author considers the EAEU CM peculiarities, features of the production, digital, scientific and innovation integration, problems, effects and develops suggestions, considering the experience of other regions.

EVENTS PRECEDING THE CREATION OF THE EAEU COMMON MARKET

The following events preceded the formation of the EAEU CM:

1. The establishment of the CIS 08.12.1991 and the signing of the Treaty Establishing the Economic Union (24.09.1993). This Treaty was intended to move through the stages of integration in accordance with (Balassa, 1961, 2). But the implementation proved to be a difficult task, as the serious problems after the collapse of the USSR.
2. In 1994, Nursultan Nazarbayev proposed the idea of deepening the Eurasian integration. To implement the first phase of the economic union 15.04.1994, the CIS countries signed the Agreement on the creation of the FTA.
3. Belarus and Russia signed the Customs union (CU) agreement (06.01.1995) and 20.01.1995 Kazakhstan joined the treaty.
4. Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Russia signed the Treaty on deepening integration in the economic and humanitarian fields (29.03.1996). The Treaty provides for the establishment of a single customs territory. The Treaty on CU and common economic space (CES) was signed 26.02.1999 to create the CU and CM. A regional organization, the Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC), was established 10.10.2000 to implement these treaties. The creation of a CU faced certain difficulties, not to mention the formation of the CES. As a result, the plans could not be implemented at this stage.
5. Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia, having invited Ukraine signed the Treaty on formation of the CES (19.09.2003). However, Ukraine soon refused to implement this project. The reasons were as follows: change of Ukrainian foreign policy in the direction of EU; unwillingness to limit a sovereignty and transfer to supranational policy. As a result, this attempt to create a CM also did not take place, but there was a certain chance of success, as evidenced by the Ozhigina & Chaikouskaya (2005).
6. Within the EurAsEC, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia undertook another attempt to deepen integration. They signed the Treaty on the establishment of a single customs territory and the formation of a CU (06.10.2007) and Customs Code (27.11.2009). The CU came into effect 01.01.2010. The creation of a single customs territory was completed. Foreign trade policy is transferred to supranational level in the CU Commission.
7. Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia adopted the Action plan for the formation of the CES (19.12.2009), 19.11.2010 and 09.12.2010 signed 17 agreements for its implementation, which entered into force 01.01.2012 (Figure 1). In 2011 Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC) was established. It was

Common Market of Goods, Services, Capital, and Labor in the EAEU

planned to complete the creation of CM by 2016, but this was not realistic. Amended texts of agreements were included in the Treaty on the EAEU of 29.05.2014 (Treaty on the EAEU..., 2014). The creation of the EAEU CM is planned to be completed by 2025.

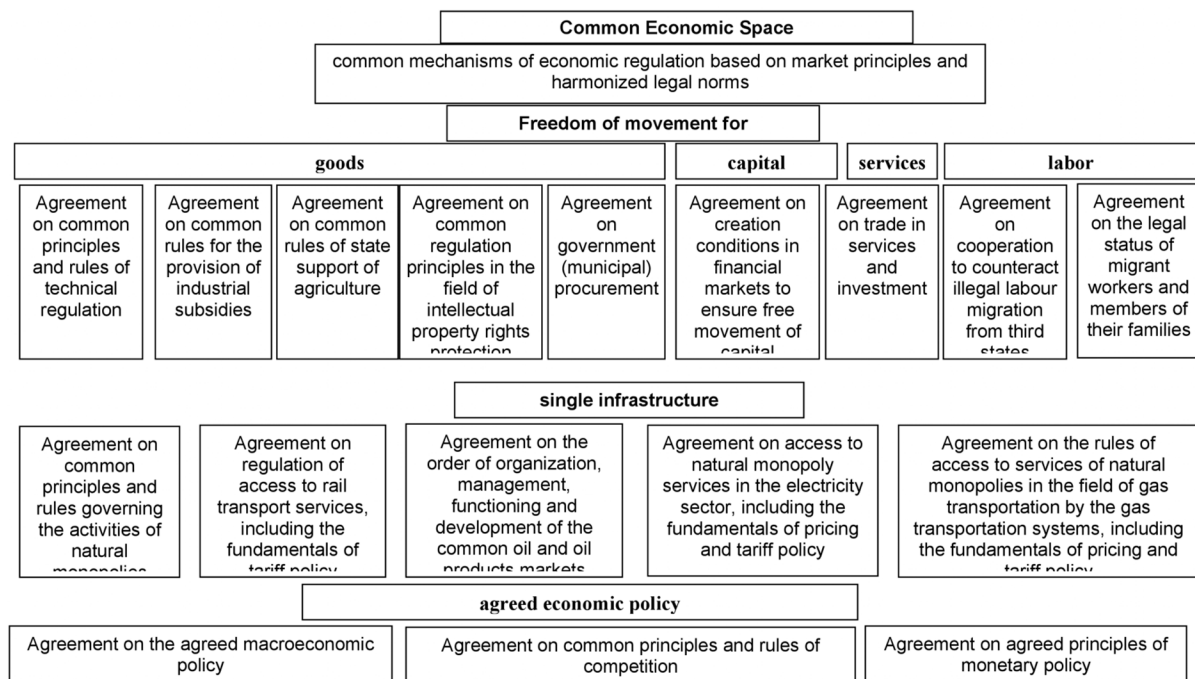
Despite its seemingly internal nature, in current international environment the creation of the EAEU CM is the core of Russia's larger geopolitical project, implemented in the context of its international relations. We are referring to the creation of the Greater Eurasian Partnership - a large-scale geopolitical, civilizational and integration project within the framework of Russia's foreign policy, based on openness, equal participation and mutually beneficial continental cooperation, mega-partnership of countries and regions (EAEU; CIS; SCO; EU; SAARC; ECO; RCEP). However, its design is just beginning and faces problems that have a negative impact on EAEU: EU's and US's anti-Russian sanctions, controversial relations with China, India and Japan, Ukrainian crisis, Syrian war, Russia's search for its niche in the APR.

EAEU COMMON MARKET OF GOODS

According to the UNIDO, Russia belongs to industrial economies, Belarus and Kazakhstan to emerging industrial economies. They are linked by regional value chains. Armenia and Kyrgyzstan are less industrialized, but also striving for the development of manufacturing industry and cooperation within the EAEU. So, the creation of a CM of goods and its protection within the CU is important for these countries.

Figure 1. Structure of the Common Economic Space

Source: compiled by the author



At the beginning of its functioning the EAEU faced difficulties, so it was not possible to experience the effect of trade creation in 2015-2016, while the effect of trade diversion was higher than expected. Foreign trade turnover decreased both within union and in relation with third countries. However, the integration process itself was not the cause of failure. The main factors were problems of Russian foreign policy: protectionism and introduction of sanctions, falling of oil prices, consequently, reduction of demand in Russia and devaluation of its currency. And only in 2017 the growth of trade was marked. On EEC statistics in 2016, the EAEU trade with third countries fell by 12.1% compared to 2015. EAEU intra-regional trade also decreased. But then was the rise, excluding 2019 (Figure 2).

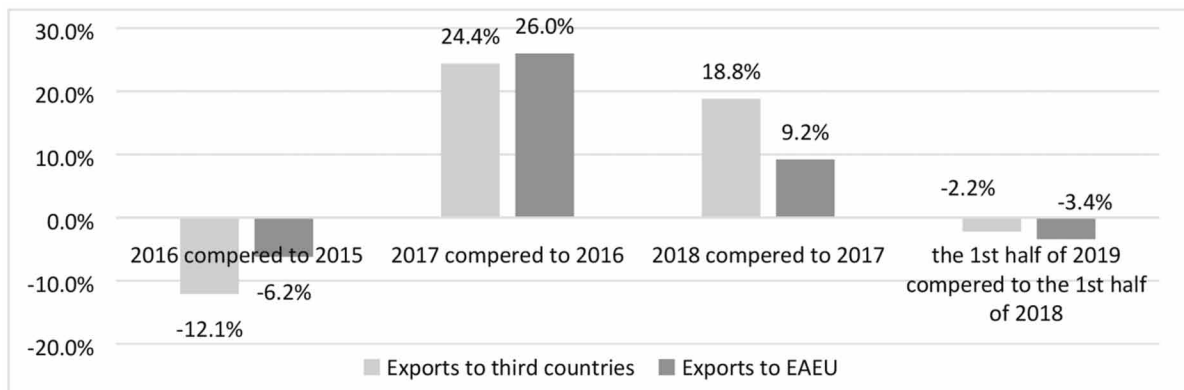
According to UNCTAD, the share of mutual exports in the total EAEU exports of goods for 2014-2018 increased from 9.1 to 10.6%. On EEC statistics it rose from 12.2 to 13.5% and amounted 11.1% in the first half of 2019. The level of 12-15% is characteristic for the blocks like SACU, MERCOSUR, CEFTA, WAEMU, LAIA, CARICOM. Undoubtedly, this level is higher than in blocks of developing countries: ECO, GCC, COMESA – 10-11%, CAN, SAARC, CEPGL – 6-8%, AMU, CEMAC, EC-CASS, MRU, MSG – 1-4%. But it is much lower than in the unions of developed countries: EU – 64%, USMCA – 50%. The author believes that to ensure the right combination of import substitution and ex-port orientation, open and closed regionalism, inward and outward orientation, integration into the region or into the world economy, formation of regional value chains and their inclusion in the GVCs the union needs to achieve a level of at least 25-35% like in ASEAN (+3, +6).

The EEC estimates that the removal of barriers to intra-regional trade will cause a decrease in transaction costs of 100-120 million dollars and growth of mutual trade by 1,5-2%. The plan of elimination is contained in the report “Barriers, exemptions and restrictions of the EAEU” (2017) and “White Paper” (2017). They include about 60 barriers to be removed, but not yet eliminated even 1/3. The priority areas for elimination are as follows:

1. Competition policy. The Procedure for assessing the impact of safeguard, anti-dumping or countervailing measures on competition in the commodity market has been adopted. The EEC has introduced a mechanism for public initiative, detecting and preventing restrictions on competition, issuing warnings without investigation. Member countries harmonize their consumer protection systems. Attention is paid to the protection of consumer rights in e-commerce, pre-trial settlement

Figure 2. The rise/decrease of EAEU’s exports of goods

Source: EEC



Common Market of Goods, Services, Capital, and Labor in the EAEU

of disputes, cooperation with third countries, protection of vulnerable consumers – children, elderly people and people with limited opportunities. The EEC carries out advocacy of competition. A draft Register of legislation on sensitive products has been developed. The road map on legislation harmonization for natural monopolies is being implemented.

2. Customs regulation. Since 01.01.2018, the new EAEU Customs Code, adopted in lieu of the 2010 code, is in effect. It is based on the most modern and progressive customs regulations. The developers considered the proposals of the enterprises and organizations and used the experience of the countries having the most effective system of customs regulation. The code regulates electronic declaration and document circulation, single window, paperless trade, expands the range of authorized customs operators working under simplified schemes. This significantly reduces transaction costs and risks of trade between union member countries and third countries. The time of registration has decreased twice, and the time of release of goods in free circulation – six times. The number of required documents has been reduced. New rules of origin and a system of “Single Window” have been introduced.
3. Technical regulation and product safety. The EAEU adopted 47 technical regulations. This list is constantly updated. The regulations cover 45 of 66 products for which single requirements are envisaged (Nazarenko, 2019). Technical regulations on oil, pipelines, equipment for operation in explosive environments, mineral fertilizers, perfumery and cosmetic products, means of fire safety, fish and fish products were recently adopted or updated.

A draft Agreement on state control (supervision) for compliance with the requirements of technical regulations has been developed. It will solve the problem of regulation transparency, prioritize the prevention of punishment, increase the effectiveness of supervision, harmonize rules, increase the level of interaction.

A draft Agreement on a risk-oriented model of state control (supervision) for ensuring product safety is being developed. It will enhance the control of high-risk products and minimize the control of low-risk products. The Uniform quarantine phytosanitary requirements, the Uniform procedure of veterinary control, the Uniform list of quarantine objects, the Uniform list of the products subject to the state sanitary and epidemiological supervision are constantly improved. The possibility of using e-certificates is discussed. Standard schemes of conformity assessment of production to technical requirements are accepted. Nine unified schemes of certification, six single schemes of declaring and two unified schemes of registration have been adopted. The certificate of state registration is now issued not indefinitely, but for five years.

The pilot project on system informing about the products not corresponding to technical requirements is developed. Dairy and meat products, wheeled vehicles, low-voltage equipment, goods for children and teenagers are selected as pilot products.

The draft Agreement on the procedure and conditions for elimination technical barriers in trade with third countries was approved (The EEC Council’s..., 2019).

4. Government procurement. EEC needs the procedure of mutual recognition a digital signature and bank guarantees, continues removal of barriers and formation of government procurement CM, unification of rules for certain goods and services.
5. Regulation of individual markets. Sensitive products are an exception in CM, but they also need removing of barriers: a pilot project of marking and digital traceability of tobacco and alcohol products, as well as monitoring of the transit of tobacco products using navigational seals is being

implemented. Countries need to introduce electronic VAT administration and indicative rates of excise duty, to remove barriers such as a security payment for alcohol, a reduced VAT rate on crop production in Belarus, a rental tax on coal in Kazakhstan; the information system of circulation of medicines is working, basic legislative acts are accepted and there is an active development of concrete normative documents on the market of medicinal and medical products: Rules of regulation a circulation of veterinary medicinal products; Requirements to determine the possibility of using the dosage form in pediatric practice or in a limited part of the pediatric population, etc.; it is planned to create CMs for oil, gas and electricity, but so far, the barriers remain, and the documents are being developed: a draft decision on the gas CM, agreement on electricity CM.

6. Marking and digital traceability. The Agreement marking of goods means of identification in the EAEU (RFID-mark, QR-code) entered into force 29.03.2019 (Agreement about..., 2018). It facilitates the digitization and traceability of products. Documentary traceability of goods, road and rail transport by means of navigational seals is provided. But apart from increasing transparency and combating counterfeiting, it can cause difficulties for suppliers. So far, the labelling of goods is being tested for tobacco, fur and jewelry, pharmaceuticals and footwear. Digital transformation is expected to increase GDP by at least 1% annually.
7. Intellectual property protection. The EEC harmonizes legislation on IPRs and distribution of counterfeit products. A single custom register of IP objects is being prepared. Agreement on trademarks, service marks and appellations of origin of goods was signed 05.12.2018 (Agreement on trademarks..., 2018). It simplifies the procedure of IPRs registration, regulates “parallel” import, implying import of branded goods by independent importers. The EAEU needs a transition from a regional to an international principle of exhaustion of the exclusive right to a trademark, the creation of an open database of patents.

The coordinated industrial policy complements the CM of goods. It has the following priorities: supra-national regulation of trade in goods; coordination in application of industrial subsidies; monitoring of main enterprises; development of joint projects and joint ventures, production cooperation and regional value chains; structural adjustment, modernization and digital transformation of industry; production of import-substituting and innovative goods; creation of infrastructure; coordination of sales activity in the foreign markets; participation of small and medium-sized businesses in the integration; harmonization of industrial legislation.

Commodity diversification of mutual trade is growing. The maximum number of three-digit items according to UNCTAD data based on the SITC is 255. We can see the rise the number of positions in mutual exports (Figure 3). On UNCTAD statistics, the share of manufactured goods in mutual trade for 2015-2018 has grown from 49.6 to 50.9%. In trade with third countries it is much lower and has grown from 17.8 to 20.1%. According to the EEC in 2017, the EAEU GDP amounted to 99.8% to the level of 2016, in 2018 it grew by 1.9%, in the first part of 2019 by 0.9%. Industrial production increased by 1%, 3.1% and 2.6% respectively.

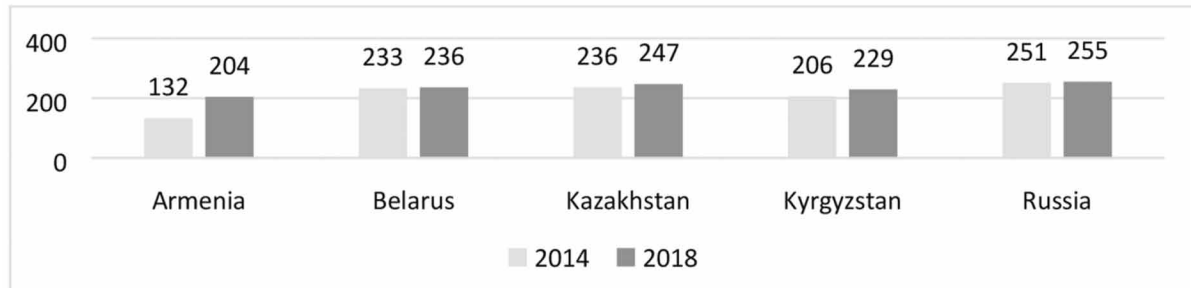
EEC and the Eurasian Development Bank (EDB) evaluate integration projects, implement a program of joint support for industrial cooperation and incorporation into state programs. They decided to reduce the minimum size of projects and increase their funding.

Enterprises of the EAEU countries take part in 62 import-substituting products and programs in 17 branches of Russia (production of elevators, equipment for food and processing industry, energy engineering and chemical industry, etc.). The EAEU sectoral map of industrialization is created. Countries

Common Market of Goods, Services, Capital, and Labor in the EAEU

Figure 3. Number of three-digit items in mutual exports of the EAEU

Source: UNCTAD



develop a network of industrial cooperation, subcontracting and technology transfer, business incubators and industrial parks. The EAEU uses “regulatory sandboxes” and “pilot projects” for testing of new agreements, forms of interaction and business models on separate goods and sectors. But still it is a problem with providing additional assistance, stimulating industrial cooperation, joint projects and programs.

EAEU COMMON MARKET OF SERVICES

The creation of a CM of services is regulated by Section XV of the EAEU Treaty, as well as Sections XVI (financial services), XIX (services of natural monopolies), XX (energy) and XXI (transport services). It began in 2014 with the adoption of the list of sectors (sub-sectors) of services. It included 43 sectors. In 2015-2018 years, the list expanded to 52 positions. Currently, the list covers more than half of the services produced by the EAEU members.

In 2016, the EAEU adopted 18 trade liberalization plans for 2019-2021, and their implementation began in 2018. They included engineering, design, tourism, advertising, audio-visual, advisory, construction, cartographic, accounting, auditing, landscape architecture, services related to agriculture, forestry and hunting, wholesale and retail trade, leasing and rent, computer and information, intermediary, franchising, logistic and individual business services.

According to EEC in 2017-2018 EAEU trade in services grew (Figure 4). But the share of mutual services exports in total EAEU exports for 2015-2018 decreased from 15.7 to 12.8%.

In 2017 Main directions and implementation stages of coordinated (harmonized) transport policy and road maps for development road, rail, water and air transport were adopted for 2018-2020. In 2018, electronic passports for cars, self-propelled vehicles and other vehicles were introduced. Since 2018, a working group has been operating to consider significant integration projects in transport and infrastructure.

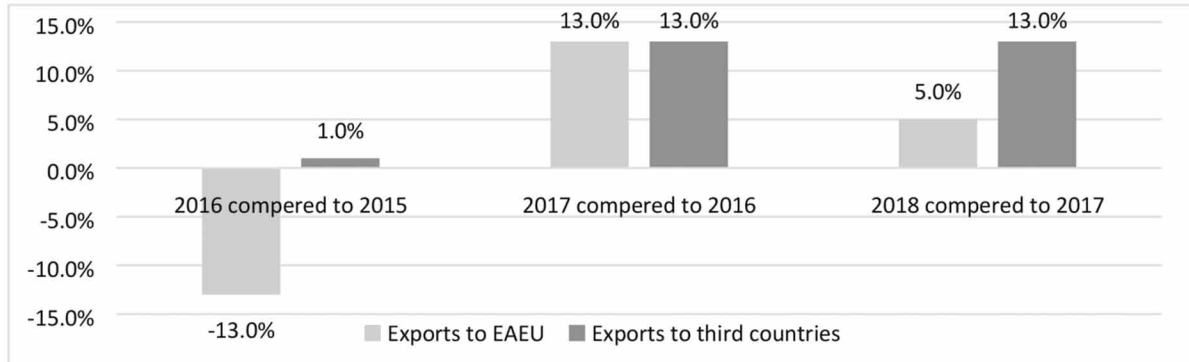
The Concept of transport corridors ecosystem has been developed.

The Agreement on shipping (01.02.2019) simplifies the mutual access of vessels under the flags of the EAEU countries to the inland waterways of other members and the transit passage of ships; allows countries to switch from permissive to notification access system.

These documents will allow to form a CM of transport services and digital transport corridors, to develop throughput capacity and digital transformation of transport and logistics systems, establish electronic document circulation and increase border transparency, optimize transport control and re-

Figure 4. The rise/decrease of EAEU's exports of services

Source: EEC



duce risks, provide payback of infrastructure projects, improve access to transport services, make them cheaper and safer.

According to EEC in 2016-2018 cargo and passenger turnovers increased (Figure 5).

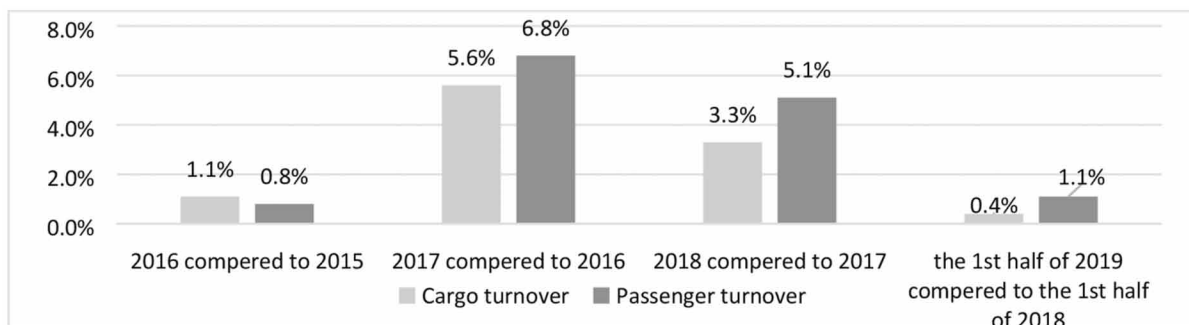
Through the creation of the digital transport corridor ecosystem, EEC expects a reduction in transport costs in the final product price from 20 to 12-15%. The creation of a transport CM will contribute to the fuller realization of the EAEU logistic and transit potential in relations with the EU and ASEAN+6.

About 40 concrete contracts are being prepared, including: on masses and dimensions of motor vehicles for traffic on international transport corridors, on lists of Eurasian transport corridors and routes, on joint projects in transport and infrastructure, on approaches to ensure equal (non-discriminatory) conditions of access to airport services and air navigation, on introduction of paperless technologies in international traffic and others.

Adopted the EAEU Digital Agenda for the transition to the digital economy by 2025. Countries use a temporary procedure for the implementation of joint projects with participation of three or more EAEU countries. Among the priority areas are the following:

Figure 5. The rise/decrease of EAEU's cargo and passenger turnovers

Source: EEC



Common Market of Goods, Services, Capital, and Labor in the EAEU

- development of legislative documents, digital traceability of goods, services and financial assets, transformation of industries, CM, transport corridors, transit and payment systems, labor exchanges, integration processes;
- formation of digital services market and its infrastructure;
- development of electronic commerce, including online system of dispute settlement;
- transition to electronic document circulation, interstate exchange of information in technical regulation, treatment of medicines;
- creation of digital consortiums, venture fund of digital industrial platforms, networks of industrial cooperation and sub-contracting;
- increasing the use of digital technologies in statistics by implementing an international ISO standard for the exchange of SDMX data;
- creation of Eurasian Internet resources in education and science, digital platforms for small and medium business.

The Union has taken the following measures in the research services and innovation:

- there are about 15 innovative technological platforms and centers of competences with participation of more than 400 EAEU enterprises, for example, “Eurasian Led Technological Platform”, “Technologies of Extraction and Processing of Solid Minerals”, “Technologies of Ecological Development”, “Technologies of Food and Processing Industry of Agriculture – Healthy Food Products”, “Eurasian Agricultural Technological Platform”, “Light Industry”, “Energy and Electrification”;
- it is planned to create an engineering center, cross-border industrial and innovative clusters, the electronic network of national technology transfer centers; financial and technical assistance is planned for joint research, interstate programs and projects;
- the Regulation on the procedure for the development, implementation and financing of interstate programs and projects within the EAEU was adopted 02.02.2018. Eurasian technological platforms “Space and Geoinformation Technologies – Products of Global Competitiveness” and “Photonics” develop the first EAEU interstate programs: “Integrated system of the EAEU Member States on the production and provision of space and geoinformation services on the basis of national data sources of remote sensing of the Earth”(in space, optical and electronic technologies) and “Agri-Photonics”(in aquaculture, poultry farming, crop production, storage and food processing, milk treatment).

The resolution on the development of Eurasian technological platforms proposes the introduction of article on scientific and technical cooperation in the EAEU Treaty, financing joint projects from the EAEU budget and joint funds, creation of a strategic framework program for innovative development similar to Horizon 2020 and system of S&T forecasting in industry.

As the result countries began to build CM of services, but still it is difficult to introduce national treatment for consumers and service providers, eliminate discrimination, remove barriers and certainly not introduce new barriers. In addition, free trade in services involves removing barriers to capital and labor migration.

EAEU COMMON LABOR MARKET

Members of the Union State of Russia and Belarus signed the agreements on labor and social protection (24.09.1993); equal rights of citizens (25.12.1998); simplified procedure of acquiring citizenship (26.02.1999); using common migration card (05.11.2004); social and medical security; freedom of movement and choice of residence; cooperation in social security; equal rights of citizens to freedom of movement and choice of residence; medical care (24.01.2006) and readmission (15.11.2013). They became a model for the EAEU labor market.

CES members signed Agreement on cooperation to counteract illegal labor migration from third states and Agreement on the legal status of migrant workers and members of their families 19.11.2010. The first agreement is in force. The second has been repealed since 2015. But its text entered the XXVI Section of the EAEU Treaty. This section abolished work permits. Migration registration is allowed within a month. It is possible to fill the migration card at the entrance of less than a month. The income is freely transferred, diplomas are recognized, pension provision is consistent. Migrant rights are exercised under the laws of the host country: social security; emergency medical care; education taxation; participation in the trade union.

Since 2016, a draft Treaty on pension provision of workers has been developed. It was only by the beginning of the 2019 that the national co-government was completed. Each EAEU state will consider the work experience and pay the pension in accordance with the national legislation during the period of work in its economic territory. This will summarize the work experience gained in the territory of the EAEU. The Agreement on the procedure of entry, exit and transit of the EAEU member states citizens is being developed since 2018.

There is growing mutual migration of population and labor resources in the common migration space. According to the EEC, the share of migrants who arrived in the EAEU from other EAEU countries in the total number of the international migrants' arrivals rose from 27.3% in 2014 to 31.1% in 2017. Later data are still not available. The share of retired migrants rose from 29.9 to 34.1%. Russia's share in the total number of migrants arrived from the EAEU increased from 88 to 93%, in the number of retired migrants from 60 to 69%. The share of labor migrants arrived in the three EAEU countries-founders from other EAEU countries in total number of international migrant workers arrived in 2017 amounted to 8.8%, including in Belarus – 20.3%, Kazakhstan – 1.6% and Russia – 0.01%. Belarus accounts for 83% of migrant workers from three EAEU countries, Kazakhstan – 11%, Russia – 6%. According to the Russian Central Bank, migrants' remittances in 2018 compared to 2016 from Russia to Kyrgyzstan rose by 57%, to Armenia – 43%, Kazakhstan – 38%, Belarus – 7%; from Kyrgyzstan to Russia – by 124%, Belarus to Russia – 36%, Armenia and Kazakhstan – 27%.

The author believes that the following problems have not yet been resolved:

- allowing migrant workers and their families to remain in the country of temporary residence after the termination of the employment contract;
- mutual recognition of diplomas on academic degrees and titles, on education of physicians, teachers, teachers, lawyers, pharmacists (they were excepted from the labor CM);
- harmonization of rules on expulsion (deportation) of labor migrants who have committed administrative offences;
- creation of a single infrastructure and labor market institutions;

Common Market of Goods, Services, Capital, and Labor in the EAEU

- the conclusion of a long-term employment contract should give the migrant the right to reside freely in the country of employment, guarantee access to public services;
- harmonization of the requirements to filling the migration card;
- cancellation of the re-registration migrant workers who left Russia but returned;
- settlement of problems of crossing the Russian-Belarusian border by the citizens of the other EAEU member states;
- the absence of a unified system of human rights protection at the EAEU level.

EAEU COMMON MARKET OF CAPITAL AND FINANCIAL SERVICES

The creation of a capital CM is regulated by Sections XV and XVI of the EAEU Treaty. It is planned to liberalize the conditions of establishment, economic activity and investment of companies in the service sector. Countries will ensure non-discriminatory access to financial markets, harmonize approaches to risk management, control and supervision, requirements to banking and insurance activities, activities in the securities market. The members will recognize licenses in the financial services market. A common exchange space will be created. Cooperation between state authorities and infrastructure organizations of national financial markets will be carried out.

Agreements on information exchange, i.e. confidential, in the financial sphere (23.12.2014) and on harmonization of legislation in financial market, i.e. securities market, insurance and banking services (17.09.2018) were signed (Agreement on information..., 2014; Agreement on harmonization..., 2018).

Countries prepare agreements: on creation of single exchange-space; on mutual admission to placement and circulation of securities on the exchanges; exchange of information of credit histories; counteraction to legalization (laundering) of the proceeds obtained by criminal means; auditing activities; admission of brokers and dealers to participate in organized auctions on the stock exchanges. The development of a basic document, the Concept of the EAEU financial CM, has also begun. By 2025, a supranational authority would be operating.

The integration of financial markets will create conditions for free capital movement, reduce the costs and increase the quality and range of financial services, liberalize payment and settlement relations, strengthen competition between participants of the financial market (pro-competitive effect), develop industrial cooperation, rise the number of joint projects and reduce transaction costs.

According to the EEC for 2015-2018 accumulated FDI from third countries in the EAEU increased by 35%, mutual FDI of the EAEU countries - by 21%. The main recipient - Belarus, the main investors – Russia and Kazakhstan. The share of mutual FDI in 2015-2018 was insignificant – 3.0-3.8%.

Nevertheless, it is worth mentioning the main problem: all basic documents on the capital market relate only to mutual investments in services. Mutual FDI in manufacturing are regulated by the national legislation of each member state and do not provide for national treatment. There is also a lack of mechanisms to promote mutual FDI, to implement joint projects and to convene Eurasian multinational companies producing under the single brand.

EAEU COMMON MARKET AND WORLD EXPERIENCE

According to the WTO, 18 CUs have been established, representing about 7% of the existing RTAs. Only 10 of them went further along the path of deepening integration and began to form a CM with four freedoms. These include the EU, where the CM is already established, as well as the CAN, CARICOM, CEMAC, SICA, EAC, GCC, MERCOSUR, WAEMU. Like these integrations, the EAEU has chosen the classical stages of integration: FTA, CU, CM, etc.

In addition, individual integration associations form elements of a CM without the creation of a CU: EFTA, EEA, USMCA (former NAFTA), ANZCERTA, ASEAN, SAARC, Pacific Alliance and others. In this case, the scope of the four freedoms is limited.

The analysis of the world experience has allowed to define some directions of the CM formation. Table 1 also shows differences between the EAEU's CM and other regional organizations, creating problems for its formation.

In addition, the difference between CMs in the EAEU and in other regional organizations is that the EAEU include transition economies that take the integration of markets simultaneously with the transition from a planned to a market economy and integration into the global economy. The second difference is that in most integration groups, the formation of a CM began earlier in the industrial economy, whereas today in EAEU it takes place in the conditions of post-industrial economy, which also requires the EAEU to move not only to market, but also to network relations.

SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations were developed to solve above-mentioned EAEU CM problems:

1. It is necessary to simultaneously create four freedoms of the CM because they are interrelated. In practice, the creation of EAEU CMs of goods and labor is faster than the creation of markets for services and, especially, capital.

To liberalize cross-border move of traded services, it is important to create a CM of goods, since the service crosses the border on a tangible medium. It is important to guarantee the freedom of payment and movement of natural persons providing goods transportation. For the consumption abroad it is important to guarantee the freedom of migration. To trade services in the form of movement natural persons it is important that the producer of services from member country be able to move freely within union territory and without special permits to render services in the territory of other participating countries. This requires the freedom of labor migration (professionals who provide services to enterprises and individuals of host countries; contract service providers; employees of foreign companies). The commercial presence implies freedom of capital migration (FDI, freedom of companies' establishment) and intra-firm employees transfer, coordination of monetary, antitrust, tax and industrial policy.

2. The EAEU needs further deepening of "negative" integration, improvement of the mechanism for monitoring and elimination of barriers, exemptions and restrictions. The irreversibility of the liberalization process and refusal to introduce new barriers is necessary.

Common Market of Goods, Services, Capital, and Labor in the EAEU

Table 1. Directions of the CM formation and the problems in the EAEU

	World experience of CM formation	Problems in the EAEU
1	free movement of goods, services and factors of production simultaneously	creation of CM of goods and labor ahead of creation of services and capital markets
2	deeper removal of NTBs, regulation convergency, non-discrimination in mutual relations, harmonization or recognition	the conservation and shallow removal of barriers, a lack of equal business conditions and regulation convergency
3	gradual rise of economic policy coordination and loss of policy autonomy	lack of supranational mechanisms
4	common system of protection the CM of goods, services, capital and labor, common external policy in relation to third countries	a lack of common system of protection for services, capital and labor
5	facilitation of development in mutual relations and relations with third countries	lack of financial resources for realization of joint projects, innovations and researches, incentives to production cooperation, economic development, formation of regional value chains and cluster-network forms of business
6	more detailed structure of regulating bodies and economic policy	implemented in structure and policy of the EAEU: Supreme Eurasian Economic Council, Intergovernmental Council, EEC, Council and Board 咸 EEC, the EEC Ministers (on economics and financial policy; industry and agribusiness; competition and antitrust regulation; energy and infrastructure; the main areas of integration and macroeconomics; trade; technical regulation, law, finance, information technologies, etc.)
7	representation interests of business, consumers and other stakeholders in institutions	implemented in the advisory bodies of the EEC
8	mechanism (body) for monitoring progress of integration	implemented in the EEC; a lack of monitoring and evaluation of integration effects
9	economic dispute settlement mechanism and penalties	implemented in the EAEU Court
10	compensation (transfer) mechanism for redistribution of benefits and costs	uneven distribution of benefits and costs of integration

Source: compiled by the author

The reasons for introducing new barriers within the EAEU are containment of competition in the CM, discrimination against non-residents from the member states, lack of a single production system and a single economy, underdevelopment of co-production, maintaining the priority position of national companies. As a result, the national interests of member states are accorded priority over the supranational interests of the union.

According to GATT Article XXIV it is necessary to ensure the liberalization of “substantially all the trade” in goods within the FTA or CU. However, this is not a complete elimination of barriers, that is always possible exceptions. It is important to remove “other restrictive regulations of commerce” as much as possible, but the term is not clearly defined, which also leads to the retention of barriers. According to Article 28 of the EAEU Treaty, tariff (including other duties, taxes and charges with equivalent effect) and NTBs (including safeguard, anti-dumping and countervailing measures, which is not typical of USMCA or MERCOSUR) should be eliminated within the union.

In addition, according to WTO, the member countries of the union can apply temporary restrictive measures in connection with the sharp BP deficit, the currency problems, the critical lack of food, the danger for human life and health under Articles XI, XII, XIII, XIV, XV and XX. Thus, according to

Article 29 of the EAEU Treaty, it is possible to apply restrictions in case of protection of human life, health, morals, the rule of law, environment, animals and plants, cultural values, defense and security and fulfilment of international obligations. In this regard, the EAEU members are often abusing the use of temporary sanitary, phytosanitary and quarantine measures in mutual trade, as well as restrictions on trade in milk, meat, sugar, fish, paper, rubble, cement and others.

If the process of removing barriers, exemptions and restrictions is in full swing in the CM of goods, the case is much worse for services and capital. Here the EAEU will also have to face difficulties, because the WTO rules allow exceptions. Barriers will persist because the terms of GATS Article V “substantial sectoral coverage” (number of sectors, volume of trade, modes of supply) and “substantially all discrimination” are not clearly defined. Temporary restrictive measures are also possible under Articles XI, XII, XIV and XIV-bis.

3. The union needs regulatory convergence, creation of equal business conditions, alignment of business environment and transition from common to single market.

To do this, the EAEU should eliminate not only “At-the-Border Barriers”, applying the WTO-plus rules (deepening existing rules), but also “Behind-the-Border Barriers”, using the WTO-extra and “regulatory convergency” (Baldwin 2014, 22-25). The first will provide mutual market access, while the second will provide market entry and create more favorable conditions for foreign production and value chains. It is necessary to expand the scope of the EAEU Treaty in accordance with modern trends in the development of RTAs. The third generation of RTAs regulate international trade in public enterprise services, labor migration and investment, e-commerce, simplification of business environment, promotion SMEs, fight against corruption, promotion of innovations, science and technology, growth of productivity and competitiveness, green and digital economy, sustainable development, inclusive growth and gender relations (Bratanove, 2013; Report from..., 2017; Summary of..., 2015).

4. Along with the removal of barriers and the equalization of conditions for goods, services, capital and labor (negative integration), positive integration must be developed.

It is important to provide additional assistance to the development of economic relations between countries: to stimulate the industrial cooperation, the emergence of joint bilateral and multilateral investment projects and programs; to develop criteria for selection of prospective integration projects with participation of 2-3 and more EAEU states, mechanisms of their management, financing, technical, information and other support (subsidies for R&D, government procurement, tax and customs privileges, etc.).

In today’s economy it is important to stimulate the creation of network forms of economic interaction (clusters, clusters of clusters, alliances, networks), GVCs. It is necessary to switch to cumulative system of rules of origin. In this case, the goods or service, jointly produced by two or more EAEU countries, will be considered as originating from the territory of the union and sold under the brand “Made in the EAEU”. It is necessary to stimulate the mobility of factors of production, the transfer of employees within companies, intellectual, academic, cyclical, business and return labor mobility, as well as the migration of managers and scarce highly qualified specialists.

It is important to harmonize export support instruments in the form of joint conclusion of FTAs with third countries, cooperation between financial and export institutions of the member states, conducting exhibitions, fairs and business forums, reducing the costs of raw materials and equipment in the frame-

Common Market of Goods, Services, Capital, and Labor in the EAEU

work of foreign trade policy, trade facilitation, infrastructure development, agreed promotion of products to the markets of third countries and joint R&D.

5. Economic integration does not in itself guarantee socio-economic development. The transition to development regionalism is necessary (combination of integration with reforms and structural changes). It is also important to combine integration between national economies with integration of the region into the global economy. It is necessary to solve internal problems of the EAEU member-states, such as high material and energy capacity of production, growth of the state debt, inflation, outdated sectoral and institutional structure, underdeveloped cluster-network forms of business and new technologies, lag in development of digital economy, ageing of population and problems of human capital reproduction.
6. The EAEU CM of goods provides protection against foreign competition by single foreign trade policy, although until now the customs tariff and NTBs against third countries are not fully harmonized, as the EAEU countries have taken on different commitments within the WTO. In addition, the union pursues common goals in conducting international activities in the form of interaction with international organizations, third countries and integration associations. At the stage of further improvement there is a supranational competitive policy.

However, the emerging CMs of services, capital and labor also require coordinated protection. In the CM of services, it is necessary to harmonize NTBs against third countries, to ensure regulatory convergence and protection against foreign competition, including when signing RTAs. In the CM of factors of production (capital, labor, technology) foreign policy is not agreed. The EAEU countries compete among themselves for their attraction. The largest foreign economic partners (EU, China) prefer to apply individual policy to each of the EAEU states, and not to interact with the union.

It is important to have a harmonized migration policy in legal migration, attraction of highly qualified specialists, protection against foreign competition and illegal migration. There is a need for a coordinated investment policy on outward and inward FDI, credits and loans, the signing of investment agreements. It is important to attract highly qualified specialists, investments and technologies from third countries to joint EAEU multilateral projects, and not to cooperate with third countries only on a bilateral basis.

7. It is necessary to gradually strengthen the supranational mechanism in various economic policies, in accordance with the interests of the union. At present, the EAEU applies supranational policy only in five directions: customs tariff and non-tariff regulation; trade regimes for third countries; special safeguard, anti-dumping and countervailing measures; competition control in cross-border markets; sanitary and phytosanitary measures. The EAEU Treaty certainly assumes the expansion of the EEC supranational powers, but the prospects for the implementation of this decision remain vague.

Despite this problem, we can specify some advantages of the decision-making process within the EEC: respecting the interests of States, making crucial decisions based on consensus and other issues by a qualified majority of 2/3 of the vote; equal representation of officials from each State; decisions that are binding and subject to direct use.

8. The EAEU needs a compensatory (transfer) mechanism to redistribute the costs and benefits of integration more evenly. The EAEU is an asymmetrical integration association, where Russia is the leader. Asymmetry leads to uneven distribution of production capacities and factors of production, uneven structural changes, which entails benefits for some countries, regions, industries, sectors, companies and costs to others. As a result, the EAEU needs a mechanism for redistribution of the benefits and costs in the CM, operating within the framework of budget, industrial, cluster, regional, social, scientific, technical and innovation policy. Financial funds should be accumulated and redistributed not only through mutual concessions and credits, but also through the EAEU budget, EDB, structural and other funds.
9. It is necessary to improve budget policy and increase the budget. The EAEU budget is replenished only by contributions from the budgets of the participating countries: Russia – 85.32%, Kazakhstan – 7.11%, Belarus – 4.56%, Armenia – 1.11%, Kyrgyzstan – 1.90%. There are no receipts in the form of customs duties and taxes (VAT, excise tax). The budget is spent only for the EAEU institutions: EEC – 95.5%; EAEU Court – 4.5%. It equals about 115.7 million euros in 2017, which is 0.007% of GDP and 0.64 euros per capita. For comparison, the EU budget is 134.8 billion euros, 0.9% of GDP and 303 euros per capita.

The EAEU budget does not perform a redistribution, regulating and stimulating functions. There is no redistribution of budget to the transfer mechanism, inclusive growth and sustainable development, promotion and stimulation of joint production and multilateral projects, sectoral and institutional structural changes, innovative and scientific-technical cooperation, integration into the global economy, etc.

10. The EAEU requires improvement of statistics and monitoring of the integration process. The EAEU is quite successful in collecting data on mutual trade in goods and trade with third countries. But the database requires further improvement, because it is not very convenient to use, and data on external and mutual trade are provided in various formats. As for the mutual movement of services, capital and labor, the EAEU statistical data are very limited. The statistical bases of the states are scattered, provide not comparable data. It is difficult to analyze the effects of CM and results of integration. In addition, the EAEU should develop an effective system of monitoring integration, develop indices and criteria to assess the progress.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Continuation of the CM creation is planned within the implementation of the Declaration on further development of integration processes within the EAEU of 06.12.2018 (Declaration on..., 2018). Further research and trends of Eurasian integration relate to the Strategic directions for the development of Eurasian economic integration until 2025.

The following research problems are to be solved:

- to study experience and develop the Index of the EAEU CM for assessment of integration effects and socio-economic results;

Common Market of Goods, Services, Capital, and Labor in the EAEU

- to develop conceptual bases, mechanisms, tools and institutes of the EAEU innovative and scientific-technical policy, which should become the central economic policy for the sustainable development regionalism;
- to study experience and to develop a transfer mechanism for more uniform redistribution of benefits and costs of Eurasian integration;
- to study experience and to develop a more perfect EAEU budget mechanism in order to increase the volume and strengthen the redistribution, regulating and stimulating functions;
- expansion of scope and addition of the EAEU Treaty considering modern trends of RTAs and necessity of elimination BBBs and introduction of WTO-extra rules;
- development of conceptual bases for the common protection system of the Eurasian common services, capital and labor markets;
- evaluation the possibilities for further deepening and widening of Eurasian integration.

CONCLUSION

There are not many cases of full-fledged creation a CM in global economy. The EAEU is one of the few integration unions that have decided for this difficult task. Before the formation of the EAEU CM countries passed several stages and made unsuccessful attempts. However, today the EAEU is quite far advanced in forming CM of goods, a little less – the labor market. As for the market of services, it has just begun to implement the adopted plans, while in the capital market the development of conceptual documents is just beginning. This conclusion is also confirmed by the analysis of integration effects.

The goal is hampered by several challenges: shallow removal of barriers; weak development of regulatory convergence; lack of equal business conditions, a common protection system, monitoring and evaluation effects, distribution benefits and costs; lack of supranational and financial mechanisms, incentives for production cooperation and development.

To improve the efficiency of the EAEU CM the following recommendations were developed: simultaneous introduction of four freedoms; deepening of “negative” integration, improvement of monitoring and removing barriers; regulatory convergence, alignment of business conditions, transition from common to single market; development of positive integration, stimulation of mutual trade and factor migration, production cooperation, joint projects and programs; development regionalism and integration into the global economy; protection of four CMs from foreign competition; strengthening of the supranational and transfer mechanisms; increase of the budget at the expense of taxes and customs duties, strengthening of its redistributive, regulating and stimulating functions; improvement of statistics and monitoring.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Common Market: Integration stage involving free movement of goods, services, capital and labor.

EAEU Common Economic Space: Territory with common mechanisms of economic regulation based on market principles and harmonized legal norms; free movement of goods, services, capital, labor; single infrastructure; agreed economic policy; in a process of realization since 2012.

Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU): International organization of integration between Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Russia, established in 2014, providing for deepening integration by harmonizing economic policies and further eliminating barriers to the movement of goods, services, capital and labor.

Integration Policy: Government's efforts to select and implement economic decisions at different levels of integration relations regarding the design of the integration system.

International Economic Integration: Interpenetration and merging of national economies into a single system of economic relations, accompanied by the signing of integration agreements, creation of integration blocs, regulated by state and joint institutions.

Negative Integration: Removing barriers and reducing discrimination between integration participants.

Positive Integration: Co-creating benefits in the integration process (goods, services, information, knowledge), development of integration institutions.

Chapter 7

Eurasian Integration and Problems of Civil Society: Trends and Limits of Development

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ABSTRACT

The chapter studies the relationship between the development of integration processes and the development of civil society in the post-Soviet space and, in particular, in the countries of the Eurasian Economic Union. It consists of five parts. The introduction presents the main trends and vectors of integration processes in the post-Soviet space. The first part considers the concept of “civil society” and its features in Western and Russian political thought. The second part highlights the features of building a civil society in the independent states of the EAEU. General points and differences in the emerging civil societies of the EAEU countries are revealed. Further, in the fourth part, the “Eurasian idea” is considered in terms of its compatibility with the peculiarities of the development of civil society in the post-Soviet space. The final part proposes a discussion topic on the possibility of political integration within the EAEU.

INTRODUCTION

Regional integration is a trend in the modern development of states and international relations. Integration basis - common economic (ideological) goals, benefits leading to the consolidation of the political position of each participant. However, the post-Soviet space is a special case. The socialism system, which has lost its attractiveness, has led not only to the collapse of the USSR, but also to the logical desire of the former republics to build independent national states, form a new identity, and create new alliances. However, due to the geographical, economic, cultural and historical factor, the former countries of the socialist empire have many common problems and opportunities for cooperation with each other. This led to the creation in 2014 of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) on the basis of an agreement between three countries - the Russian Federation, Kazakhstan and Belarus. (Dogovor o Evraziyskom ekonomicheskom soyuze, 2014). Subsequently, Armenia and Kyrgyzstan joined the organization. De-

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spite the possible options for expanding and attracting other countries of the former Soviet Union, the membership of the organization today remains unchanged. This is normal for a very young organization. However, many questions arise to assess the prospects for its future development. Most of them relate to economic development, tariffs, preferences, customs agreements, organizational management and the development of the digital environment. But there is another layer that lies in the field of the ideology of integration and the real desire of citizens of member states to continue integration, its new stages leading to a new political unification.

The purpose of this chapter will be to identify the opportunities and development limits of the EAEU integration association, taking into account the development of civil society of the participating countries, its problems and needs.

In this aspect of the analysis, it is necessary to consider the following questions: how does the civil society of the EAEU countries perceive integration, and is it ready for its new stages? Is the expert community developing? Is there an ideology of integration? - Of course, all these tasks require deep study, and each is worthy of a separate study. This is especially true for analyzes of empirical data, opinion polls, discourse analysis of the press and social networks. One chapter cannot claim to be complete, but it can outline the scope of problems and identify trends.

It is also necessary to give an idea of how the concept of civil society in the Western tradition differs from what is built in the EAEU countries under this definition.

The analysis is based on a) theoretical and empirical studies of civil society in pro-Soviet and post-socialist countries, b) on the materials of the Eurasian Economic Commission, the Eurasian Economic Union, the Eurasian Development Bank, the Russian Council on Foreign Affairs, etc.

This chapter has four parts. The first part will be devoted to the analysis of the concept of civil society in the EAEU countries and its differences from the Western interpretation. The second is to assess the real situation of civil society, and its perception of Eurasian integration. The third part will examine the question: is a special ideology of integration possible within the EAEU? The fourth part: The expert community of the EAEU countries, its capabilities and assessments of integration discourse.

BACKGROUND

A combination of the topic of integration and the theme of development of civil society in the EAEU countries is considered in the scientific literature in connection with various studies. First of all, these are theoretical works on the analysis of the concept of civil society, as well as studies of civil society in post-Soviet and post-socialist countries, made by both foreign and Russian experts.

The concept of public was introduced into scientific circulation in the doctoral dissertation of J. Habermas "Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere", published in 1962. The key to understanding the complexity of the concept of civil society is the monograph by J. L. Cohen and A. Arato "Civil Society and Political Theory", where the authors analyze the main scientific discussions about the nature of civil society. Very interesting and indicative is the study of M. M. Howard, professor at the Department of Management at Georgetown University, "The weakness of civil society in post-communist Europe." The discussion on civil society in post-socialist and post-Soviet countries continues S. Salmenniemi in the article "Theory of Civil Society and Post-Socialism". Among the numerous works of domestic authors, it is worth noting the works directly related to the study of this phenomenon in the post-Soviet space. Note several monographs: I. Khaly "Institutions of civil society in modern Russia. "To the methodol-

ogy of study “; L. Gudkov, B. Dubin, N. Zorkaya “Post-Soviet Man and Civil Society”. The article by T. Gusenkova “Eurasian Economic Union: Civil Dimension” is devoted to the study of the problems of civil society in the framework of integration associations, including the EAEU.

Further, these are studies of a wide range of sociological questions about the attitude towards the EAEU project, about the assessment of integration projects, about the image of the EAEU. These data are primarily published in the framework of the analytical materials of the Eurasian Development Bank.

The ideology of Eurasian integration is a problem subject. The concept of “Eurasianism” claims the status of ideology. Eurasianism as an ideological, scientific and cultural school of thought has a lot of variations. It originates with the ideas of Russian emigrants of the first wave in the 1920-1930s. The Soviet and post-Soviet periods are associated with the names of L. Gumilyov, A. Dugin, A. Panarin, and others. His qualitative historical review is given in the works of M. Laruelle “Eurasia, Eurasianism, the Eurasian Union: Terminological Gaps and Coincidences”, “Russia as an Anti-Liberal European Civilization”. A sketch of the principles of modern Eurasian ideology is set forth in the article by Y. Kofner “Greater Eurasia. The principles of Eurasian integration in a historical perspective.”

An important part of civil society is expert organizations. Some of them were created as part of the development of public diplomacy. Their co-founders are government agencies and state funds, although their status in most cases is a non-governmental organization or non-profit partnership. Other expert organizations are analytical centers of the EAEU countries, which began to deal with integration issues. The analysis of their activities is based on the materials of the Russian Council on Foreign Affairs and the Eurasian Economic Commission, a number of articles, and it is also based on personal observations of the author.

Main FOCUS OF the CHAPTER

Our main points are as follows:

1. Civil society in the countries of the EAEU integration association needs to be investigated in order to identify and predict possible expectations and concerns of the population of the EAEU countries about the benefits and losses of the project. And also, to use the potential of civil society in the development of Eurasian integration.

Civil society in the EAEU countries should be distinguished from Western (traditional) ideas about civil society with a network of amateur non-governmental organizations. Non-governmental organizations of the post-Soviet space, rather, fit into the model of the “third sector” of the economy, which the state, within the framework of the social contract, allows (and even instructs) to deal with numerous social issues. The best have direct funding. The rest receive it on a competitive basis through a grant system. Political and human rights organizations are controlled by authorities in Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan. Opposing opposition organizations are under pressure from the authorities. In Armenia and Kyrgyzstan, such institutions have more degrees of freedom and the possibility of Western funding.

The analysis of civil society cannot be approached with exclusively empirical standards: the presence and number of NGOs, independence from state funding, the percentage of the population working in NGOs. The differences between “Western” and “Eastern” activism are rooted in the traditions of

individualism and community, the development of democratic institutions, ideology, as well as in the degree of adaptation of Western social practices in the country.

In general, in our opinion, there are three positions in the civil society of the EAEU countries with respect to integration within the EAEU: 1. unconditional approval; 2. approval of integration at the level of exclusively economic cooperation and the common market; 3. fears of possible political integration and erosion of the sovereignty of the participating countries.

2. Studies of the attitude of the population towards the EAEU and the image of the EAEU have not been conducted among members of institutionalized entities - NGOs of various directions. As a rule, either random samples or income level samples were used for this. This determines the general attitude, but does not reveal the dependence of this relationship on the direction of civic activism. The exception is open supporters and open opponents. Although both of them may not be part of the structure of NGOs.
3. A special place is occupied by expert organizations of the EAEU countries that have the status of NGOs. They have become a platform for discussion and expression of the views of the intellectual elite. It is the representatives of the expert community who give the most adequate analysis of integration trends and problems. In addition, it can be argued that due to the development of the EAEU project, there was a demand for domestic and interstate expertise. Political expertise from an absolutely elitist sphere of public policy is becoming more widespread, making it possible for the academic community and the middle class to express their positions. However, it is necessary to take into account the difference in the levels of this expertise and the certain bias of the expert communities. The problems in the activities of the “think tanks” include low information activity, a narrow focus of research and poor coordination between regional organizations.
4. The ideology of integration unity has not yet been developed. Discussions about its necessity (or lack thereof) are still ongoing. The ideology of “Eurasianism”, developed by Russian philosophers and public figures in the last century, in our opinion, cannot serve as a support for the new integration format.

THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO THE ANALYSIS OF CIVIL SOCIETY

In our opinion, there are three directions and circle of problems that determine the complexity of understanding “civil society” as a concept and phenomenon.

1. The Western tradition in which this concept and phenomenon originated, taking into account the numerous interpretations and refinements associated with the political traditions of individual states and changing political technologies.
2. The expansion of the technologies of the Western model of civil society in the countries of the East and South, which did not (or did not completely) go the way of Western political and technological modernization. Moreover, this expansion, as accepted voluntarily, and was imposed from the outside.
3. The methodology of civil society research: the applicability of Western approaches to post-socialist, post-Soviet and, in general, to non-Western countries.

The concept of civil society, like many political concepts, originated in antiquity. In particular, in the tradition coming from the Aristotelian “Politics”, the interpretation of the terms “civil society” and “political society” had a synonymous meaning. In modern times, the concept of “sovereign” appears, which makes society no longer “civic”, but “governed”. The will of the sovereign begins to embody the unity of citizens in the state.

In the philosophy of modern times, there is an understanding of bourgeois revolutions and the concepts of private property, private enterprise and the protection of the rights of the owner. Jurgen Habermas, in his doctoral dissertation (Habermas J., 2016) and his other early works notes that along with the separation of the private in the Modern age, a new public appears. This new public is shaping its views in new “institutions” - circles, intellectual clubs. New newspapers and magazines appear. This leads to politicization of the public and to new claims for public participation in political life, in representative authorities. Political life is limited by law adopted by the public, and not just sovereign law. The new (bourgeois) civil society is interpreted as a sphere of private autonomy, defined and limited by law and market relations. Civil society institutions are voluntary associations independent of state and economy. They enable the public to independently manage and act in opposition to power. In the future, Habermas’s position regarding the independence of civil society and its ability to confront the authorities changed: from deep pessimism to new optimism regarding the role of the media and the ability of the public to participate interactively in shaping the agenda and influencing political decisions.

Also at the origins of the modern understanding of civil society is the French statesman, sociologist and historian of the first half of the 19th century, Alexis de Tocqueville. The first major work in this direction was his book *Democracy in America*, which defined civil society and its institutions and their significance for the development of democracy. It is civic associations that allow the state to get rid of part of its functions, and citizens get the opportunity to independently solve problems. Political alliances also help strengthen democracy. “It is in political unions that Americans of all professions, mindsets, and ages daily cultivate a taste for collective activity as such and master its laws. ... If we take the whole history of the existence of this people, it will be just as easy to show that freedom of association in the sphere of politics favors the prosperity and even peace of citizens.” (Tocqueville A., 1992, R. 384-385)

American researchers Jean L. Cohen and Andrew Arato, in their fundamental work, *Civil Society and Political Theory*, as well as Habermas, view civil society as a sphere of social interaction. “By “civil society” we mean the sphere of social interaction between the economy and the state, consisting primarily of the spheres of closest communication (in particular, family), associations (in particular, voluntary), social movements and various forms of public communication. Modern civil society is created using certain forms of self-constitution and self-mobilization.” (Cohen J., Arato A., 2003, P.7)

Thus, the above approaches define the classical Western interpretation of civil society as a public sphere located between the state and the economic sector, consisting of free and amateur associations. These associations serve to meet the social and political needs of citizens, contribute to self-realization and collective interaction skills. And this is the perfect model.

In reality, the primary subject of politics is the state, state power, which allows and / or restricts civilian institutions. Again, in Western political thought, there are classical theories that regard the state as the dominant subject in relation to civil society. Hegel in *Philosophy of Law* (Hegel G.V.F., 1990) considers society as a moment of the state, which is “removed” (*Aufhebung*) by the state, absorbed by him, as a subject embodying absolute mind. Society, as an area of the special, is subject to the universal. But the true state is the rule of law, and it is precisely this that is the exercise of true freedom. In fact, freedom as the embodiment of a rule of law state, where individual rights, property, and the constitution

are protected, presupposes the free development of the individual with his private needs, and includes the unity and freedom of the nation. However, the idea of such a state had no real analogues at the beginning of the 19th century (it does not even now) and was perceived by many political thinkers as the idea of the primacy of the state (over civil society). It was actively used by totalitarian and authoritarian regimes, without much critical reflection.

Michel Foucault touched on the topic of political rationality and the development of society management technologies in his analysis of the state in the book "The Birth of Biopolitics". (Foucault M., 2010) Studying, first of all, the problems of power, Foucault sees a rationalist turn in the nature of dominion in the Modern History. According to Foucault, civil society is part of the technology of government management of economic entities using legal norms. «From a certain time, the state, using various technologies of manipulation, begins to motivate the individual to self-restraint, self-management and chronic war with himself. Foucault calls this the transition from a disciplinary society to a control society. Thus, the state should not be opposed to civil society, Foucault believes, and the latter is a natural continuation of the former». (Burygin D., 2014).

There are many other explanatory interpretations of civil society, the essence of which can be reduced to the above. Thus, Western philosophical and political thought in its theoretical constructions and practical application has formed three approaches to the definition of civil society: 1. A society of free self-determined associations that enter into dialogue with the state and exercise public control. 2. Society identical to the state, subordinate to it. 3. Society as an object of political manipulation by the state. Social balance, the assumption of freedom is achieved using manipulation technologies.

In essence, these three approaches constitute the research framework used by Western scholars to analyze civil society in any, including non-Western (post-socialist, post-Soviet, patriarchal) countries. And such an analysis gives the expected picture: there is either no civil society, or it is in a state of infinite formation. This may explain the situation within the boundaries of a certain paradigm, but not contribute to its understanding in reality.

Studies of civil society in post-socialist and post-Soviet countries can be divided into empirical and discursive. An example of an empirical study is Mark M. Howard's work "The Weakness of Civil Society in Post-Communist Europe." (Howard M., 2009) The methodology of this study is based on the theory of neoinstitutionalism, according to which the evolution of society is its economic and social growth (or lack thereof) or slowdown - depends on the once chosen institutional trajectory. And her choice is influenced by ideologies, as well as social groups and elites that form a request for the preservation or change of existing institutions. To confirm the hypothesis about the relationship between economic development, the type of political regime and the activity of civic institutions (primarily NGOs), sociological analysis methods used in the framework of the World Values Survey global study were also used. Based on a qualitative and quantitative analysis, three reasons for low civic engagement were identified: 1) past experience of citizen participation in organizations and traces of distrust of all formal organizations; 2.) the stability of the informal circle of contacts, replacing participation in official organizations; 3.) disappointment with the current democratic and political systems, pushing many away from the public sphere. (Howard M., 2009; P.19)

The second study, which I would like to note, has a different focus. This is Suvi Salmenniemi's Theory of Civil Society and Post-Socialism. (Salmenniemi, S., 2009) When analyzing Western and Russian studies of civil society in post-Soviet and post-socialist countries, the author notes that the conclusions regarding civil society are approximately the same. - It does not correspond to the classical model, since it is characterized by paternalistic tendencies and state control. The search for historical prototypes of

civil society in traditional religious practices also does not provide an adequate understanding. But how then to evaluate the existing public sphere, institutions, channels of horizontal and vertical interactions? - The author offers an approach to civil society as a discourse. "In contrast to the colonization view of civil society, the idea of cultural harmonization is central here. One of the consequences of the global circulation of the concept of "civil society" is that one concept does not necessarily mean the same thing in different societies. " (Salmenniemi, S., 2009; P. 453) As a result of empirical research and the use of discursive analysis in the study of Russian activism and non-governmental organizations, the author found two interpretations of the concept of "civil society", which are close to the self-consciousness of citizens in the light of the political context. First: civil society is an unattainable ideal when viewed as a lack of state control and restrictive measures. Second: civil society should have the potential to resist power and fight for their rights. In general, representatives of Russian NGOs spoke out positively at least for maintaining the concept of "civil society" in official discourse. Since this implies the possibility of dialogue with the authorities and other public policy actors.

PROBLEMS OF CIVIL SOCIETY OF EAEU COUNTRIES: ATTITUDE TO EURASIAN INTEGRATION

The previous conclusions seem to us the most productive in the analysis of Russian civil society and civil societies of the EAEU countries. Since democratic transit and modernization proceed at different speeds in different countries, institutions and forms of activity corresponding to the long process of transformation appear on this path.

The problems of civil society institutions (NGOs) of the EAEU countries were caused both by the political and economic situation in the countries, and by the peculiarities of national mentalities and the preserved stereotypes of "Soviet" thinking. As a result, created national NGOs were very dependent on donors, many were unable to continue their activities at the end of funding. Paternalistic expectations and fears of independent initiatives contributed to the development of corruption schemes. (Danilov, 2010) At the same time, national governments could and did provide only very modest financial support to NGOs. The legislation regulating the activities of NGOs has been poorly developed for a long time and allows the authorities to "broadly interpret" the letter of the law if necessary which will be allocated funding. (Kuzhekov, 2009)

The general context of the problems does not cancel the differences in the degrees of state control over non-governmental organizations in the EAEU countries. The most stringent control is in the Russian Federation, where the law "on foreign agents" was adopted (Federal law of the Russian Federation 'O vneseniizmenenij v otdel'nyezakonodatel'nyeakty) implying strict reporting for foreign financing. And the state encourages socially oriented NGOs that carry out activities in the social sphere. Socially oriented NGOs can rely on state grants, subsidies, and, in some cases, direct funding. Such socially and state-oriented NGOs include organizations working in the field of public diplomacy. They are the ones who promote integration ideas, create venues for meetings of politicians, businessmen, youth leaders, hold art festivals, and organize student exchanges.

The necessity and development of public diplomacy is mentioned in the Russian Foreign Policy Concept (2016), in the section on humanitarian cooperation. From the middle of the "zero", the Government of the Russian Federation began to invest in this area of activity. So in 2005 the Russian information channel "Russia Today" (RT) was created, in 2007 - the Russkiy Mir Foundation. In 2008, the Rosza-

rubzhtsentr was transformed into Rossotrudnichestvo (the Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States, compatriots living abroad, and international humanitarian cooperation). In 2010, the Public Diplomacy Support Fund named after A.M. Gorchakova and the Russian Council on Foreign Affairs (INF). Organizations and foundations have the status of NGOs funded mainly by the state. The founder of the Fund.A.M.Gorchakova on behalf of the Russian Federation is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. RIAC has several founders. In addition to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, this is the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation; The Russian Academy of Sciences; Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs; Information Agency "Interfax".

However, as Vladimir Pereboev, director of the Center for Integration Studies of the Eurasian Development Bank, notes, "... there is a shortage of joint projects in the EAEU countries focused on promoting or facilitating Eurasian integration (be it in business, educational activities, public diplomacy in a broad sense and other areas). "(Pereboev V., 2018) V. Pereboev also notes that so far the role of the main "integrators" in the public space is played by supranational structures of the EAEU and, above all, the Eurasian Economic Commission (analogous to the European Commission in the EU), which stimulates the interaction of organizations of the EAEU member states and solves the problems of the international positioning of the EAEU.

As for the development of socially oriented NGOs and non-governmental organizations in other EAEU countries. They are also developing and have similar trends and even state financing mechanisms; voluntary movement and other ways of directing social activity in a productive direction are growing. However, while studying the legislation on public organizations of the EAEU countries, we came to the conclusion that, in addition to Russia, it is not so strict in all countries, and with all measures of state control, it allows active cooperation with Western (and Eastern) donors, foundations and NGOs. This indicates a legitimate desire to maintain friendly and mutually beneficial cooperation with various states and organizations, regardless of relations with the Russian Federation. Therefore, if we consider the prospect of political integration within the framework of the EAEU (or even any other possible alliance), then in our opinion, this idea is doomed not only because of fears of repeating the USSR project. - The elites and civic institutions of Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan, which have been independently forming and renewing themselves for almost three decades, will be less and less susceptible to the idea of political unification. The same applies to the idea of a unified civil society. "Building a unified civil society in the EAEU region can only be seen as a super task, ... the EAEU member countries are more likely to perceive this prospect as a political risk." (Stetsko E., 2016, *Nepravitel'stvennye organizacii v stranah EAES*, P.65)

Of course, public diplomacy does not end with the activities of specially created organizations and foundations; it also includes an analysis of the general mood of citizens regarding the participation of their countries in the integration project. The Eurasian Development Bank periodically publishes data from such studies. According to the 2017 survey "... among the EAEU member states, the highest level of support for Eurasian economic integration was recorded in the states of Central Asia - Kyrgyzstan (83%) and Kazakhstan (76%). Over the past year, the indicator values in these countries have not changed. Also, a high level of support was recorded in Russia (68%). Residents of Belarus (56%, in 2016 - 63%) and Armenia (51%, in 2016 - 46%) rate the participation in the EAEU the lowest, as in 2016. In these countries, approximately a third of respondents are indifferent to the union in the EAEU: 33% of the Belarusian citizens surveyed (28% in 2016) and 30% of the Armenian citizens surveyed (33% in 2016) say so." (*Integracionnyj barometr EABR*, 2017, P.23-24)

In 2016, a study was conducted of the EAEU approval among population groups with different income levels. "An analysis of the opinions of citizens in terms of income groups allows us to conclude that the materially well-off categories of the population are more likely to have a positive attitude towards the EAEU than the low-income ones. In Kazakhstan and Belarus, support for Eurasian integration from high-income groups of citizens amounted to 76 and 74%, from low-income groups - 65 and 57%, respectively. In Russia and Kyrgyzstan, citizens with different economic conditions demonstrated relative unity in 2016 in approving the participation of their countries in the EAEU (in Russia - at least 64% of support in both income groups, in Kyrgyzstan - at least 79%)." (*EvrAzijskaya ekonomicheskaya integraciya -2017*)

An analysis of the data presented allows us to conclude that the attitude towards the EAEU among the population of the participating countries is mostly positive. The high level of approval recorded in 2015 was associated, according to analysts, with high expectations and was a certain credit of trust. Its gradual decline may be explained by: 1. unfavorable external conditions in the given period; 2. Overstated expectations of frustrated benefits and disappointments in them. The analysis of approval in accordance with income groups confirms once again the fact that social projects and the fight against poverty and unemployment must be given special attention. At the current stage of integration, these efforts are possible within the framework of migration policy, as well as in the expansion of educational and youth projects.

IDEOLOGY OF EURASIAN INTEGRATION

Today, the idea of a Eurasianist claims the role of such an idea. The philosophical concept of Eurasianism developed in the 20-30s of the twentieth century. The founders and theorists of this direction were famous Russian scientists of various branches of knowledge: N.S. Trubetskoy, P.N. Savitsky, P.P. Suvchinsky, V.N. Ilyin, N.N. Alekseev, G.V. Frolovsky, G.V. Vernadsky, and L.P. Karsavin, who considered themselves the successors of the Orthodox-Russian spiritual tradition of the Slavophiles. Eurasian ideology developed as an alternative to communist ideology. And at the same time, it included value characteristics close to the Russian and Russian mentality: collegiality, collectivism, statism, Orthodoxy, patriotism.

The main geopolitical views of the Eurasians claimed that Russia represents a continental and national-state unity with Eurasia. The central idea of the Eurasianists came down to the assertion that Russia-Eurasia is a separate geographic and cultural world with its inherent special, distinctive Eurasian-Russian culture, which is presented as a "culture- heiress" that has mastered other people's traditions in conjunction with Orthodoxy. (Tsvetkova S.)

The most interesting interpretations of Eurasianism in the twentieth century can be found in N. Gumilyov, which was based on the fact that the Russian Empire and the USSR are historical forms originating from the Genghis Khan empire. Hence the conclusion that the Turkic and Muslim peoples are "the natural allies of the Russians in the fight against the expansion of the West." (Biryukov S., 2014)

In the 90s, the Russian political scientist A. S. Panarin considered Eurasianism as a cultural and civilizational alternative to "Atlantism" and attempts to introduce the Western development model worldwide. Later this interpretation was developed by A. Dugin, who proposed the concept of "neo-Eurasianism" and a new model of Eurasian integration. His version of the unification of the post-Soviet space proceeds from the assumption that Russia "as the heart of the Eurasian island, like Heartland, in the current geopolitical situation could better withstand all other regions than Atlantic geopolitics and be the center of an alternative Greater Space." (Dugin A., 2005)

The main modern promoter of the “Eurasian idea” among the leaders of the CIS countries was the President of Kazakhstan N. Nazarbayev, who proposed its implementation in the project of the Eurasian Union. The project he announced in 1994 envisaged the unification of all the former republics of the USSR into a single economic space while maintaining their political sovereignty. N. Nazarbayev considered it necessary to create a Eurasian union of states on the model of the European Union, where there would be a consensus decision-making path. “Nazarbayev’s Eurasianism” was favorably received, first of all, because in this interpretation emphasis was placed on geo-economic unity while maintaining the sovereignty of states. Actually, it is thanks to this consensus in the understanding of Eurasianism that it is not rejected by the national elites and peoples of the EAEU countries.

However, there is another tendency - to expand the principles of Eurasianism to build a model of political unity within the EAEU. This point of view, in particular, belongs to the chief editor of the analytical portal “Eurasian Studies” Yuri Kofner. He believes that in the future it is possible to combine the ideas of classical Eurasianism of the early twentieth century with the pragmatic Eurasianism of the current EAEU politicians in the promotion of “the integration ladder from a purely economic union already into the Eurasian Economic and Political Union.” (Kofner Y., 2017) The principles of the future stage of integration: 1. Cultural pluralism; 2. Collective security; 3. The general economic space; 4. The rule of law; 5. The supremacy of spiritual values. The gradual implementation of these principles will lead to the formation of common Eurasian values, in particular - “Eurasian patriotism”.

The most interesting and deep analysis of the ideology of modern Russia and Eurasianism is presented in the works of Marlene Laruelle, professor of international relations and director of the Central Asian Studies Program at George Washington University. She believes that the ideology of Eurasianism, along with conservatism, contributes to the formation of a civilizational paradigm with which Russia could position itself in relation to Europe and the West. And this is “the image of Russia as a European country following the non-Western path of development.” (Laruelle, M., 2015 *Rossiyyakakantiliberal’ nayaevropejskayacivilizaciya*) However, with regard to the possibility of perceiving Eurasianism as a modern integration ideology, it draws very critical conclusions. “The Eurasian Union does not borrow anything from (neo-) Eurasianism in its definition of political and economic strategy for the region. Not a single official Russian text on the Eurasian Union mentions Eurasianism as an ideology.” (Laruelle, M. (2015) *Evraziya, evraziystvo, Evrazijskij Soyuz*). And according to the understanding of the direction and speed of integration, the EAEU project and the EU project are related only by flexibility in the perception of the term “Eurasia” and integration allies.

Analyzing current trends in the development of the EAEU and the study of Eurasianism as a possible ideology of integration, we can draw the following conclusion. - “Eurasianism” exists in the EAEU discourse in two ways: as a convenient metaphor for some geographical and cultural-historical realities; as the ideology of a possible political and cultural symbiosis that is not visible in the foreseeable future. Thus, pragmatism based on the geo-economic community of post-Soviet states remains a really working ideology.

The task of building a Eurasian integration ideology similar to European, in our opinion, remains unresolved. According to sociologist Igor Zadorin, director of the Eurasian Monitor agency: “The main question is whether we can produce symbolic values that are attractive to citizens of neighboring countries. If we can produce them, then integration will noticeably accelerate. An attractive lifestyle, attractive values attract more than gas supplies.” (Zadorin I., 2016)

EXPERT COMMUNITIES IN EAEU COUNTRIES: INTEGRATION MEASUREMENT

The expert community is part of the intellectual elite of any country, along with representatives of science, literature and art. However, unlike the “cultural elite” itself, the expert community occupies a middle position between political power and various sectors of the population in particular, and society as a whole. This middle position defines one of the main functions of the expert community - to be a communicator, an intermediary between the authorities and the people. However, this mediating function is not only to adapt the discourse between the “upper” and “lower”, but also to shape it, propose new directions, anticipate problems and identify trends. With the implementation of all these points, the expert community will indeed be a necessary component of civil society.

In the post-Soviet space, for obvious reasons, this community began to form only in the 90s with the independence of the former Soviet republics. The first problems that the created “think tanks” faced were the lack of experience, the diversity of problems and the lack of differentiation of the experts themselves, as well as the lack of internal funding and the need, therefore, to use external grants. In many ways, these problems persist today. Although there are areas where the picture has radically changed. - This is, above all, the sphere of political power itself, where the process of formation and consolidation of power elites has begun; and there has also been a gradual differentiation of experts. Specialists stood out in global and regional problems, in ethnic and religious conflicts, in economics and energy, etc.

In connection with building a new geopolitical and geo-economics paradigm - the Eurasian Economic Union - there is a need for expert assessment of these processes not only in Russia, but also in the EAEU countries, in which a galaxy of their own political scientists has also grown over the years of independence. And their “brain centers” arose. That is why an analysis of the activities of the research centers of the EAEU countries can give the most objective picture of the moods in society and the political elites that take place among partners in this project. (Stetsko E., 2016, Problemy integracii Evrazijskogo ekspertnogo soobshchestva, P.51-52).

This analysis was carried out by the Russian think tank, the Non-Profit Partnership “Russian International Affairs Council” (RIAC). The study was carried out as part of a large research work “Development of effective communicative models for the interaction of the Eurasian Economic Commission with the expert community and the general public of the countries of the Eurasian Economic Union and foreign countries in the public sphere.” (Razrabotka effektivnyh kommunikativnyh modelej ..., 2016) The results of this analysis are presented in the report, the first part of which is devoted to the analysis of the expert environment of the EAEU member states.

Key findings (as of November 2016):

- The concept of “expert community of the EAEU countries” currently does not exist in the single economic space of the Union countries. Each EAEU country has its own expert groups, which within their own community are developing the problems of Eurasian economic integration.
- These groups primarily exist and develop as closed systems.
- The expert communities in each country are heterogeneous. There are several subgroups:
 - country (experts are exploring opportunities for their country in the context of Eurasian integration),
 - youth (meaning youth movements and clubs that consider integration, as a rule, as an attractive ideology for uniting young initiative people),

- political science (prevailing in the EAEU countries; it implies communities or NGOs of political scientists and 22 experts on “soft power” who consider the Union as a political project),
- economic (contrary to the specifics of the EAEU, this community of experts is the smallest).

The reason for the absence in the EAEU space of a single expert community on the topic of Eurasian economic integration is the lack of a system-forming infrastructure that would create conditions for regular communication of experts from the EAEU countries.

As a result, the EAEC was tasked with building closer communication links with the expert community. The importance of obtaining first-hand information by experts (from EAEU officials), and not just from the media, was noted. They also proposed forms of work to promote an adequate understanding of the EAEU among the population and the expert community of the participating countries. These include the traditional forms of ECE contacts - seminars, webinars and round tables. To create an expert network, it was proposed that winter and summer “schools” be held for experts from Union countries. The participants of these schools would subsequently become not only sources of reliable information, but would also form “think tanks” and discussion platforms on the issues of Eurasian integration on the ground. A proposal was also made to create an “educational dimension of Eurasian integration” in the network of universities.

The second project to analyze the expert community in the EAEU countries was also carried out in 2016 by the RIAC in cooperation with the President of the Russian Federation, the International Eurasian Center for Science, Education and Innovation of the North-West Institute of Management (RANEP). However, this project primarily examined the presence (quantitative indicators) and the main activities of the analytical centers of the EAEU countries. 76 organizations corresponding to the status of a “think tank” were analyzed.

In this study, a hypothesis was put forward on the correlation of the index of democracy developed by The Economist with the number of think tanks involved in promoting democratic principles and the ideas of civil society. The highest indicators of this index were recorded in Armenia (4.0) and Kyrgyzstan (5.33), which correlated with the high activity of Western funds and non-governmental organizations. The experts identified the positive and negative aspects of the development of analytical centers of the EAEU countries. (Shamakhov V.A., Vovenda A.V., Koryagin P.A., 2016, P.15-24)

The positive ones were:

- The desire to strengthen their involvement in the decision-making process by generating specialized knowledge that can become useful for decision-makers;
- The desire of employees with high academic performance, scientific degrees, focused on political and economic issues.

Negative are expressed:

- Fragmentation and unsystematic development, weak horizontal connections, duplication of research topics;
- Low activity in the information space.

For 2019, such full-scale studies of the EAEU expert community have not been conducted. But based on personal experience and the study of analytical materials on Eurasian integration, we can conclude that there are positive trends.

They are expressed:

- In the development of public diplomacy projects as part of the activities of Russian non-governmental organizations - the A. Gorchakov Public Diplomacy Fund and the INF Treaty;
- The appearance in the information space of portals of social movements and expert groups. Among them: the Eurasian movement of the Russian Federation; Center for Eurasian Studies, Byzantine Club, Eurasian Communication Center, Workshop of Eurasian Ideas, Eurasia. Expert, Eurasian Development, Eurasian Analytical Club, Business Eurasia and others;
- In the creation of the Eurasian Information and Analytical Consortium (EIAK) - an association of expert and educational organizations of member states created on April 17, 2018 on the basis of the Association for Assisting the Development of the Analytical Potential of the Person, Society and State, "Analytics", the Financial University under the Government of the Russian Federation and the Institute scientific information on social sciences of the Russian Academy of Sciences. The main goal of the EIAK is to help improve the efficiency of the integration processes of the EAEU countries based on their high-quality information and analytical support. (Sozdanie Evrazijskogo informacionno-analiticheskogo konsorciuma, 2018)
- With the support of the EEC, a number of educational projects have been created to study Eurasian integration. They are attended by St. Petersburg State University of Economics (UNECON), Moscow State Institute of International Relations (University) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation (MGIMO), Armenian State Economic University, Belarusian State University, Eurasian National University, Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Kyrgyz Republic, Kazan Federal University, St. Petersburg State University, Saratov State University, Orenburg State University and others. (V Soyuze razvivaetsya evrazijskij kadrovj potencial, 2018)

SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

To assess the processes of integration of the Eurasian space, it is necessary to study and take into account the experience of past integration associations - the USSR and the CIS, and therefore, to study civil society, its ability to organize itself, relations with power elites and the ability to build a dialogue on pressing political issues. Consequently, the research topics of civil society of the EAEU countries, the dynamics of its development should be constantly expanded.

- It is necessary to constantly monitor the problems and expectations of formal and informal social groups (youth, religious, political) in relation to the present and future EAEU project;
- The Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC) needs to encourage the development of expert organizations in the EAEU countries and create new platforms for dialogue not only on political and economic issues, but also on social and humanitarian issues;
- To encourage the development of studies of Eurasian integration in universities of the EAEU countries, to develop the practice of exchanging students and teachers in this area;

- Do not force the introduction of “Eurasian ideology”, “Eurasian values”, focusing on the economic benefits and maintaining an atmosphere of trust between peoples;
- Use the tools of public diplomacy to create a positive image of the EAEU.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

As part of the continuation of this topic, studies in the following areas would be very useful and interesting:

- Ideologies of integration associations: what are they? What is their need?
- Experience of supranational NGO networks in the European Union and ASEAN in promoting the integration agenda;
- Elites (political, military, economic, cultural) of the EAEU countries and their positions regarding the further development of the EAEU project.

CONCLUSION

The main objectives of our study were: to clarify the features of the development of civil society and the degree of support for the EAEU project among citizens of the participating countries; assessment of the state of the expert community on Eurasian integration issues; the importance of the ideology of “Eurasianism” for the further development of the EAEU.

The concept of civil society in the post-Soviet space and within the framework of the EAEU should be interpreted taking into account the historical experience and features of the development of non-governmental organizations. From our point of view, it is a mistake to identify Western and non - Western NGOs and expect the same actions from them. The state of affairs in the non-governmental sector of the EAEU countries depends on the political regime and the foreign policy strategy of each country. From the legal point of view, it remains the most difficult in the Russian Federation. In the rest of the EAEU countries, NGOs have greater freedom of action, which is consistent with the multi-vector foreign policy of these countries. This allows us to conclude that the formation of a single civil society with the same structures within the EAEU is not expected.

However, common problems can be distinguished - the legacy of the past, and positive trends are the result of the efforts of the present. Common problems include: traditional paternalism, lack of experience of self-organization, dependence on donors. The positive aspects include the fact that NGOs have become platforms for dialogue between interested actors and social institutions. Still very formally, such a dialogue is built between citizens and the authorities. But the integration processes and the EAEU project caused the growth of expert organizations and the expert community, contributed to the revitalization of labor, cultural and social ties at the citizen level, building a common integration discourse.

The attitude towards the EAEU of the population of the participating countries is mostly positive, although the indicator of indifference is also high. The EAEU project received the most approval in 2015, when it was considered as a certain credit of trust. Experts attribute the decline in approval in subsequent years to high expectations of immediate benefits and the economic crisis. Also, perceptions of the preservation of political sovereignty associated with the Soviet past and the level of income of citizens influence the perception of the EAEU. This allows us to conclude that the main tasks of the

EAEU were and remain the economic and social development of the countries of the region, the creation of real benefits for business, opportunities for the development of citizens while maintaining state independence and cultural identity.

“Eurasianism” cannot be considered a ready-made ideological concept for the development of Eurasian integration, because in it (in its various interpretations) one can see the idea of the dominance of Russia and the opposition of the countries of Eurasia to the West, which runs counter to the foreign policy strategies of most of the participating countries. Although in the geographical and cultural aspect, “Eurasianism” can be considered a kind of unifying symbol, a trend indicator. The development of integration to the level of a political union in the medium-term (and possibly long-term) perspective should not be expected.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Eurasian Economic Commission (EAEC): is The permanent regulatory body of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), which aimed to ensure the functioning and development of the EAEU, and developing proposals for the further development of integration.

Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU): is An international organization for regional economic integration that has international legal personality and is established by the Treaty on the Eurasian Economic Union.

NGO: (non-governmental organization) is An organization that is not part of a government and was not founded by states. NGOs are therefore typically independent of governments. Although the definition can technically include for-profit corporations, the term is generally restricted to social, cultural, legal, and environmental advocacy groups having goals that are noncommercial, primarily. NGOs are usually non-profit organizations that gain at least a portion of their funding from private sources. Current usage of the term is generally associated with the United Nations and authentic NGOs are those that are so designated by the UN. Because the label “NGO” is considered too broad by some, as it might cover anything that is non-governmental, many NGOs now prefer the term private voluntary organization (PVO).

RIAC: (Russian International Affairs Council) is A non-profit academic and diplomatic think tank that was established by the resolution of its founders pursuant to presidential decree No. 59-rp dated 2 February 2010 “On the Establishment of the Non-profit Partnership “Russian International Affairs Council”. RIAC activities are aimed at strengthening peace, friendship and solidarity between peoples, preventing international conflicts and promoting conflict resolution and crisis settlement.

The Eurasian Development Bank (EDB): is An international financial institution established to promote economic growth in its member states, extend trade and economic ties among them, and support integration in Eurasia through investment. The Bank was conceived by the Presidents of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Kazakhstan and established in 2006, following the signing of an international agreement by the Presidents of those two countries on 12 January of that year. The Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Tajikistan became full members of the Bank in 2009, the Republic of Belarus in 2010, and the Kyrgyz Republic in 2011.

World Values Survey: (www.worldvaluessurvey.org) is A global network of social scientists studying changing values and their impact on social and political life, led by an international team of scholars, with the WVS Association and WVSA Secretariat headquartered in Vienna, Austria.

Chapter 8

Features of “Soft Power” in the Eurasian Economic Union and the Role of Russia

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ABSTRACT

The chapter is devoted to the problem of the formation of “soft power” in the Eurasian space. All attempts to find a common language between states in the world lead to the fact that an appeal to “soft power” appears more and more often on the states’ agenda as a tool of achieving the goals of the states, including the states of Eurasian region. The concept of “soft power”, introduced into the circulation of the modern theory of international relations by J. Nye, is being actively discussed in Russia. In recent years, President V. Putin and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia S. Lavrov were repeatedly called upon to multiply the Russian resource of “soft power” for solving foreign policy tasks. Undoubtedly, this is also valid when we speak about Eurasian integration.

INTRODUCTION

Not only the cultural, ideological and spiritual values constitute the essence of “soft power”, which is integral to creating Russia’s positive image and enhancing its political role, but also in shaping a new regional identity in the Eurasian space in the new context. Development of economic ties, cooperation based on “soft power”, common understanding of human values, socio-cultural proximity, strife for high living standards mean a particular type of civilization. And, ultimately, it should bring about a new regional identity. Incontestably, territory of the Russian Federation in geopolitical terms (Eurasia) is a ground for such identification. That is why, the country possesses explicit geopolitical advantages, which enable it to pretend on a considerable role in the Eurasian region. Russia should develop this dimension further. Emergence of stable geopolitical fields of the Eurasian Union (where Russia is engaged in) is aimed at the internal essence resting upon common history, social values, dissemination of the Russian language and foreign regional institutions (accumulated over the integrational process in the Eurasian

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space), incorporating “soft power” issues. Unfortunately, the idea of a regional identity through the “soft power” tools has been regarded as a long-term project so far. Nevertheless, already at this stage these tools, early successes or setbacks can be analyzed.

BACKGROUND

In the modern world grand transformations are shattering world politics; foreign policy of the most states is focused on use of military power as a paramount instrument providing their own security. Interestingly, cultural globalization and ever more interdependent world are complementing the military sources with the non-military factors propelled by political motives, which were generalized in the American notion “soft power”. Even back in 1971 R. Keohane and J. Nye in their article “Transnational Relations and World Politics” (Nye, 2004) remarked that the states were no longer the sole actors of international relations and six years later in 1977 in their book “Power and interdependence: world politics” described a new neo-liberal paradigm in the theory of international relations. Although the Russian scholar D. Lanko believes that the term “soft power” was put forward in early 1970s by S. Strange to denote the level of economic development in international politics. However, we rely on the fact the term “soft power” was introduced by J. Nye in 1990 in his book “Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power”, which later on was elaborated by him in the next book “Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics (Nye, 2004). And cultivating further the neoliberal ideas, it was precisely Keohane and Nye who presented the soft power concept, which accentuates importance of not only military or economic instruments in conducting foreign policy (Transnational Relations and World Politics, 1971). In this context, we are giving consideration to the specific traits of Russian “soft power”, which nowadays is being criticized by the Western researchers, as states are the primary mentors of “soft power” in the Eurasian region (Markushina, Tserpickaya, 2016).

Still, according to T. Volgy one of the most crucial actions with regards to “soft power” is acknowledgement of its frameworks (Volgy, 2011). These frameworks are very hard to set on, as it may appear in the case of integrational processes. But, indeed, it does not mean that soft power has nothing to do with power authority. All forms of power authority have constraints. As long as foreign policy goals abide by promotion of democracy, human rights and liberty, soft power exceeds hard power. In Nye’s opinion, in the era marked by increased information flows and power dissemination that is likely to feature ever more important segment of foreign policy strategies (Nye, 2006). Vast, grand and prospective goals in the foreign policy of any state are needed to put soft power to efficient use, firstly, the governments should estimate, how many resources should be mobilized to achieve the desired result. As far as frameworks are concerned, we always resort to the connotation of “soft power”, and namely, the countries’ aptitude to use their attractiveness and persuasiveness in pursuit of foreign policy goals, by contrast to military power or financial backing. The sense of “soft power” is to pledge provision of the key international attainments without high costs, which often emanate from use of hard power. K. Kosachev assumes that eventually more powerful and mighty governments use this notion so as to meet long-term ends in foreign policy (Kosachev, 2013). But obviously, those principles may well guide the integrational entity. The European Union (EU) case in itself speaks volumes. In particular, with regards to the EU virtues of soft power potential, the following points can be used:

- Positioning of the EU as a successful socio-cultural project;

Features of “Soft Power” in the Eurasian Economic Union and the Role of Russia

- Attractiveness of the social-economic model within the member-states; aggregate economic strength;
- The largest donor of international development assistance;
- Assistance in development of the “soft power” instrument;
- Wide-scale data intelligence, the active communicational strategy and relationships “dimension” system;
- Feedback from the local elites. (Dempsey, 2012)

Therefore, the European authors testify use of “soft power” by the large integrational entity.

Intriguingly, until recently there have not been surveys, which would delve into the “soft power” phenomenon in the Eurasian Economic Union’s space. The national and foreign studies suggested analysis of soft power tools functioning mainly within the state strategy. The major part of the scholarly community, exploring “soft power” prospects and potential in world politics, underlines: the European, Soviet, Japanese, Russian and Chinese (Eriksson, Norman, 2011) strategies of “soft power” application, alongside with the traditional (American) “soft power”. This split-up is explained by the national and historical particularities in foreign policy of states.

The present situation in the Post-Soviet sphere requires elaboration of new ways of exerting pressure on states through “soft power” instruments. There are separate studies dedicated to the Eurasian region in a broader geopolitical interpretation, for instance, the article by E. Bastamova “Soft power” in the Eurasian space”, which sheds light on the ongoing dissemination of “soft power” in the modern Eurasian space. “Soft power” is posed as an effective tool in implementation of the foreign policy of the Russian Federation, China and Turkey. However, these studies are focused mainly on the Post-Soviet space.

MAIN FOCUS OF THE CHAPTER

Consequently, within this chapter the perspectives for use of the “soft power” tools are to be determined with regards to the Eurasian integration. The study will also help to point out a role of Russia’s state institutions in determination and implementation of “soft power” in the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU).

SPECIFIC FEATURES OF SETTING ON SOFT POWER BY THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AS THE CONSTITUENTS IN THE EURASIAN “SOFT POWER”

It is quite evidently to presume that Russia is one of the central engines of the Eurasian integration, therefore it is expedient to review also the methods, which are applied by the state, as it will be the same instruments, Russia is going to use in the EAEU as well. Noteworthy, attractive power of the EAEU should be projected not only outside (to forge a foreign attractive image), but also to form the regional identity, create an appealing image for the parties to the integrational process as well. And as we have already stated, it is precisely “soft power” that possesses an immense potential. It can be implemented through the nascent civil society channel (even the church resources) and collaboration with the international organizations, mass media, economic might, personal contacts, mobility and public diplomacy.

There is a specialized agency “Brand EU” in the EU, which creates the EU brand, however, in the EAEU nothing similar has been launched so far. That is why, quite obviously that the EAEU member-

states will likely to rely on the existent instruments of “soft power”. A special role will undoubtedly be designed to Russia in this process.

Due to the Eurasian integration Russia would exploit its potential, which has been given by globalization and technological revolution, defiance whereof makes the country vulnerable in the eyes of the international community, which has not always been friendly to our state, especially in light of the recent events. The modern geopolitical situation has brought even more uncertainty into countries interaction, because misbalance of the bipolar world led to collapse of the old and emergence of the new (both identical and strategic) regions, whereas the leading role in this process is played by other factors. Impact exerted by the EU and NATO, with varying success trying to speculate on Russia’s “totalitarian past” and the Post-Soviet space, should not be overlooked as well. Thereby, the necessity to adapt to a new global environment requires drastic overhaul of Russia’s foreign policy methods. In June 2016 “for the first time the British PR-agency Portland placed Russia into the list of 30 the most influential countries on the basis of “soft power”. Inclusion into this top rating underscores an ability of states to affect other countries with values of their civil society, rather than money or weapon”. (Rossiya v pervie voshla v top-30 reytinga stran “myagkoy sily”, 2016).

If we resort to the source base, determining Russia’s “soft power”, a major role in its consolidation is assigned to the Strategy of National Security of the Russian Federation and Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation (Konceptsiya vneshney politiki Rossiyskoy Federatsii, 2008). In analysis of the regulatory component in the institutionalization of “soft power” a range of other documents, which guide the policies putting the “soft power” concept into practice, should be taken into account:

- The Constitution of the Russian Federation;
- The Concept of Public Policy of the Russian Federation in the Field of Assistance to International Development;
- The State Concept of Support of the Russian language abroad;
- The Doctrine of Information Security of the Russian Federation;
- The basic policy directions of the Russian Federation in the sphere of cultural-humanitarian cooperation;
- The International treaties and agreements of the Russian Federation in the sphere of humanitarian, military, political, cultural, law enforcement, informational and other kinds of cooperation;
- The Decree of the President of the Russian Federation dated May 8th, 2013 N° 476 “The issues of the Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States, Compatriots Living Abroad and International Humanitarian Cooperation”;
- The Decree of the President of the Russian Federation dated May 07th, 2012 N° 605 “On measures to implement foreign policy strategy of the Russian Federation”.

These legal acts, in their turn, pave the way for implementation of functioning and activity by various organizations, including the state and non-state institutions: ministries, agencies, foundations, religious organizations, other non-commercial organizations, mass media, educational and scientific organizations, and other entities. Part of such organizations belongs to public diplomacy sector (Vorochkov, 2015).

Russia, as one of the major actors in world politics, faces the need for fulfillment of tasks in the sphere of foreign policy by means of “soft power” instruments. In practice we witness active use of different introduction entities.

Features of “Soft Power” in the Eurasian Economic Union and the Role of Russia

In order to conceive of the “soft power” institutionalization process, it is necessary to analyze the basic “soft power” mechanisms in Russia and understand who is accountable for what. It is also interesting that the majority of these mechanisms are responsible for attractiveness of the Eurasian integration as well. It is indeed one of the tasks of the EAEU member-states’ policy.

If look at various angles, implementation of “soft power” is carried out across many areas:

Education and science (the Government of the Russian Federation, Gorchakov Public Diplomacy Fund, Rossotrudnichestvo (Russian Cooperation), the Intergovernmental Foundation for Educational, Scientific and Cultural Cooperation (IFESCCO) of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the fund “Russian World”):

- Allocation of quotas for studying of foreign citizens at Russian educational organizations covered by budget (since 2008 onwards 15000 quotas have been allocated);
- Individual research scholarships by the Russian-speaking students, post-doctoral students and lecturers studying the Russian foreign policy (since 2013 onwards) (the Programme “Professor” from 2011 till nowadays);
- The programme on teaching immigrants, entering Russia to work (from 2011 till nowadays). (Otchetny o deyatel’nosti Rossotrudnichestva s 2008 po 2017 goda)

The Youth Policy (Gorchakov Public Diplomacy Fund, Rossotrudnichestvo):

- The Programme “Dialogue for the sake of Future” (involving the youth from 18 states, since 2011 onwards);
- The diplomatic workshop “Russia – Ukraine – Belorussia” (from 2012 till nowadays);
- The Programme “Baltic Dialogue” (since 2012 onwards);
- The Programme “Caucasian dialogue” (from 2012 till nowadays). (Publichnaya deklaraciya tseley I zadach Rossotrudnichestva na 2016 god).

Culture (Rossotrudnichestvo, the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation, the Fund “Russian World”):

- Rossotrudnichestvo is represented by 90 affiliate offices in 80 countries: 69 Russian centres for culture and science (8 out of them are Russian Center for Science and Culture branches) in 61 countries, 24 official representatives of the agency at embassies in 22 countries;
- Circulation of books on the Russian language, literature and culture in libraries of foreign countries (the campaign “the Russian book as a gift!”)
- Internet-conference “the Russian language between Europe and Asia”.
- Scholarship programmes on behalf of the fund “Russian world”.
- Cooperation with the Russian Orthodox Church jointly with the fund “Russian world”.
- Implementation of the target programmes – “Professor of the Russian world”, “Cabinets of the Russian world”.

Features of “Soft Power” in the Eurasian Economic Union and the Role of Russia

- Opening of the Russian language centres in the near abroad countries. (Otchety o kul’turnoy deyatel’nosti Rossotrudnichestva s 2012 po 2018 goda).

Endorsement to the Non-Government Sector – Democracy, Human Rights, Free Declaration of Will (Gorchakov Public Diplomacy Fund, IFESCCO of the CIS):

- Support of the projects by the Russian civil society institutions aimed at pursuit of Russia’s foreign policy and engagement of the Russian experts in international events and conferences (from 2010 till nowadays);
- Back-up to the events held by the NGOs from members-states to the IFESCCO (Armenia, Belorussia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan), oriented at hosting humanitarian cooperation events among the CIS member-states (since 2007 onwards);
- The fund of the Presidential scholarships for civil society development. Every year it receives more than 1000 applications and carries out such massive projects as “Stop HIV”, “Child protection centre” and so on. (Publichnaya deklaraciya tseley I zadach Rossotrudnichestva na 2016 god).

Support of Freedom of Speech, Journalists and Mass Media (via Rossotrudnichestvo, the Russian State Radio and TV Company, “Mir” TV company, the Information Agency “Russia Today”):

- Russian informational broadcasting in Russian on the TV-channels “Russia-24”, “Mir”, «RTVi» (since 1992 onwards);
- Russian informational broadcasting in English on “Russia Today” (from 2005 till nowadays).

Mobility in the post-Soviet Space (through the agency of Russia’s Foreign Affairs Ministry and Rossotrudnichestvo):

- Issuance of Russian passports to residents of the Transdniestrian Moldovan Republic, South Ossetia, Abkhazia. The Decree dated April 24th, 2019 “On determination of people’ categories with the humanitarian purposes qualifying to apply for Russian citizenship under the simplified procedure”. It holds that the persons, who reside permanently on the territories of separate districts of the Donetsk and Lugansk regions of the Ukraine are entitled to apply for the Russian citizenship under the simplified procedure in accordance with the Part 8, Art. 14 of the Federal Law of dated May 31st, 2002 N° 62-FZ “On citizenship of the Russian Federation” (Ukaz ob opredelenii v gumanitarnykh tselyakh kategoriy lits, imeyushkh ikh pravo obratit’sya s zayavleniyami o priyome v grazhdanstvo Rossii v uproschyonnom poryadke, 2015).
- The Russian compatriots Voluntary Programme of Resettlement to the Russian Federation, who live abroad (from 2002 till nowadays). (Otchety o deyatel’nosti Rossotrudnichestva s 2012 po 2015 goda).

Features of “Soft Power” in the Eurasian Economic Union and the Role of Russia

Russia lends a hand of assistance to its compatriots, realizing one of its “soft power” instruments. In order to encompass the broadest group it can, the Russian politicians elaborated the “Russian world” concept, albeit it is criticized at times, especially in the context of the Eurasian ideas. Quite evidently, the notion “Russian” is not equal to the “Eurasian” that makes the concept more covert and less oriented at the post-Soviet space. Unification with the Russian Orthodox Church in advancing values challenging the Western tradition also evokes criticism. The term “Russia world” is reputed to denote not only the very Russian diaspora, but also the ideological concept of the Russian culture and its outlook. For the first time the ideas of the “Russian world” were outlined even back in 1990s. In 2000 P. Shchedrovitskiy published the article called “The Russian world and transnational traits of Russia”. (Shchedrovickij, 2006)

The Russian TV is also popular in many countries of the near abroad and serves as a “soft power” dissemination means (Naumov, 2015).

In Russia institutionalization of soft power started before it entered the official part of language. In 2007 the fund “Russian World” was established by the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation (albeit with a public organization status). The pivotal function of the Fund is popularization of the Russian language, culture and education system abroad. The “Russian world” based on the cultural and communicational sources of the Russian language are interpreted as “soft power” capital, which can be used for drawing up an agenda (vision of the future) and consolidation of the Russian statehood.

For instance, the “Russian world” proposes the best lecturers and students of the Russian language and literature for the positions “Professor of the Russian world” and “Student of the Russian world”. (Russkij Mir: vosstanovlenie konteksta. Beseda s Petrom Shchedrovickim, 2019) This programme envisages scholarship and internship programmes for foreign scientists and students in Russia. The Fund regularly arranges various conferences, contests and Olympics. In 2008 the Federal Agency on CIS affairs “Rossotrudnichestvo” (compatriots living abroad and international humanitarian cooperation) empowered with the same mission as the “Russian world”, although it enjoys the state status at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

As the then President Medvedev stated, the agency should feature the “primary institution of the so-called “soft power”. (Poslanie Prezidenta RF Federal’nomu Sobraniyu 12 dekabrya 2013 goda) Nowadays, the agency has affiliate offices in almost all European countries, the USA, Canada and Asian, African and Latin American states. Apart from these, two major institutions, an array of non-governmental organizations (frequently state entities) like Gorchakov Public Diplomacy Fund, the Saint Andrew Foundation, the International Diasporas Funds “The Russians”, the International Union of Russian Compatriots, the Library “Russian Literature abroad” and the International Association of sister cities put “soft power” into practice (Kononenko, 2006).

Historically, Russia pioneered conduct of the “foreign policy” in the Post-Soviet space. In 1999 the Moscow Fund to Support Compatriots (named after Yuriy Dolgoruky) was established by the Decree of Mayor Yu. Luzhkov (later on it was transformed into the Moscow Fund for International Cooperation). The Fund executes the scholarship programme for the Russian-speaking students, primarily for compatriots in the CIS and the Baltic states. For instance, Russian business invested in the seven Moscow houses, which are to serve as “centre for culture and business cooperation” (the Moscow House). Currently, there are six houses – in Bishkek, Minsk, Riga, Sofia, Sukhumi and Yerevan. In 2010 following Luzhkov’s resignation, the Fund was re-organized into the two separate entities supervised by the Department on foreign economic and international affairs: the Moscow International Cooperation Centre and the Moscow Compatriots Centre (Panova, 2010).

“Soft power” is implemented ever more actively by Russia’s north-western districts as well, which “specialize” in development of humanitarian contracts, helping compatriots abroad. For instance, St. Petersburg, the Leningrad region, Kaliningrad and Karelia have traditionally been collaborating with the foreign cities and various European regions. Some of these regions have recently embarked on launch of compatriots support programmes (Kubyshkin, Joenniemi, Sergunin, 2012).

The Russian system of higher education is gradually building the “soft power” capacity. This process is going international, as the Bologna system is getting introduced and quotas for foreign students to study in the Russian universities are enlarged. The academic exchange frameworks are diversified. The state slots for study at the Russian universities are allocated through the Russian embassies, with 70-100 slots for every country. A series of the leading universities (for instance, the Moscow State University, St. Petersburg State University, and Higher School of Economics) organize independent selection process via contests. The regional universities (e.g., Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University, (Kaliningrad), St. Petersburg State University, Kuban State University, and Siberian Far East State University) carry out multiple cooperation programmes with the universities in neighboring countries, including joint bachelor, post-doctoral and other scientific projects.

Furthermore, the Russian academic community is prolific at using the professional associations for boosting “soft power” capacities. For instance, the universities of the North-West of Russia play a central role in the universities network of the Baltic region and facilitate academic exchange programmes there. As stated the then Prime-Minister V. Putin, “we ought to extend our educational and cultural presence in the world by several times, as well as increase it by an order of magnitude especially in those countries, where any share of population speaks or understand the Russian language”. (Putin, 2012)

Finally, the role of the Russian Orthodox Church is prominent as well. For instance, in crisis years Russian Orthodoxy was functioning as an informal intermediary between Russia, Georgia and Ukraine. Most experts share an opinion that its international engagement has grown after the election of Patriarch Kirill. As one Latvian pundit, K. Kudors wrote, “freedom of worship, which is highly esteemed in the West, imparts certain degree of legitimacy to the activity by the Russian Orthodox Church (Kudors, 2010). In words by F. Lukyanov, “it is one of Russia’s pivotal “soft power” assets, but it scares the foreign counterparts even more than the traditional leverages” (Lukyanov, 2009). In order to neutralize such accusations, some Russian experts suggest positioning the Russian Orthodox Church as a transnational organization. (These, 2012, p. 51)

The Western scholars usually assess Russia’s potential for “soft power” use with regards to the West as constrained and hopeless. The “soft power” idea was introduced into the Russian foreign policy Concept in 2013, and the eminent Russian leaders (including the president V. Putin) claimed that “soft power” tools are pivotal in the foreign political arsenal of the Russian Federation. Nevertheless, for sustained growth of Russia’s “soft power” and its development its own policy of “soft security” should be elaborated, since without steady economy, social welfare and security throughout all spheres of society “soft power” is unlikely to develop successfully and prove its effectiveness in foreign political projects and initiatives. (Poslanie Prezidenta RF Federal’nomu Sobraniyu 12 dekabrya 2013 goda)

THE POST-SOVIET BACKGROUND – PLUSES AND MINUSES

Significantly, the EAEU is not a maiden attempt at institutionalization of the Post-Soviet space. As the researcher E. Gulyaeva noted, “Soft power of the Eurasian Economic Union is able to function and bring

Features of “Soft Power” in the Eurasian Economic Union and the Role of Russia

positive results, as long as its culture stems from aspects, which lure other peoples, and values live up to interests of the citizens of the union. Attractive power of values and culture of the EAEU should be bolstered by its economic success: investment influx, growing trade turnover, rising living standard of member-states’ population and so on”. (Gulyaeva, 2016) Genuine solidarity between states should be built up to fulfill these tasks. The Post-Soviet countries are quite suspicious of Russia’s “soft power” policy in the region. Both political and scholarly literature is ample with critical attitude to the Russian efforts, especially in the Post-Soviet area. For this reason, contrary to the traditional definition of “soft power” Russia does not exhibit emphasis on legitimacy and moral authority, in opinion of the Western political scholars and mass media representatives, it serves to divide, rather than unite and put an end to fears and discomfort. (Simons, 2014)

The Western experts believe that the key objective of Russia is to undermine the Post-Soviet countries statehood and expand its own impact area. Another vision of activities by the largest country in the world interprets Russia as “striving to use the Western “soft power” concept, reformulating it as euphemism for coercive policy and economic twisting of arms”. (Minzarari, 2008) Several Russian experts, in essence, reiterate this remark, stating that the “soft power” notion has two senses: narrow, related to, first and foremost, attractiveness and wide, implying an ability to alter political preferences of other actors. (Suharev, 2011) The second sense, in practical view, is very close to the “hard power” notion.

If to bear in mind specific realms of the EAEU’s “soft power”, the foreign experts have quite a skeptical attitude to the economic policy as well. In particular, there is a desire to draw Russia’s “special role” to the energy security issues, which uses “energy weapon”, i.e. a hard, rather than “soft power” tool. As far as the “cultural dimension” of the EAEU’ “soft power” policy is concerned, the notion of the Eurasian culture has proved to be hardly implemented in practice. Partially, rich cultural traditions of the EAEU countries are often marred by negative perception of the current political developments in this country. Moreover, contrary to “sophisticated” culture, the modern post-Soviet culture, ways of life and media products appear to be less attractive to the foreigners, even to compatriots living abroad. It is frequently stated that the ethnic minorities in the post-Soviet countries live within the Russian “informational field” that ostensibly diminishes their loyalty to the states of residence. In general, the stance of the EAEU citizens is quite unequivocal. On the one hand, they manifest certain proximity to Russia and even to the ruling political regime. On the other hand, as soon as they are able to choose, where they can receive education and/or migrate, they go for Europe, North America, or the Asia-Pacific region. (Alekseeva, 2012)

Russia’s role in building the Eurasian integration is estimated ambiguously. So is the compatriots’ role in Russia’s “soft power” strategy. From the viewpoint of the Polish expert B. Risse, “the Russian policy in this regard seems to be running counter to the “soft power” concept: instead of winning people’s hearts and minds, who do not share Russia’s principles and aims, the country aspires to mobilize those who agree with them” (Risse, 2002). Apart from that, “soft power” is often perceived by the local political elites as creation of the Russian “fifth column”, which works against the sovereign statehood. Statements on a need for consolidation of the Russian compatriots abroad exacerbate the existential fears even further (Natsios, 1997).

It is impossible to claim that any “soft power” institutions have been set up precisely within the EAEU, especially when it comes to the non-governmental organizations. Use of the NGOs potential is not a priority to the EAEU. It means, NGOs, which are “officially” entitled to practise “soft power”, are semi-state in fact and are perceived as the “intended audience” in the Post-Soviet countries. In E. Stetsko’s opinion, “for all the EAEU parties concerned there common drawbacks in the structure and

functioning of the non-governmental organizations: dependence on donors, corruption practices in financial sphere, insufficient professionalism of personnel”. (Stecko, 2016) From E. Gulyaeva’s viewpoint, “the only NGO, which purposefully advances the very Eurasian ideas, is the Eurasian Movement of the Russian Federation (EMRF)”. (Gulyaeva, 2016)

As far as appeal of the shared political beliefs is concerned, many foreign pundits suggest that Russia is struggling for harmonization of its traditional values to the internationally accepted democratic values and standards. According to V. Kononenko, on the one hand, “there are dramatic differences in their value-based and individual manifestation due to national, historical and other specific features”. (Kononenko, 2006) In other words, the Russian Federation deems it a challenge to convince others that it shares universal human values and is prepared to spread them all around the world. In Russia internal social-economic and political model, in order to be more attractive and successful for the majority of foreign countries, is being constantly improved. But experts believe that Russia is not able to export its own model, because “it has not elaborated such a model yet” (Kononenko, 2006), as a consequence, it is still impossible to disseminate these ideas within the EAEU.

Particular attention should be paid to engineering the long-term advocacy strategy that would create a positive image of the EAEU in the world. To fuel its “soft power” the EAEU should develop a system of public diplomacy, combining the traditional outlooks and new marketing approaches affecting the foreign audience in the short- and long-run.

The existent informational capacities are obviously out-of-date (Dolinskiy, 2011). Blogosphere as an effective discussion platform and catalyst for “roadmap testing” of public diplomacy mechanisms at the non-governmental level should not be ignored. Nevertheless, establishment by the EAEU of its own mass media – though essentially – would become the first step. For creation of the world community image the structure is needed, which would coordinate all spheres of public diplomacy, cultural diplomacy, foreign cultural policy and advocacy, as well as would bear accountability for training human resources and building up the foreign policy strategy. (Dolinskiy, 2012).

Public diplomacy of the EAEU is executed at the superior leadership tier via the press-office and foreign political agencies of the presidential and governmental apparatuses.

For sure, it is precisely the financial-economic potential of the EAEU that should lay the foundation, which enables the organization to systematically apply “soft power” tools for solution of the foreign political tasks. In this sense, success in strategic development of this foreign political segment hinges upon opportunities and state practices of involving large-sized businesses in financing the long-term projects, whereby political effects may bring quantifiable results only after prolonged time. Economic feasibility of such input, at a first glance, may seem to be quite doubtful. Then a choice has to be made either to opt for pragmatic thoughts of the current economic realities imposed by market economy and accept a risk of dwindled investment at early stages in exchange for creation of a platform for political and economic weight in the future. (Kubyshkin, Cvetkova, 2013)

Remarkably, this should not entail eternal donations to friendly states, sisterly republics, their corrupted elites, tremendous debts write-offs and so forth. Having reckoned the long-term political and economic effects of such moves, it would be necessary to decide on the advisability of such initiatives in practice. Critically, the EAEU elite would raise awareness of the problem. It is essential to demonstrate the political will in fulfillment of specific steps, putting practice this awareness. Moreover, dependence on the nascent civil consciousness institutions is getting ever more urgent. Against this background there is vivid absence of a mechanism that would concert public diplomacy of governments with efforts by non-governmental organizations and other non-government subjects like business communities. Mean-

Features of “Soft Power” in the Eurasian Economic Union and the Role of Russia

while, joint programmes between the NGOs of the EAEU and business communities are likely to make a self-sustained and prospective dimension of the EAEU public diplomacy.

Another probably effective way of struggle against the artificially created adverse image of the Eurasian region abroad is development of tourism – through state investment and creating favorable environment for tourist business on account of private investors as well, which are able to expand the foreign tourist programmes range. (Filimonov, 2012)

Another aspect, which is vital to the states, should be mentioned. To an extent, “soft power” determines attractiveness, and luring image of a country automatically facilitates mild investment climate and, evidently, caters for national economy boost. In this context, the idea of “cloning” of modernization and innovational development in cooperation between Russia and other CIS member-states declared by the incumbent leadership of the Russian Federation. At present, Rossotrudnichestvo is working out a special programme for innovational collaboration of the CIS countries till 2020. Although this initiative raises numerous questions and is still rather a protocol document, the very course in this direction and an attempt at forging Russia’s image as an innovational leader in the CIS deserve close attention. Support and development of such innovational, science-intensive projects alongside with Skolkovo is an incontestable contribution to strengthening grounds of not only Russia’s “soft power”, but also its “smart power”.

DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Today, the main task of the EAEU is to create real solidarity, which is necessary for the development of the integration process.

The following recommendations may be made in this regard:

- to come to a common understanding of the Soft Power policy among the EAEU member states
- develop a specific plan of action or a roadmap for the practical implementation of the Soft Power policy;
- develop and use the tools of public diplomacy to create a positive image of the EAEU.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Given the relevance of the Soft Power policy in the development of cooperation between the EAEU countries with third countries and international blocs, it is also important to analyze the experience of the European Union and the leading states (in this direction) in order to more effectively implement this EAEU policy.

CONCLUSION

Today there is no single organization, which could elaborate a strategy envisaging complete use of soft power by Russia and advance constantly in this dimension. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Public Chamber, Rossotrudnichestvo, RIA-Novosti, “Russia” channel and a series of other structures are performing in this sphere, but there is no mechanism that would coordinate their overall functioning, that is why

Russian public diplomacy is run at the Presidential Press-Office level. Such a pattern has two serious flaws. Firstly, because of large number of other duties head of press-office finds it arduous to supervise this dimension continually, and secondly, such a scheme is vertical, i.e. it inhibits the bottom-up approach.

On Russia’s side, the “Russian centre for culture and science” works on the territory of the Post-Soviet space. In words by K. Kosachev, the former head of the Federal Agency for the CIS, Compatriots Living Abroad and International Humanitarian Cooperation (Rossotrudnichestvo), “in terms of “soft power” Russia is lagging behind its competitors tremendously”. (Studneva, 2012)

Therefore, use of “soft power” within the Eurasian integrational process is still at the start of its evolution.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Cultural Diplomacy: A type of public diplomacy and “soft power” that includes the exchange of ideas, information, art, language and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples in order to foster mutual understanding.

Public Diplomacy (people’s diplomacy): Any of various government-sponsored efforts aimed at communicating directly with foreign publics.

Rossotrudnichestvo is a Federal Agency for the Affairs of the Commonwealth of Independent States: Compatriots Living Abroad, and International Humanitarian Cooperation.

Russian World (the *Russkiy Mir* Foundation): A joint project of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education and Science and supported by both public and private funds. The Foundation’s Board of Trustees consists of prominent Russian academics, cultural figures, and distinguished civil servants.

“Smart power”: The term proposed by J. Nye and means the combination of hard and soft power to form a winning strategy.

“Soft Power”: A concept, proposed by J. Nye, which accentuates importance of not only military or economic instruments in conducting foreign policy.

Section 3

National Strategies to Eurasian Integration

Chapter 9

Armenia's Approach to Eurasian Integration

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ABSTRACT

The Armenian view on Eurasian integration is multidimensional, as it includes various ideological, historical, political, and economic aspects that simultaneously contradicts to the classical Eurasianism, but gets along with the political and economic contexts of this phenomenon. Joining CSTO and the EAEU is explained by searching political and economic stability in regional integrative projects, as well as within a country. Highlighting three levels of reflection of Eurasian integration allows observing a large gap of state, public, and diasporic approaches to understanding and mastering the idea of integration in the post-Soviet space. However, there is no split in the Armenian public opinion as the initial prerequisite for Armenia's participation in the Eurasian integrative project concerning the political and economic aspects. Another feature of the Armenian approach to the CSTO and the EAEU is the consideration of these projects in the general direction of Russian-Armenian relationship, rather than a scrutiny of multilateral cooperation.

INTRODUCTION

Armenia's approach to Eurasian integration is considered as a pragmatic step towards establishing strategic relations within the scope of a common political and economic integration project. In this context, there are several main trends, related to Armenia's accession to the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU): the problem of security, the need for economic integration due to overcoming the effects of the blockade, the strengthening of statehood and internal economic stability. Referring to the problem of approaches to Eurasian integration, public discourse in Armenia is built on a comparison of three patterns: "Eurasian economic integration", "Armenia's participation in the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO)", and "Russian-Armenian relations". For economists, political scientists or lawyers, these phenomena differ for several reasons and functions, but public opinion, and in many respects, political statements, are built by combining these elements of Armenia's foreign policy. At the same time,

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it is important to understand what changes have occurred in the views of the political elite and society of Armenia in perceptions of Eurasian integration after the “velvet revolution”. Determining the degree of the Armenian domestic policy influence provides a large field for studying the interdependence of factors within the integrative processes.

The main aim of this chapter is to detect the major approaches to Eurasian integration within the framework of the various social and scientific discourses transformation in Armenia.

This chapter includes three parts. The first part is dedicated to the analysis of the social, political, economic and cultural prerequisites of Armenia's participation in the Eurasian integration project. In the second part, the effects of Armenia's entry into EAEU are analyzed in conjunction with the security problem. Finally, the third part appeals to the possible development of Armenian integrative approaches after the political changes in 2018.

BACKGROUND

The complexity of the analysis concerns the omission of many important aspects of the problem. Researchers come to not quite correct conclusions because of many nuances related to the EAEU “semi-integration” problem (Tigran Sarkisyan vidit neobkhodimost ‘v soglasovanii natsional’nykh politik ..., 2019), whereas the internal political context is ignored beyond the frameworks of scientific analysis or it takes too much attention.

The most popular topic of analysis remains the discussion around the concept of “conflict between two integrations” (the term was introduced by Vinokurov et al. 2015). This problem includes two levels. On the one hand, the studies are connected with a more professional assessment of the institutional interoperability issue in the economic union and cooperation with other integration projects. On the other hand, the discussion revolves around the “existential” choice between the West and the East. This approach is common both in the Armenian and foreign academic community, but it is worth noting that politicization of the issue has been a subject of a thorough scrutiny in academic papers (Delcour, 2018; Tavadyan, 2018, Shirinyan 2019) and analytical publications on various network resources (Armeniya mezhdru ES i EAES: v lovushke politicheskogo parazitizma, 2017; ES – EAES: vozmozhna li konvergentsiya? 2017).

Speaking about the internal political context of the U-turn of Armenia towards Eurasian integration, another discourse aims to analyze the tactics and strategy of Armenia's political elite in 2008-2013. This approach considers the process of including Armenia in various integration projects from the domestic political expediency perspective, aimed at strengthening political power and ensuring stability within the state. Thus, the process of association with the EU is explained by the need to neutralize the liberal opposition in Armenia and to ensure the victory of the ruling party and President S. Sargsyan in the elections for 2012-2013, that is why some scholars saw the motivation of the following global changes rather prosaic (Giragosian, 2014). At the same time, the geopolitical component of the process is not neglected, since joining the EAEU is determined by a combination of internal and external factors. Besides, the problem becomes biased, reducing the discussion of the issue in the public and scientific fields to the competition of “pro-European” and “pro-Eurasian” (meaning “pro-Russian”) discourses (Terzyan, 2016; Gabrielyan, Dabaghyan, Tadevosyan, Zakaryan, 2017).

As a part of Armenia's accession to the EAEU, the main focus was on the issue of security, which became the leitmotif of Armenia's accession to the Customs Union (CU) and then to the EAEU. The S. Sargsyan's formula «participating in one military security structure makes it unfeasible and inefficient

to stay away from the relevant geo-economic area» (The RA President Serzh Sargsyan's remarks..., 2013) became an important thesis for further debates in Armenian and foreign academic literature. It should be noted that from the very beginning the focus of topic discussion of the topic shifted from the economics to security, and more specifically to politics. Yet again, according to many Armenian experts, Armenia, juggling between the Association Agreement (AA) and the Customs Union, chose the CSTO (Iskandaryan, 2015). This approach represented the EAEU in the form of a certain geopolitical union, which Armenia had to join for some reasons.

Separately, one can be mentioned the literature devoted to a macroeconomic analysis of the Eurasian integration effects (Vinokurov, 2017), although this problem evolved in Armenia's public discourse relatively later - in parallel with Armenia's integration into the EAEU and by a degree of the socio-economic situation deterioration in the republic. Also, an important place in the Armenian academic and publicist literature was taken by the evaluation of the positive and negative effects of joining a new integration project (Manaseryan, 2018). Also, the concept of Armenia's "integration bridge" mode, as this state is part of the EAEU and whilst performs active interaction policy with the EU, became interesting source for the different studies (Perspectives of Co-Existence of EU and EAEU Integration Processes: The Case of Armenia, 2018).

MAIN FOCUS OF THE CHAPTER

The Strategy of Complementarity: European and Eurasian Integration Ways of Armenia

Two main principles were defined in the national security strategy of the Republic of Armenia in the 2007 edition: 'involvement' (integration) and 'complementarity' (complementarism) (Republic of national security strategy, 2007). These principles were built on overcoming the negative effects of the Azerbaijani-Turkish border blockade and the necessity to extract development resources from various sources. It is noteworthy that the notion of "Eurasian" was absent in the 2007 Strategy, although Armenia has been an observer country in the Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC) from 2003. The country's regional economic cooperation was conceived in the framework of "Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia" (TRACECA) and "Interstate Oil and Gas Transportation to Europe" (INOGATE) projects that were ineffective for Armenia because of the closed borders with Turkey and Azerbaijan, while the main way of state development was seen through European integration. It should be understood that the problem of a balanced foreign policy of Armenia accompanied the entire history of political and economic development of the independent republic. Moreover, the need to actualize the national security strategy against the background of the growing confrontation between Russia and the West eventually lost its significance for the Armenian political elite.

In 2003, Armenia became an observer in the Eurasian Economic Community, while in 2004, this republic began gradually integrating into the association with the European Union (EU). More precisely, Armenia became a member of the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP). Thus, Armenia chose the European integration path, which was accompanied by reforms in various spheres, however, the Eurasian integration remained a part of the country's foreign policy as it was tied to the matters of security of the South Caucasian republic (Iskandaryan, 2015, 41). This aspect is also reflected in the Strategy, noting

Armenia's Approach to Eurasian Integration

the importance of finding Armenia in CSTO in terms of the country's security and the purchase of Russian weaponry at preferential prices.

The political and economic strategy of Armenia in the 2000s evolved within the principle of resource complementarity of several integration projects and bilateral formats of international relations. From 2003 to 2008, Armenia's GDP increased more than four times (2003 - \$ 2 807 million, 2008 - \$ 11 662 million), including construction and services, which generated more than 90% of GDP growth. At that time, the remittances were an important factor as one of the main types of people's incomes. The global crisis, which began with a reduction in capital inflows, remittances and external demand, led to a fall in economic activities and exposed the imbalance of the GDP structure and the inefficiency of investments. Consequently, a 14.1% reduction in Armenia's GDP in 2009 was the deepest drop among the countries of the region. It took 4 years from Armenia to restore the pre-crisis level of GDP (Armeniya i Tamozhennyi soyuz: otsenka ehkonomicheskogo effecta integratsii, 2013, 12-13).

It should be noted that the optimism of the Armenian government with a high level of foreign direct investments caused the notorious "Dutch disease" before the 2008-2009 global crisis. The vulnerability of the Armenian economy will also be manifested after 2014, when economic restrictive measures against the Russian Federation will be introduced and applied, causing their effect on Armenia's economy.

At that time, the logic of the Armenian authorities was to reduce risks and compensate losses through cooperation with several different integration associations (The Republic of Armenia in the Eurasian Economic Union. first results, 2018, 53). Thus, there was a diversification of risks, but not the economy. Foreign direct investment and remittances were mainly connected with economic cooperation with Russia, in addition to which there was a security problem.

After the onset of the global crisis in 2009, Armenia participated in the creation of the Eurasian Fund for Stabilization and Development (EFSD). The latter helped mitigate the post-crisis state of the economy, as well as attract investment in the modernization of the country's irrigation system, transport, agriculture and medicine. In 2011, Armenia's Parliament ratified the Agreement on the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) free trade zone (Dogovor o zone svobodnoi trgovli, 2011). This event was highlighted by the Armenian authorities as another breakthrough in the integration policy of Armenia, but was hugely criticized by the opposition. Back in those days, the Armenian opposition noted that in case of the future non-alignment with the Russia-led Customs Union, Armenia could have a serious conflict with the former. The reason for such consequences was in the numerous contradictions in the CU treaty text (Armeniya ratifitsirovala soglashenie o zone svobodnoi trgovli v SNG, 2011). Moreover, since 2009 Armenia has been participating in the Eastern Partnership project with the EU, aimed at the future signing of the Association Agreement (AA).

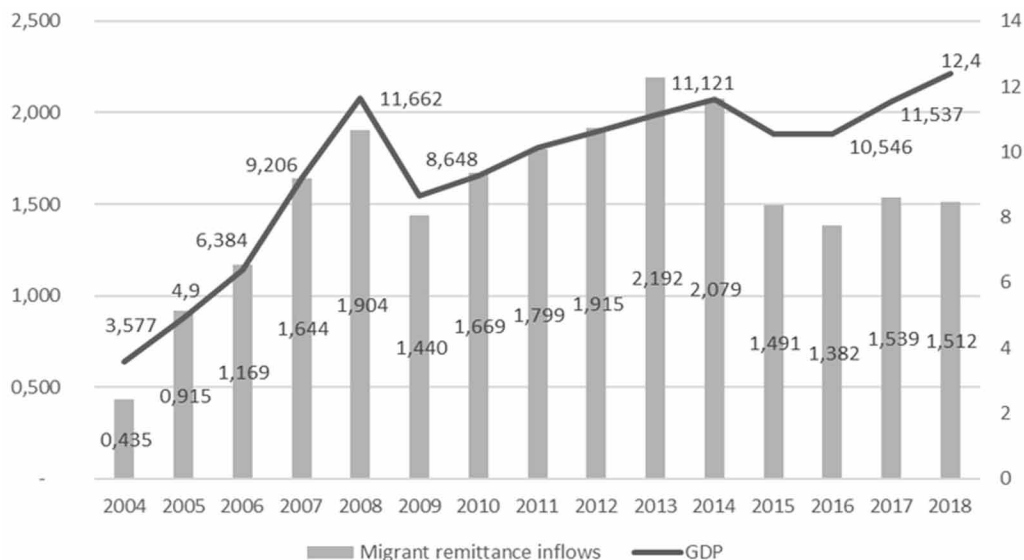
Tactically, the political elite of Armenia has managed to ensure the effectiveness of its decisions by playing on two integration projects that provided certain benefits for Armenia. Thus, integration with the EU promised great financial assistance in some areas, both humanitarian and infrastructural. The space of Eurasian economic integration, in turn, represented a large market for the export of competitive Armenian products. At the same time, various issues of military-political and energy security intertwined within the framework of Eurasian integration. On the other hand, economic cooperation, primarily with Russia and the EU, allowed the Armenian elite to ensure the ongoing development of the economy, as well as stabilize the problem of unemployment and poverty. Even after a catastrophic collapse of Armenia's GDP in 2009 (-14,2%), the economic recovery structure was built on attracting investment through integration projects.

However, by the end of the 2000s, some non-economic factors began to influence the integration choice of Armenia. It should be noted that until 2008 the atmosphere of international relations was relatively favorable, although there was a tendency towards the deterioration of Russia-West relations. Under these conditions, creating multilateral economic relations in the framework of various integration projects could have been fraught with negative consequences. While remaining committed to the development of Armenian-Russian relations (a corresponding agreement was signed in 2010 to extend the location of the 102nd Russian base in Armenia until 2044), Armenia tried to minimize the effects of the blockade, its unfavorable geographical position and the constant threat of renewed hostilities. Tactically, this behavior of the Armenian political elite justified itself, yet, not strategically. The gradual escalation of the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh and on the Armenian-Azerbaijani border also contributed to an unambiguous geopolitical choice, as security guarantees were necessary against the background of deteriorating socio-economic conditions of the population of Armenia (Minasyan, 2016).

From 2008 to 2018, Armenia experienced several crisis waves in domestic politics. The first wave was associated with a deep political crisis after the tragic events of 2008 (Zolyan, 2010), which later provoked a number of political and social protests in the republic. At the same time, the first crisis wave rolled back by 2012, partly due to the anti-crisis reforms of the government of T. Sargsyan, when the republic's GDP reached 2008 levels (Minasyan, 2016, 39-43). In 2014, the Armenian economy demonstrated its vulnerability to external factors again – due to the introduction of sanctions against Russia, the fall in oil prices and the devaluation of the Russian ruble. The second wave of the crisis began to roll back as early as 2017 when the volume of trade between countries increased, and the dependence of GDP on remittance inflows began to minimize (V 2019 godu denezhnye perevody bol'she ..., 2019) (Fig. 1).

Figure 1 shows the important stages of the political development of Armenia. These stages became decisive in choosing the geopolitical path of Armenia, as tactically the political elite of Armenia was able to resolve almost all crises inside the country, including the ability to maneuver in relations with

Figure 1. Migrant remittance inflows to Armenia in correlation to GDP, USD bln
Source: World bank and Central bank of Armenia.



the EU. The resource of cooperation with the EU in the framework of preparing the signing of the AA was actively used by the authorities to neutralize opposition forces inside the republic, providing an opportunity to eliminate protest hotbeds gradually, using methods of public opinion manipulation and creating a fake agenda within public discourse (Giragosian, 2014, 2). At the same time, European officials turned a blind eye to some authoritarian actions of the Armenian elites, as well as to the problem of possible falsifications in the elections in 2012 and 2013.

Going back to the topic of Armenia's internal policy influence on the geopolitical choice, it must be admitted that the tactical victories of the Armenian authorities over the opposition to neutralize the protest movements were gained against the background the absence of any clear foreign policy strategy. At least the four-year period of the association was not successful and led to a crisis of trust between Armenia and the EU, although at the Vilnius summit in 2013 the Armenian President S. Sargsyan announced a desire to continue the dialogue. Simultaneously, joining the Customs Union, and later the EAEU was incomplete and has a non-linear nature, as Armenia had close economic and trade contacts mainly with Russia. It was remarkable, that a new agenda in the context of deepening integration relations within the EAEU and cooperation with the EU emerged in 2017, coinciding with the socio-economic situation stabilization in Armenia.

Analyzing the advantages and disadvantages of Armenian integration into the EAEU, it is necessary to note the fact that the success of changes in foreign policy was inextricably linked with the domestic political configuration. The complicated situation of Armenia's relationship with neighboring countries and world leaders also left its imprint on the country's domestic policy, but the ability to maneuver in foreign policy depended directly on the political elite's coherent view of the political decision-making process. Besides, the attitude of the EU and the USA towards Armenia has changed, creating new risks (the deepening of the strategic relationship of the US and the EU with Azerbaijan, reduction of financial support from American and European governments) in republic's positions strengthening on the world stage.

Based on the above, the Armenian approach to Eurasian integration needs some clarification. Armenia's foreign policy is cramped in the context of conflict with Azerbaijan and Turkey since the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and the problem of recognizing the Armenian genocide largely determine the outlines of Armenia's foreign policy opportunities. At the same time, all the EAEU members are endeavoring to develop reciprocal beneficiary collaboration with Turkey and Azerbaijan based on political, economic and cultural features. It should also be mentioned that Russia is the only EAEU member-country, which recognized the Armenian Genocide in the Ottoman Empire. In this context, emphasis only on economic integration is more reasonable, but the weaponry trading with Azerbaijan or the desire to include Turkey in the free trade zone with the EAEU will meet a negative response in Yerevan.

Another aspect worth mentioning is the popularity of the foreign policy agenda as part of public discourse, which was often used by the opposition in the confrontation with the "regime". Here, one may consider a large number of publications on various Armenian Internet sites directed against Russia or Armenia's joining the EAEU (Iragir.am, 1in.am). Besides, this agenda was used by the "Way-out" bloc – parliamentary opposition, headed by N. Pashinyan. Further, the current Prime Minister pointed out the rhetorical nature of his statements about Armenia's withdrawal from the EAEU in order to sharpen the internal and external audience's attention on other important issues (Pashinyan obyasnil ideyu ego fraktsii o vykhode Armenii iz EAES, 2018). In public opinion, the issue of joining the EAEU was associated with the personality of President S. Sargsyan, who had an extremely low legitimacy. Thus, the low legitimacy of authority was reflected in the public perception of all Armenian political elite's foreign

policy decisions. Such discourse was picked up by Western-oriented media and replicated in the press. Thereby, the problem of mistrust of the executive power was projected onto the foreign policy agenda, notwithstanding the positive or negative sides of the issue.

Also, it must be mentioned, that the picture of public opinion about Russia in Armenia and its attitude towards the EAEU is quite compatible, although they need some explanation regarding the domestic and foreign policy context (Fig. 2). According to a sociological survey conducted in May 2019 by the International Republican Institute (IRI), Russia seemed to the respondents to be the most important political (78%) and economic (62%) partner of Armenia, and 77% (in the IRI's October survey this indicator was 79%) of respondents considered the joining of republic the EAEU as a positive phenomenon (Public Opinion Survey: Residents of Armenia, 2019).

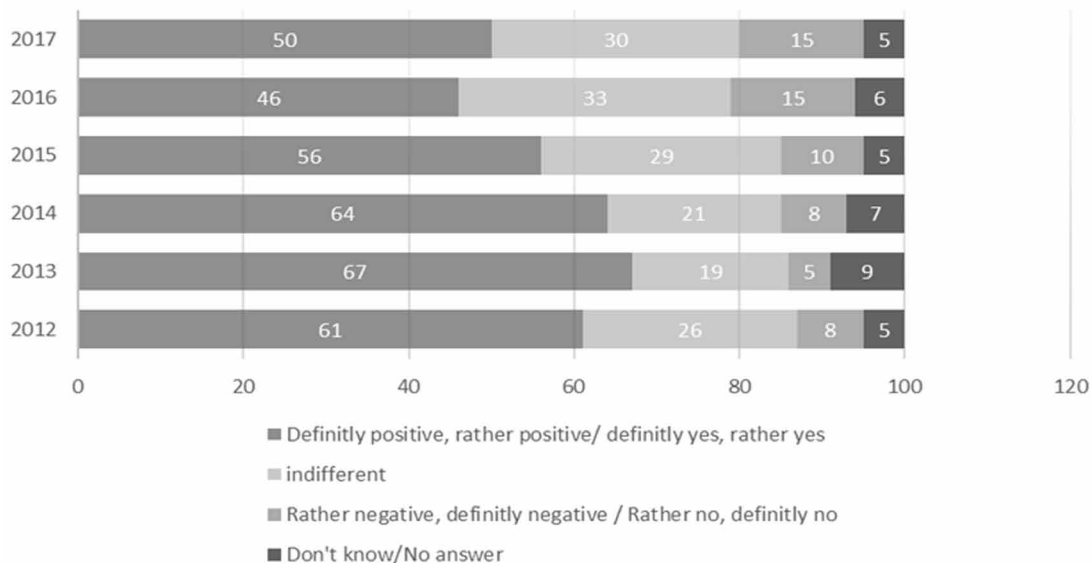
In the case of public perception of the EU, there are many nuances related to the specificity and viability of the institutional framework of this organization. The support for Armenia's possible membership in the EU had been gradually decreased since 2012 when Armenia's integration vector begun to change (Fig.3).

The difference in the positive perception of the EU and the EAEU in Armenia is quite large, which is explained by the active and flexible EU media policy, as well as it's significant support of local media in Armenian (Fig. 4.). Non-profit organizations existing on European grants also provide consolidated information on EU activities. In 2018, the EU spent € 1.74 million to support civil society (Armenian civil society receives €1.74 million for new activities, 2018; European External Action Service (EEAS), 2018). In the period 2017-2020, the EU, in the framework of the Programming of the European Neighborhood Instrument (ENI), plans to allocate more than €140 million for the development of business,

Figure 2. Dynamics of public perception of the EAEU, 2012–2017

Note: Question: Five countries have decided to create the EAEU (in essence, a single market for the five countries). What is your attitude towards that decision?

Source: EDB (2017).

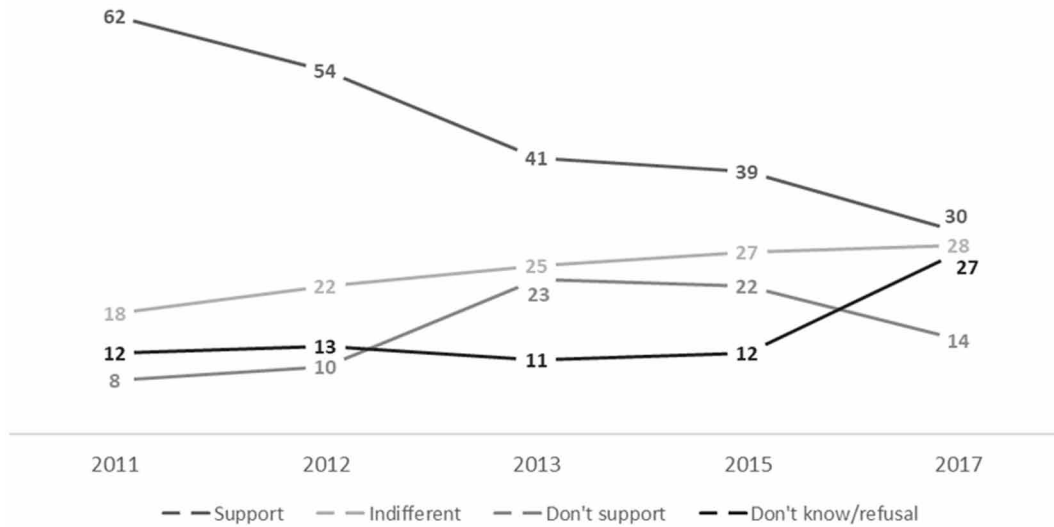


Armenia's Approach to Eurasian Integration

Figure 3. Support of Armenia's membership in the European Union, 2011–2017

Note: Question: Please tell me to what extent would you support Armenia's membership in the EU?

Source: The Caucasus Research Resource Center (CRRC).

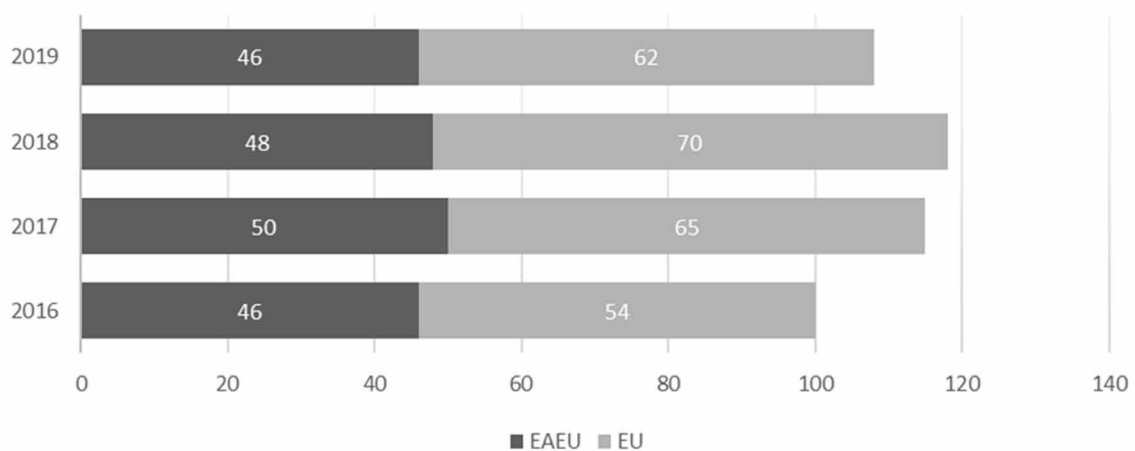


democratic institutions, infrastructure, environment and civil society (Single Support Framework for EU support to Armenia, 2017).

All these factors influence the attitude towards the EU, which is also reflected in local media, where the number of publications on the EU is almost always greater than references to the EAEU (Fig. 5). The role of the media in the formation of public opinion about the EAEU and the EU is quite large, and the European Union eventually developed an effective system for Media-NGOs coordination.

Figure 4. The comparison of trust dynamics towards the EU and EAEU in Armenia, 2016-2019, per

Source: EDB, Annual survey report «EU NEIGHBOURS east».



In the case of the EAEU, there are more difficulties. The institutional, regulatory and procedural aspects of integration are still in their infancy, but at the same time, the expectations of the Armenian society from the EAEU are higher, and disappointment with certain problems within the organization or in the framework of interstate cooperation may be more acute. Media also does not reveal the functional differences of the EU and the EAEU for Armenia, therefore in the public consciousness, these two organizations are perceived at the same level for several characteristics, which affects their assessment.

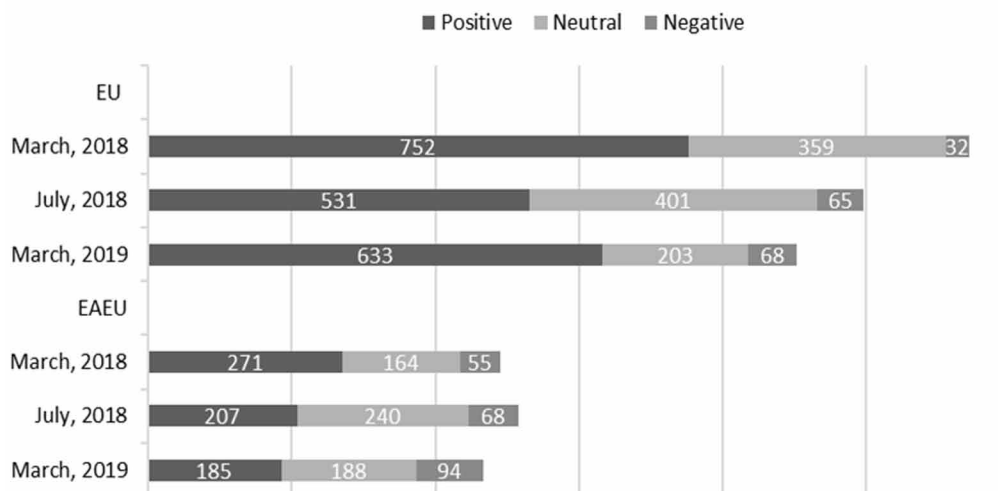
Summarizing aforementioned, it is necessary to note all the factors that influenced the Armenia's integration choice in 2013: the necessity to continue complementary policy in order to avoid a scarce resource base effects; foreign policy pressure caused by the reformatting of the post-Soviet space international relations; internal political problems associated with the Armenian political elite desire of power retain; economic crisis and vulnerability to external factors; national security of Armenia and the necessity of minimization of the risks of active hostilities in Nagorno-Karabakh. These conditions act as context for Armenia's approach to Eurasian integration and its shaping, the process of which continues until now and is aimed at determining the republic's main priorities of development after the 2018 "velvet revolution".

Armenian View on "Greater Eurasia": Region, Integration Effects and Security Dilemma

The specificity of the Armenian approach to integration is highlighted by a number of features related to the self-perception of the Armenian people in the world. The basis of the Armenian identity is built on the foundation of the historical and cultural experience of existence in the framework of various "imperial" projects, as well as the desire to preserve its uniqueness based on three elements: religion, writing system and language. These factors also influence the formation of the Armenian view on Eur-

Figure 5. Armenian media coverage of the EAEU and the EU, the number of Armenia-related publications (March, July 2018, March 2019)

Source: maxmonitor.am, mediamax.am



Armenia's Approach to Eurasian Integration

asian economic integration, contributing to the idea of Armenia as a bridge between various integration projects (Ademmer, Lisovolik, 2018, 29). Thus, the Armenian political thought positioned the Armenian state as an “in-between” state. (Krumm, 2018, 19).

This position is explainable from the perspective of perceiving Armenia's place in the world and the region geopolitics as a middle state, capable of performing mediatory functions between different centers of power. At the same time, the ethno-political conflict and the realities of the independent republic existence limit the Armenian view on “Greater Eurasia” in the context of concentration only in the South Caucasus problems.

The institutional basis of Eurasian integration is still in its infancy, which contributes to the “regional space” formation (Söderbaum, 2012). The continuing post-Soviet space erosion as a reaction meets with the construction of new regionalism, which is distinguished by the “softness” of relations within integration projects and is therefore beneficial in terms of preserving sovereignty and ability to cooperate with other regional associations. On the other hand, the “soft” type of integration within the framework of unified formation of Eurasian space hampers its development, since each state pursues its pragmatic goals, which sometimes conflict with the partner country's interests.

For Armenia, it is important to retain a flexible relationship mechanism within the EAEU and the possibility to continue cooperation with the EU, as well as to reduce the risks of price increase for different types of goods using the tools of free trade zones with various states (Iran, China, etc.). Based on this, Armenia's vision of “Greater Eurasia” passes through the lenses of economic interests and is limited by them. The pragmatic approach of Armenian economic relations in the conditions of undeveloped industries suggests the need for a protectionist policy in the export field and avoidance of more competitive products from the third countries to its market. In such conditions, countries contribute to the deepening of further integration, but on the other hand they fear ambitious steps in the issue of giving broader power to the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC) (Delcour, 2018, 60). As a result, subjective and objective reasons lead to the low level of integration problem in the Union.

The complicated situation in Armenia, which has developed in the process of private political and economic crises, ought to be stabilized. Integration was considered as a factor contributing to the sustainability of the domestic political and economic conjuncture. Despite the balance breaking through abrupt and ill-considered steps in 2013, Armenia's participation in Eurasian integration by 2017 began to show a positive trend in trade and export. However, the agricultural and industrial sectors of the economy are still in an unstable state, depending on some external and internal factors (Effekty integratsii Armenii i Kyrgyzstana v ramkakh EAES, 2019).

Armenia's entry into the EAEU prevented a number of possible risks. At the same time, it raised some new ones. The main field of problems for Armenia after the restoration of independence was formed around finding an effective solution to issues related to transport routes and the organization of goods logistics, as the only way to the world was communication with Georgia. The highway project “North-South” was an attempt to create an alternative communication with Iran in order to support Armenia's transit potential. The absence of a common border with the member countries of the EAEU aggravated Armenia's situation in the context of creating flexible economic relations mechanisms with Georgia, aimed at the Euro-Atlantic integration path.

The security issues in the context of the development of Armenia is perceived as a space of “existential” challenge, connected with the provision of all measures for the Armenian ethnos preservation in this territory. As an argument one can mention the same absence of a direct border with the EAEU member-countries or the glowing ethno-political conflict presence, and also blockade from two of four

adjacent states. The obvious benefit of the membership in the EAEU is the absence of a sharp increase in gas prices, as well as the abolition of taxes and non-tariff restrictions on the EAEU products export (Armeniya v EAES: evraziiskaya integratsiya v deistvii, 2018, 8). The guarantee of energy and economic security provides the development of other spheres of the Armenian society, including the military-political component.

In the Armenian political elite and many public groups perception, Eurasian integration in its economic (EAEU) and military-political (CSTO) dimensions serve a single goal.

In this aspect, there is some “isolated” vision of Eurasian integration, extraneous to other Armenia’s partner states in the EAEU, but those are the political and economic realities of the Armenian society development process. Of course, the effect of integration is not only positive, but also reveals many structural and substantive difficulties of a unified economic association. The ‘pros’ and ‘cons’ of the process of Armenia’s integration into the EAEU cannot be separated since there are a large number of factors influencing the common market formation. For example, the common labor market formation, and a labor migrants number increase from Armenia and other EAEU member states to Russia, which in turn necessitates the development of a regulatory basis within the EAEU labor law framework, including in the pension provision within the Union (Shustov, 2018). But also the number of labor migrants is an indicator of the crisis situation in the EAEU countries. The absence of whole complexes of industrial or agricultural sectors leads to a disproportion in the effectiveness of integration processes and does not solve problems within societies of the member countries.

The obvious achievement of Armenia’s membership in the EAEU is the foreign trade and export growth. Considering the geographical structure of transactions, it is worth noting that foreign trade with third countries dominates in Armenia’s market, this is fair for both export and import. However, there is an increase in the share of mutual trade with EAEU member countries, mainly in terms of exports, which indicates the positive impact of integration (Tab. 1). Nevertheless, it should be admitted that Russia remains the main trading partner of Armenia in the EAEU, as much of the energy and nuclear fuel also comes from the Russian Federation.

First of all, difficulties arise from the insufficient level of the institutional and regulatory framework development in various areas of cooperation. This problem is also being slowly resolved due to the internal political inhomogeneity of the partner countries. Secondly, there is a lack of communication channels between countries, as well as a lack of adequate interaction at the humanitarian level (Evraziiskaya ehkonomicheskaya integratsiya: perspektivy razvitiya i strategicheskie zadachi dlya Rossii, 2019). Although the Eurasian Development Bank (EDB) announced the start of financing humanitarian projects, the initiative of humanitarian cooperation from both an organizational and a substantive point of view should come not only from Russia, but from all other EAEU members (Sarkisyan, 2015). Thirdly, there is a problem with the low qualification of manpower. The priorities of the EAEU formation, associated with the development of high-tech industries to establish the cooperative interaction of states, need a serious scientific and educational foundation. Finally, the real problem for the whole Union and, in particular, for Armenia is the lack of working capital and the limited banking system capacity to finance infrastructure projects. For example, the project “North-South” was faced with some problems at construction various stages, also the possible implementation of a railway to Iran was declared unprofitable. In this context, the conditions for attracting investments are important and will be discussed below.

Armenia’s interest in the EAEU is expressed by the cumulative “security-economy-communication” ratio. These elements are interdependent and determine the place of Eurasian integration in Armenian foreign policy. By its size, Armenia is a small state with a little economic and demographic potential

Armenia's Approach to Eurasian Integration

Table 1. Structure of Armenia's export, USD thousand

		2015	2016	2017	2018
EAEU states	Russian Federation	244 893	374 471	557 256	666 502
	Belarus	6 810	13 412	7 051	11 737
	Kazakhstan	4 166	4 974	4 928	9 767
	Kyrgyzstan	371	1 037	1 764	971
EAEU free trade and economic cooperation zone	Iran	81 728	75 253	84123	94203
	China	165 359	96 451	118 529	107 222
	Vietnam	131	22	157	566
Other trade partners	Germany	140253	138950	133128	136079
	Bulgaria	78928	152420	282332	215271
	Switzerland	38953	74643	261389	336378
	Georgia	125320	146939	152892	68696
	Iraq	130637	137896	117449	150638

Source: Armstatbank.am.

(Armenia's GDP – \$ 12.4 bln. (2018), population - 2 986 100 (2017)), but the strategic course of this country's foreign and domestic policy concerns several areas: preventing deterioration of relations between the state-members of the EAEU and CSTO, deepening cooperation, monitoring the actions of allied states in relations with the third countries, the formation of its own agenda of integration relations. In this context, the role of CSTO is very important as an allied structure, which was not conceived as an organizational element of the Eurasian project, but which actually represents the military-political dimension of integration in a common space.

In the 2007 Strategy, Armenia's need to be in the CSTO was associated with the provision of armament to the participating country at preferential prices, the creation of mechanisms for military cooperation and the fight against international threats (Republic of Armenia national security strategy, 2007). However, Armenia's view on military-political or economic cooperation lies in striving for a "rigid" CSTO structure capable of ensuring the security of Armenia's borders from possible aggression. In parallel with this, economic integration is considered in the context of the "flexible" system formation in the EAEU, which will contribute to the development of the Armenian state and society, but at the same time does not hinder the search for resources in the framework of cooperation with other integration projects.

Strengthening trade relations with Iran, Vietnam, Singapore, India and other countries of Eurasia can contribute to a "departure" from the post-Soviet logic of "holding-together regionalism", in which politicization of various issues impedes integration processes (Libman, Vinokurov, 2016, 33). In this context, the new experience of creating a unifying regional project should be based on mediation between various integration projects: the EU, the EAEU, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), "Belt and Road Initiative". For Armenia, it is important to include the greatest number of potential political and economic allies in further integration process.

Future of Armenia in the EAEU: External Vector of Domestic Policy Changes

The aforementioned factors shape the current policy of Armenia and contribute to the current approaches to Eurasian integration transformation. Considering the future of Armenia in the EAEU, it is necessary to understand the trends that arise under the influence of external or internal changes. The choice of the integration vector was determined by a specific set of circumstances where a large number of elements were included, but today the formation of the EAEU is also affected by structural changes within the member states - at least, in the areas indirectly related to trade and commodity circulation. In the future, these relations will deepen and partner countries need to develop a common program for the organization of further development.

The global problem at the moment remains the blurriness of such concepts as “Eurasian space” and “Eurasianism” in general, as well as the resulting lack of understanding between the allies. “Eurasia” as a region is not perceived as a unified construct, directed to the future, because the main aspects of classical Eurasian conception do not work with society’s modern self-perception (Bordachev, Pyatachkova, 2018, 37). To a greater extent, other integration associations in the form of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) or ASEAN are ignored in the Armenian public discourse. In ordinary consciousness, the perception of this phenomenon dominates as a relic of the post-Soviet space, which currently unites only some of the participating countries’ selfish economic interests. There are many grounds for such opinion, however, Armenia’s position in the context of the “Eurasian” region development is not entirely clear.

Armenia has shaped its approaches in domestic and foreign policy under rather difficult circumstances, experiencing a series of crises one after another. Integration could be considered as a way to mitigate crises, but the Armenian political elite has not yet formulated any working program for inclusion in the international process. Ideas are akin to the “Armenian world”, “global nation”, “local civilization” or part of the European family of nations led to the destruction of the format of relations between states and even the ties of Armenia with some communities of the diaspora, because from an institutional or value point of view Armenian society was not ready to adopt a new foreign policy concept.

Eurasian integration was not a panacea for Armenian society, but the “softness” of the economic union gave some room for maneuver and breadth of actions within the framework of “Greater Eurasia” or the post-Soviet space. The discourses formed within Armenia show antagonism of the “pro-Western” or “pro-Russian” positions, but own vision of foreign policy is seen through the prism of certain subjects: the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (regional layer), the problem of recognizing the Armenian genocide (global layer), relations with the Diaspora (global layer), Russian-Armenian relations (bilateral security format). Outside these narratives, several formats of bilateral relations are present, but there are no full-fledged approaches within the framework of Armenia’s role global vision.

This problem brings Armenia’s relations with other states to a crisis, as the recognition of any negative step towards Armenia leads to a sharp increase in tension. In this case, the biggest share of the blame lies with the Armenian diplomacy, which is not aimed at creating close relations with various countries of the world. As an example, several processes, including intensive economic and military-technical cooperation between Russia and Belarus with Azerbaijan, as well as disputes around the CSTO Secretary General, put to a certain disillusionment of Armenia’s citizens, but the reaction of the Armenian public and the political elite was limited, emotional and situational. No effective steps have been taken to prevent such effects before those situations occurred.

Armenia's Approach to Eurasian Integration

On the other hand, the attitude towards the EAEU is “politicized” because of the little attention of Armenian society to the problem of economic growth or tax-free trade. The share of the blame lies on the structures of the EAEU, which do not properly conduct the policy of informing the population about the results achieved. That is why even events that are not directly related to the EAEU can affect negatively the Armenian public mood. The lack of a foreign policy strategy and specific approaches to Eurasian integration might not have much importance in the case of low integration, but the EAEU currently influences the formation of some economic institutions in Armenia, which cannot be ignored. With a high depth of integration, Armenia will be forced, along with some proposals of a structural nature, to include in the foreign policy agenda the development of its vision for Eurasian integration.

For Armenia's new political elite, it is important to demonstrate an interest in promoting the Eurasian integration project in various directions, as well as to avoid mistrust between the member states of the Union (Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan Presents Priorities of Armenia's Presidency in EAEU, 2019). At the same time, N. Pashinyan's government faces the issue of improving the macroeconomic indicators of Armenia, using also the tools of Eurasian integration. As well the new Armenian parliament came up with the initiative to create Standing Committee on Regional and Eurasian integration (spheres of activities: relations with the Eurasian Economic Union and other countries of the region, harmonization, unification of legislation of the Republic of Armenia and other member states of the EAEU and laws governing those areas).

Returning to the main priorities of the Eurasian integration, a number of difficulties hinder the effective implementation and contributes to the failure of initiatives. In almost all areas of Eurasian integration, there is a problem of harmonizing both regulators of economic and trade relations and increasing the level of trust between countries. In addition, there is the problem of market liberalization, when some of the Union states are shifting too early to the free movement of goods, services and capital to the detriment of local producers, while partner countries remain in positions of state regulation of the market. In the case of Armenia, everything is much more complicated in the context of the transition period for the political and economic system after the “velvet revolution”.

The following issues of strategic importance are included in the main agenda of the activities of the new Armenian government:

1. The effect of the “economic revolution”, which is neoliberal and risky in the context of modern internal political processes in Armenia. Tax reform is aimed at introducing a single income tax rate of 23% with a gradual decrease to 20% by 2023, as well as removing most of the economy from the shadows. This plan is designed to receive benefits in the form of a large flow of foreign direct investment (FDI), but according to some researchers, the forecasts of the government are rather controversial (Avetisyan, 2019). Also, the growth of FDI is decreased, which the entry into the EAEU could not affect (Kakvstuplenie v Evraziiskii Soyuz povliyalo na ekonomiku Armenii, 2019), but the new economic policy may also affect relations within the EAEU.
2. Funded by the Asian Development Bank and the Eurasian Development Bank, the “North-South” highway project has been a subject of litigation after the seven years of the road construction. At the same time, government representatives have stated that there was not a real calculation of the economic effect of the project for a long time in except for superficial assessments, the total cost and the completion of the entire investment program (Pravitel'stvo Armenii rabotaet s partnerami ..., 2019). Additionally, the “North-South” highway is the most promising direction for including

- Armenia in the transit network of “Greater Eurasia”, as well as entering into competition with an alternative route through Azerbaijan.
3. The implementation of the Comprehensive and enhanced partnership agreement (CEPA) between the European Union and Armenia presents great interest from perspectives of interfacing cooperation processes with European structures and Eurasian integration.
 4. Another strategic direction for Armenia and all EAEU countries is the strengthening of trade relations with Iran, despite the large difference between the markets and a three-year period for the compliance of trade relations between EAEU and Iran with WTO standards. In addition, Armenia is interested in increasing its export to Iran, as well as in activating the free economic zone in Meghri on the Armenian-Iranian border (Markarov, Davtyan, 2018, 535). In the context of deepening Iran-EAEU economic relations, Armenia has some advantages: a common border with Iran and long-standing political and trade-economic relations. The “North-South” project also serves to strengthen EAEU-Iran contacts, where Armenia plays the role of an interested mediator. Therefore, Armenia expects from this agreement both a reduction in duties on a wider list of goods and the opportunity to penetrate the market of Northern Iran in conditions of Iranian protectionist economic policy, and strengthen its political and economic status in Iran-EAEU relationship (Armenia stands to benefit from Eurasian Economic Union, Iran trade deal, 2019).
 5. The IT sphere is also worth mentioning, as one of the most important directions of development of the Armenian economy, which can support the “Digital policy” of Eurasian integration. This industry should be considered not only in terms of software exporting, but also fulfilling the following important tasks: creating integrated tools for trade facilitation, recording citizens’ relocations of the EAEU member states within the common space and ensuring their physical and legal security, shaping common standards for inspection and transportation of goods (EAES nuzhny mestnye analogi internet-gigantov Alibaba, eBay, Amazon..., 2019).

These priorities, along with the peculiarities of changes in the political and economic structure of the Armenian society, represent an open ‘window of opportunity’ that is related to both the internal political development of Armenia and the EAEU as a whole. Since after the “velvet revolution” the tendency to associate the Eurasian integration with the illegitimate political regime has passed. Paradoxically, N. Pashinyan’s high rating leads to support for Eurasian integration within Armenian society. That is why today the Armenian political elite and society can form new demands for their own view on Eurasian integration.

It is difficult to determine what is the place, occupied by Armenia in the structure of Eurasian integration, because the given problem has not been scrutinized meticulously, which to a certain extent can be explained by the very fact of the incompleteness of the integration project itself. There are two possible strategies that Armenia can choose in the process of deepening integration processes. The strategy of Armenia as a “small state” can be reduced to the desire to give supranational bodies of the EAEU and CSTO a more significant role. At the moment, the only tool for smoothing asymmetry is the consensus institution, however, making collective decisions in this way is sometimes ineffective, because it faces with the reluctance of one of the parties to give up in a dispute for political reasons (consider revising this sentence, difficult to understand). Thus, the Eurasian Economic Commission has no authority to monitor the implementation of the decisions of the EAEU bodies. The commission does not even have the right to appeal to the Court of the EAEU, which hampers the elimination of barriers in the common market and complicates the resolution of disputable situations (Sutyryn, 2019).

Armenia's Approach to Eurasian Integration

In the absence of significant resources and in a complex geopolitical situation, Armenia may be interested in using the institutional framework of Eurasian integration, putting emphasis on increasing the role of supranational international institutions and exerting pressure through them on more influential partner countries (Wivel, 2005, 396). On the other hand, the integration strategy of Armenia can be built around a bilateral format of relations with the most significant state of Eurasian integration – Russia. Such a strategy is more realistic, given the deepening of relations between Armenia and Russia in the economic (most of the export-import and foreign direct investment falls on Armenia) and the military-political spheres (purchase of weapons at preferential prices, creation of joint air-defense system, support in implementing the Armenia's humanitarian mission in Syria). The format of Armenian-Russian relations differs in many ways from interaction with other the EAEU and CSTO states, as Belarus and Kazakhstan in some cases tend to have a more restrained integration policy, emphasizing the purely economic component of integration and bilateral security format.

The Eurasian Economic Union remains a community of realist states that seek to protect their interests, not allowing any losses for themselves. But the idea of Eurasian integration, first of all, belongs to the “constructivist” thought, aimed at the new region formation, based on the values justifying a common future, as well as the transition from “role” to the “collective identity” of the EAEU member countries (Wendt, 2003). In the economic sphere, this means to create conditions for a common chain of the industrial complex, independent of imports from the third countries, as well as the interest of allies in developing a general position on some regional and global issues.

SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The analysis of Armenia's approaches in regard to the Eurasian integration reveals the essence of internal and external political influence on the main factors of emerging Armenian socio-political discourse. Hence, it can be distinguished at least two groups of recommendations:

For the Armenian government:

- To create a comprehensive “road map”, reflecting the conceptual vision on Eurasian integration in the context of contemporary Eurasian integration conditions;
- To harmonize EAEU member state's strategy documents regarding the national security, foreign policy, energetics and economy;
- To create a platform for ensuring contacts with Armenian diaspora in the context of necessity to support the diasporic communities in Eurasian Union member countries, as well as for increasing the level of awareness on Armenia's integration priority for Armenian communities outside the Eurasian integration area;

For some structures of the Eurasian Economic Union:

- To elaborate a new information policy, ensuring the awareness of the people in Armenia and the other EAEU countries on achievements and perspectives of the economic integration;
- To support the local humanitarian initiatives in the sphere of information policy of the EAEU and to contribute to the development of the common information and humanitarian space.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

The analysis of the attitude of the Armenian diaspora towards Armenia's participation in various integration projects can be elaborated on as a noteworthy direction for further research on studying Armenia's main approaches on Eurasian integration. It is also important to understand to what extent the Armenian diaspora can influence internal socio-political discourse.

Additionally, the other promising research direction is the issue of studying the positions of EAEU member states in terms of international relations theory. This direction will be aimed at revealing the main styles of state behavior at various levels of Eurasian integration.

CONCLUSION

Armenia is unique in a number of features, determining the place of this republic in the structure of Eurasian integration and its relation to the whole common space formation concept. This specificity is connected both with the geopolitical position of Armenia, and the existence of ethno-political conflict, however, the Armenian foreign policy remains "hostage" to the regional policy in the South Caucasus, not having the opportunity to present a broader vision of integration processes. The absence of strategy in 2008-2013 led to an unexpected U-turn of the Armenian policy towards Eurasian integration, although before the domestic elites were trying to maintain a common vector of political and economic development with Russia. The tactical victories of the Armenian authorities over the opposition and the international confrontation growth led to the adjustment of the Armenian integration policy. The complementary principle of Armenian foreign policy has been revised, but no conceptual basis for a new strategy has been emerged. Today, Armenia is an active participant in the EAEU and can estimate the advantages that the Eurasian integration has brought to the country, however, the domestic policy remains the priority as the basis for ensuring the security of the state. In Armenian society, the phenomena of security, foreign policy, integration, economic development are not separated from each other, therefore, the political changes in 2018 made their adjustments to the process.

After the "velvet revolution" Eurasian integration in public discourse is no longer associated with illegitimate power, which makes it possible to formulate its own vision of current processes within the framework of the EAEU and the CSTO. Also, Armenia's membership in Eurasian integration showed some benefits and advantages for the country's economy in the field of export increasing, trade turnover and sustained GDP growth.

At this stage, the new political elite will have to attract investment and ensure economic growth, and at the same time stabilize the public discourse about the role and place of Armenia in the Eurasian integration project. The sustainability of Armenia's approaches to Eurasian integration depends on solving urgent problems in the spheres of economy, development of the transport system and infrastructure, as well as the ability to ensure the state security in the long term.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

2018 Armenian “Velvet Revolution”: A series of anti-government protests in Armenia from April to May 2018 staged by various political and civil groups led by future Prime-minister Nikol Pashinyan (head of the Civil Contract party).

Complementarity Policy: The foreign policy of Armenia is based on a partnership approach that seeks to simultaneously develop relations with all states in the region and with states with interests in the region.

Eurasian Economic Commission (EAEC): Is the permanent regulatory body of the EAEU, which aimed to ensure the functioning and development of the EAEU, and developing proposals for the further development of integration.

Greater Eurasia: The concept of a Greater Eurasian partnership or community as a common space for economic, logistic, and information cooperation, and for peace and security space of the EAEU, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the ASEAN, and other countries.

“North-South” Project: Major infrastructure project which aims at connecting the Southern border of Armenia with its Northern point by means of 556 km-long Meghri- Yerevan - Bavra highway. The construction of this highly important strategic road will ensure easier traffic from the Southern border of Armenia to the Georgian border and up to Black Sea ports.

“Small State” Strategy: Several strategies that small states employ to achieve greater stability and security, and gain more influence in relation to other actors. Small states can either engage with great powers, balance against potential threats, develop hedging strategies or stay neutral.

The CSTO: An intergovernmental military alliance (Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan) that was signed on 15 May 1992. The CSTO promotes the collective defence of any member that comes under external aggression.

Chapter 10

Eurasian Integration of Belarus as Path–Dependence

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ABSTRACT

There is a tendency to explain all the problems and choices made by the Republic of Belarus as a result of the policy of its leadership. This text offers a take on choices made by Belarus in favor of preserving and strengthening relations with Russia through the prism of the concept of path-dependence. Simply said, economic, social, and political circumstances determine the vector of development of the country since the collapse of the Soviet Union, as well as they frame and transform president Lukashenka's intentions. Thus, country's participation in the formation of the Eurasian Economic Union is a predictable step in a chain of interconnected choices that the Belarusian political elite have been making since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Special attention in the text is paid to what the analysis of the Belarusian case can tell about the nature and prospects of integration in the region.

INTRODUCTION

Experts' opinion on the political system and socioeconomic model established in the Republic of Belarus after the collapse of the USSR are highly controversial. For some it is "Europe's last dictatorship" and "a splinter of the Soviet Union", for others it is the best possible way of post-Soviet development called "Belarusian socialism" and "Belarusian economic miracle" (Treshchenkov, 2014, 125). Such opinions are highly dependent on political affiliations and values of the observers themselves, but no one can deny at least two facts: strong dependence of the Belarusian economy on Russia and more than significant role of the Belarusian leader Alexander Lukashenka in the processes that have been taking place in the republic since 1994.

Virtually from the beginning of the 1990s, Belarus, along with Russia, has been taking an active part in integration projects in the post-Soviet space. For a long time, the Union State of Russia and Belarus was the quintessence of the Belarus-Russia rapprochement. At the turn of the 2010s the so-called "ink on paper integration" of the past underwent qualitative changes. And today, Belarus, together with

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Russia and Kazakhstan, acts as the core of the Eurasian economic integration. The clear choice made by the republic occurred, to a large degree, against the will of its key political player. The desire to retain a certain degree of autonomy with regard to the decisions made in the Kremlin has always been characteristic of A. Lukashenka's policy. For a long time, one of the bargaining tools used against the Russian leaders was "the European dimension" of the Belarusian foreign policy. At the same time, such a rapprochement with the European Union (EU), which would involve political and economic reforms in Belarus, was excluded. The participation of the republic in the Eurasian Economic Union (as well as in Eurasian Economic Community's Customs Union) was an expected result of the processes that had taken place in the country before and after the collapse of the USSR.

In this study, the author suggests considering the participation of Belarus in the formation of the EAEU in terms of path-dependence. Such approach makes it possible not to focus exclusively on the role of an individual in history to the detriment of other objective factors and pre-conditions. First and foremost, it includes the definition of the term "path-dependence" and other related categories. In the following sections, the author makes an effort to determine the pre-conditions for the formation of the contemporary Belarusian path-dependence and to identify possible alternative ways and main juncture points where the dependence could have been broken. Then, the author describes the essence of the modern Eurasian integration model and its relevance to the Belarusian path-dependence.

BACKGROUND

Belarus occupies a special place in the history of post-Soviet economic integration, since it is a consistent participant in almost all Russia-led integration associations in the region. The participation of Belarus in the EAEU is often viewed by the media and experts as a result of a choice made by Belarusian leadership. In the academic literature, the analysis of the motives of Belarus's participation in the EAEU is rather scarce. There is a fair opinion that it should be viewed, first of all, as an attempt to preserve an access of the country's exports to the Russian market. It is based on a few studies of Russia-Belarus relations, revealing the reasons for the choice made by the president A. Lukashenka in favor of developing economic integration with Russia (Zaostrovtssev, 2007; Koktysh, 2000). At the same time, these studies as well as attempts to explain the current participation of Belarus in the EAEU lack a clear conceptual framework. As an example of such a framework, which allows analyzing empirical material in a systematic and more intrinsic way, this study suggests historical institutionalism and the notion of path-dependence. This is the first attempt to apply path-dependence to the Belarusian case. Up to the present, its application to the post-Soviet problematics has been limited to explaining the entanglements of political transformation in Russia (Hedlund, 2005; Gel'man, 2013).

Historical Institutionalism and Path-Dependence

The term "path-dependence" is an integral part of historical institutionalism. There, institutions are defined as "the formal or informal procedures, routines, norms and conventions embedded in the organizational structure of the polity or political economy" (Hall & Taylor, 1996, 938). As to Belarus, it would be appropriate to mean by institutions the ways of organizing economic activity and the socioeconomic practices, that have been established as early as in the Soviet period and continue to exist, having undergone certain transformations, up to now.

For historical institutionalists institutions are relatively persistent features of the historical landscape and one of the central factors pushing historical development along a set of “paths” (Hall & Taylor, 1996, 941). Moreover, these institutions, in turn, are the product of different political circumstances, socioeconomic development, the influence of ideas, etc. Institutionalists break the sequence of historical events “into periods of continuity punctuated by “critical junctures”, i.e. moments when a substantial institutional change takes place thereby creating a ‘branching point’ from which historical development moves onto a new path” (Hall & Taylor, 1996, 942).

Thus, the concept of path-dependence implies not only the path that has been chosen, but the presence of alternatives to that route that occasionally arise at the turning points in history. In the case of the Belarusian path-dependence, a legitimate question arises: what shall be considered as such alternative? As to the beginning of the 1990s, it is obvious that the rapprochement with Russia was not in itself depending on the chosen path, but it has become a tool for the Belarusian political elites who were not capable of overcoming institutional practices existing in the Soviet period. The choice of the elites in favor of the preservation of the socio-economic model has become the expression of the Belarusian path-dependence, and the rapprochement with Russia means ensuring that preservation, with alternatives in the form of the same deep economic and political reforms having been less attractive and more costly.

Virtually since the collapse of the Soviet Union Russia made it clear for the Belarusian leadership that it did not insist on deep political and economic transformation in the country. At the same time, the European Union considered democratic and market reforms in Belarus to be an important prerequisite for the provision of financial support to the country (Katsy, 1998, 5-17). Given the inevitable costs that such transformation would entail for the ruling elite, alternative to the preservation of the established model turned out too weak, especially since the EU itself for a long time showed no active interest in the Belarusian transformation.

At the present stage, the paths of development for Belarus that are behind the Eurasian and European integration models remain unchanged. In this paper, the author does not contrast the European model with the Eurasian one, especially given the fact that both Russia and Belarus belong to the pan-European civilization. However, it is obvious that the antagonism exists both at the level of perception and at the level of particular economic and political practices (Khudoley, 2016).

MAIN FOCUS OF THE CHAPTER

The Soviet Legacy and the Weakness of Alternatives

Belarusian path-dependence was laid down during the Soviet period of history of the republic. As is known, the Belarusian Soviet Socialist Republic (BSSR) was among the founders of the Soviet Union, as well as one of the fifteen Soviet republics at the time of the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. The Soviet economy, despite the raw material and energy trade with Europe, was a closed system. Thus, in 1985, the volume of foreign trade did not exceed 4% of the total GNP of the Soviet Union, i.e. it was virtually isolated from global trade and economic processes and technology exchange (Zickel, 1991). The competitiveness of entire industries was extremely low, compared to the foreign counterparts. Each Soviet republic had its own niche in the internal division of labor.

The Belarusian economy was heavily integrated into the system of economic relations of the Soviet Union. During the Second World War Belarus suffered more than any other Soviet republic. And it was

during the post-war economic recovery when Belarus gained its specific features. Since Belarus did not have sufficient natural resources necessary for the development of mining and heavy industry, it became a specialized industry based on raw materials and semi-finished products from other Soviet republics. The republic played the role of “the assembly shop of the Soviet economy”, and finished products, in turn, were supplied back to the place where the raw materials had come from (Meshcheryakov, 2012, 18). As noted by Dmitri Katsy, “more than two-thirds of the Belarusian enterprises were only branches of a disintegrated centralized production system, and it was not suited for self-sustained activity” (Katsy, 1998, 5). Russia played the main role in this system for Belarus. Thus, in 1990, Russia accounted for 41.5% of all Belarusian exports (Zaostrovstsev, 2007, 105). Even Soviet statistics shows that Belarus was stronger than the rest of the republics tied to intra-Union trade between the republics. The products exported from the Byelorussian SSR to other Soviet republics were priced much higher than if they were sold on international markets (Narodnoe hozyajstvo SSSR..., 1991).

In general, the Belarusian segment of the Soviet economy was quite advanced in terms of technology, but in any case, it was not able to withstand open competition outside the USSR. At the same time, the standard of living in the country was maintained at a fairly high level. The same was true of employment and social security. In 1990, Soviet Union ranked number 33 out of 160 countries on the Human Development Index (Human Development Indicators, 1992, 127). On March 17, 1991, at a referendum, 82.7% of Belarusians voted for the preservation of the Soviet Union, which was approximately 10% higher than results from neighboring Russia (Ob itogah referendum..., 1991).

In addition to economic and socio-economic prerequisites of the Belarusian path-dependence, one can also single out the lack of a strong national movement in the country. Belarusian economic and party elites were largely Sovietized and conservative. Kirill Koktysh (2000) believes that the reasons for the conservatism of the Belarusian ruling elite lay in the structure of the economy established in the Soviet period. Yuri Shevtsov (2005) upholds the same economic determinism. Apparently, the demographic factor also played an important part in the configuration of the elites and values of the Belarusian population.

It appears that in BSSR a favorable environment for the occurrence of the phenomenon called by sociologists “homo sovieticus” was formed (Levada, 2005). Despite the fact that after the collapse of the Soviet Union for the majority of former Soviet citizens a belief in communism and Marxism-Leninism died away, the seventy years of the Soviet system left a significant imprint on people. Many former Soviet citizens still sympathize with the previous socio-economic practices. From the very collapse of the Soviet Union, Belarusians have been characterized by a high degree of support of socialism as a way of organizing the economy and the degree of the state intervention in it. This is particularly noteworthy, given that, despite the economic downturn and rising unemployment in the early 1990s, the Belarusian society, unlike Russia, has not faced radical and painful economic reforms. In 1993, when asked the question of “which system is more suitable for Belarus?” 40.9% said “socialism”. “Capitalism” was supported by 31.6% of respondents. In 2014 the supporters of “socialism” still numbered 39.9% (Chelovek sovetskii..., 2014).

The heart of the Belarusian mass beliefs of the proper socio-economic model is the concept of “justice”. Its place in the system of Belarusians’ values is characterized by researchers as central (Lynova, 2002, 616). State authorities are legitimate if they ensure “social justice”. In practice, this is achieved by a relatively uniform distribution of national income between citizens, promotion of employment, various social guarantees, relatively free medicine and education. The majority of the practices implemented by the state were adopted from the Soviet period. For example, the law stipulates that the graduates trained

at the expense of the state budget were obligatory employed at the assigned places (Zakon Respubliki Belarus "O vysshem obrazovanii", 2007).

For the economy, this means several things. Firstly, the public sector is dominant. According to the official statistics, from 1995 to 2017, the share of the population employed in the public sector changed, but remained high - from 59.8 to 40.1% (Belstat, 2019). It is necessary to take into account the fact that in practice the share of the private sector is even lower, since *de facto* as much as 70% of the Belarusian economy is still state-owned (Yarashevich, 2014, 1705). A high share of people employed in the public sector demonstrates an important feature of Belarusian path-dependence. It is easier for political leaders to control political and electoral behavior of people employed in the public sector. Secondly, in the Belarusian economy, there are whole sectors that exist due to government subsidies. For example, as is pointed out by economists, in case the subsidies were denied, 53.5% of the agricultural organizations would become unprofitable (Romanchyuk, 2014). Thirdly, the management of the economy, similar to that during the Soviet period, is ineffective both in purely economic terms and taking into account modern global and regional context. The presence of the plan from the top-down leads to situations where the output of large enterprises is outside the supply and demand. Thus, the problem of overproduction has been constantly present in the President Lukashenka's messages since 2010 (Lukashenka, 2010b; Lukashenka, 2014).

For a long time, Belarus has been number one country on the Human Development Index among the CIS countries. The level of social stratification (GINI Index) (World Bank, 2019) was also quite low. In this regard, Lukashenka is quite sensitive to the expectations of the electorate, which characterizes the Belarusian society, along with the German one, as most "fair" (National survey, 2011b). "Social justice exists in deed and not in name. In Belarus, there are neither beggars nor oligarchs" (Lukashenka, 2010a), the Belarusian leader says. In the 2000s, the socio-economic model of Belarus encountered serious challenges when first the Russian leadership revised its principles of cooperation with the republic, and then when the global economic crisis started. There was a real threat of the occurrence of a critical juncture, after which the existing path-dependence could be changed. And it was a serious reason for Lukashenka to yield to Russian partners on some issues concerning "the Russian-Belarusian rapprochement".

However, Lukashenka was not unique in seeking to focus on the expectations of the electorate. Maintaining a high level of social protection at all costs has been one of the cornerstones of the political philosophy of the elite of Belarus from the beginning of 1990th. Back in September 1993, Prime Minister Vyacheslav Kebich, future competitor of Lukashenka at the presidential election of 1994, made a proposal for reintegration with Russia (Koktysh, 2000). The practice of retaining the socio-economic system through indirect subsidies from Russia had actually been used by the ruling elite of the Republic of Belarus before the A. Lukashenka's rule. Debt relief, preferential supply of energy had been present in the agenda of the Russian-Belarusian relations since the collapse of the USSR.

The social, economic and political practices established in Belarus¹ did not contribute to the broad support of deep transformations in the country from the population in the early 1990s. Considering the paternalistic attitudes of the electorate (even if the political elite were focused on reforms and breaking with the Soviet past), it would be quite a challenge. The Belarusian ruling elite, as it is characterized by the researchers (Koktysh, 2000; Suzdal'tsev, 2009, 67), was conservative, Sovietized and imagined independence of Belarus poorly. To the extent of its capabilities, it adapted to external changes and fluctuations of public sentiment.

The Union State with Russia and the Isolation Policy of the European Union

By the time A. Lukashenka came to power, the state of the Belarusian economy could be described as critical: substantial economic recession, rising unemployment, reduced oil supplies from Russia. In the autumn of 1994, the President offered his reform program, and in December asked the EU to provide financial assistance. By that time, the Belarusian leadership had agreed on a program of cooperation with the International Monetary Fund, and the funds from the European Union were to be complementary to loans from the IMF. However, assistance from the IMF and the EU came disproportionately to the increasing difficulties in the Belarusian economy and finance (Katsy, 1998, 8-10).

As D. Katsy rightly points out, “the first President of Belarus did not start his rule as a dictator” (Katsy, 1998, 16). There was no lobby to back him up, he had no experience in public administration, had no particular program, and was not known abroad. Drawing strength from populism and responding to the demands of the electorate, A. Lukashenka chose “union with Russia” instead of deep market reforms. Reactive stance taken by the European Union (who associated the issue of financial assistance with the pace of reforms) also influenced his choice. As a result, the nationalist part of the Supreme Council (represented by the Belarusian Popular Front Party (BPF) reacted negatively to the rapprochement with the Russia and opposed the policy of the President. In order to overcome the resistance of the parliament, A. Lukashenka resolved the issue by strengthening his own power (Katsy, 1998, 16), which became the result of the 1996 referendum.

The Belarusian ruling elite perceived market reforms in Russia with skepticism. The opposition in the person of the BPF, as well as the Chairman of the Supreme Council S. Shushkevich poorly understood economic issues. There was no demand for reform in society either. In this situation Russia did not insist on conducting in Belarus a hard shock therapy similar to Russian. Almost since the collapse of the USSR, the key issues of visits of representatives of the Belarusian government to Moscow have been loans and energy pricing (Kommersant, 1992).

It is noteworthy that in the 1990s, the EU and Russia, both standing behind possible models for further development of Belarus, competed to a certain extent. On January 6, 1995, the Agreement on the Customs Union between Russia and Belarus was signed, with Kazakhstan joining later. In February, Russia and Belarus signed the Treaty of Friendship, Good-Neighborliness and Cooperation. Simultaneously, the European Union decided to provide Belarus with a loan for macroeconomic stabilization. On March 6, 1995, the EU-Belarus Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) was signed, which was then promptly ratified by the Supreme Council. In May 1995, A. Lukashenka held his first referendum, which resulted in the restoration of the Soviet national symbols and the Russian language acquiring the status of an official one. Belarusians also expressed support for the President’s actions aimed at economic integration with Russia (Respublikanskij referendum, 1995).

Obviously, the Belarusian leadership, within the established path-dependence, attempted to ensure stability of the existing socio-economic model both by maintaining close economic and trade relations and getting aid from Russia, and by the alleged support from the EU. It remains questionable whether the EU had enough foresight after the Belarusian referendums in 1995 and 1996 when it froze the ratification of the PCA. By deploying a policy of isolation against the leadership of the Republic of Belarus, the EU only narrowed its limited ability to influence the situation in this country.

On April 2, 1996, the Treaty on the Community of Russia and Belarus was signed, which was the beginning of the institutionalization of the Russia-Belarus integration. There were established common integration bodies – the Supreme Council, Parliamentary Assembly, and the Executive Committee. Despite

this, the parties were in no hurry to implement most of the provisions of the treaty. Both for the Belarusian and Russian leadership, the integration was an important tool to influence the electorate. Furthermore, as for Belarus, the increase in the mutual trade became evident. Integration with Russia contributed to economic stability in the country. From 1993 to 1997 Belarusian exports to Russia increased 6 times (from \$ 790 million to \$ 4,780 million) (Kovalev, 2001). It is noteworthy that the Russia-Belarus agreements reached in 1995-1996 also provided A. Lukashenka with support from Russia in internal affairs. In particular, in November 1996, it was the agreement between the leaders of the Supreme Council of Belarus and the Russian delegation headed by Prime Minister V. Chernomyrdin that, in fact, saved the Belarusian leader from impeachment (Zaostrovtssev, 2007, 91).

In turn, the EU continued to “stand firm” in respect of the situation in Belarus. In particular, in February 1997, the EU Council warned the Belarusian authorities that in case of reduction of democracy and weakening of the rule of law in the country, they could meet retaliation measures from the EU. The idea was that the EU would oppose the admission of the country into the Council of Europe, would not ratify the PCA, would limit contact at the ministerial level and call upon the international financial institutions to revise relations with Belarus (Katsy, 1998, 15). The Belarusian authorities reacted to the recommendations of the EU by signing in April 1997 the Treaty on Russia-Belarus Union. In December 1998, the Declaration on further Russia-Belarus Union was adopted, and a year later, on December 8, 1999 the Treaty on the Union State was signed (Dogovor ot 8 dekabrya 1999 goda ‘O sozdanii Soyuznogo gosudarstva’, 2000).

The treaty establishing the Union State took it a step further than previous agreements: the citizenship of the Union State, the alleged general budget and defense policy were established. The majority of the provisions of the Treaty on the Union State have not been fully implemented yet. However, for a long time, it has been considered the most advanced form of integration in the post-Soviet space (Nachalo zasedaniya Vysshego Gosudarstvennogo Soveta..., 2013). The existence of the Union State has become a guarantee of political and economic support for the Belarusian leadership from Russia. In the 1990s, the Russian share in the Belarusian export had been steadily growing. In addition, Belarus obtained privileged access to the Russian market, while with regard to the Russian goods it enacted various protective measures. This fact, coupled with the relative cheapness of Belarusian products, made it possible for Belarus to take quite a strong position in the Russian market. The energy cooperation between the two states was also of fundamental importance for the Belarusian economy. Throughout the years, the Russian “gas subsidies” made up 11% of the GNP of Belarus, which was greater than its economic growth. In turn, the share of petroleum products in the total Belarusian export increased from 7.7% in 1998 to 26.2% in 2004 (Zaostrovtssev, 2007, 102-106).

All of this does not mean that Russia have not considered the possibility of supporting other candidates for the presidency of the Republic of Belarus. The potential political influence of Russia on the situation had been large until the formation of the current Belarusian political regime was finished. Thus, even in 2001, on the eve of the presidential elections in Belarus, the Kremlin was considering supporting the opposition candidates. However, in the end the choice was still made in favor of the incumbent President. Accordingly, the claims of the representatives of the EU against Russia, which is considered to be the power that indirectly promotes Belarusian conservatism (European Parliament, 2006), are not without reasoning. However, one must realize that the policy of the European Union towards Belarus has affected the situation to the same degree as the stance of Russia. Inattention to the economic problems in the country and the policy of isolation contributed to the formation of the A. Lukashenka’s regime. In addition, the Member States of the European Union acted as buyers of petroleum products produced

by Belarus from Russian oil (Treshchenkov, 2013, 357). It should be noted that it is the income from their sale was one of the special revenues received by the Belarusian regime. EU's policy only deepened Belarus's dependence on Russia, and more generally, its path-dependence.

Russia-Belarus Relations after 2000

At the turn of 1999-2000, Vladimir Putin came to power in Russia. The process of "strengthening of the vertical power" in the country was gradually transferred to the outside. In his policy towards neighboring countries, the new president took an offensive approach. It was required that partners showed more loyalty in exchange for preferential prices for energy, access to the Russian market, loans and political support. This approach is extremely uncomfortable for the Belarusian leadership, especially due to the conditions existing since the 1990s with the focus on trade and economic rapprochement with Russia with a parallel preservation of socio-economic system of the country.

In August 2000, V. Putin raised the question of continuing the supply of natural gas to Belarus at preferential prices. In response, A. Lukashenka said that "the sovereignty of Belarus was undeniable". In August-September 2001, Russia distanced itself from the support of A. Lukashenka in the presidential election, but soon, in December 2001, the parties adopted the Military Doctrine of the Union State (Meshcheryakov, 2012, 30). In subsequent years, such fluctuations in Russia-Belarus relations would become the usual matter and, simultaneously, a manifestation of the Belarusian leader's attempts to preserve the *status quo*. It should be said that the formation of the Belarusian regime had already been close to completion by that time. For Russia, this meant that in political terms, the possibility of its influence on the situation in the republic reduced significantly, but economic and energy tools still remained. In the future, they would be actively used by Russia in bilateral relations with Belarus.

The Belarusian path-dependence also experienced a transformation. A new institutional element, the political regime of President Lukashenka, was added to the modified Soviet practices that manifested in the "Belarusian socialism" with elements of centrally-controlled economy. The regime that was established due to the adaptation of the Belarusian president to the existing path-dependence was a barrier to the consideration by the ruling elite of any alternatives. Preservation of the existing system became a key task of the government.

Institutionally, there was fusion of Soviet institutions and practices with the new political regime. Economic management and control over the social and political life in the country was in the hands of the President and his team. Huge public sector provided a concentration of economic and labor resources in the hands of the president. It is no coincidence that the privatization programs periodically announced by the Belarusian government are each time extremely limited (Treshchenkov, 2013, 312). In the legal framework, the dominance of the President is ensured by the fact that his decrees have higher priority than the laws of the Parliament (Fadeev, 2011). Political parties, even those who support the incumbent president, are prudently excluded from politics. Thus, in the lower house of the National Assembly (House of Representatives) that consists of 110 members less than 15% are associated with any political party.

In its foreign policy, the Belarusian government continues to attempt to use the "European dimension" in order to improve the bargaining position in matters of cooperation with Russia. A noticeable attempt of Belarus to improve its relations with the EU coincides with the preparation of the European Neighborhood Policy. The ENP was designed to build relations with the new neighbors of the EU (Belarus among them) after its enlargement in 2004. In 2003 the Belarusian Foreign Ministry presented its proposals with regard to the ENP. The focus of these proposals, for obvious reasons, was on trade and

economy (Predlozheniya MID Respubliki Belarus', 2003). This was happening against the background of strong pressure on the Belarusian leadership from Russia who insisted that the shares of Beltransgaz be assigned to the Russian company Gazprom in exchange for maintaining favorable terms of gas supply to the Republic (Meshcheryakov, 2012, 33).

But the EU rejected the idea of abandoning the policy of isolation against Belarus. Despite the fact that it was formally included into the ENP, the format of the interaction of the EU and Belarus remained the same. On the contrary, the stand of the EU with regard to the processes in the country worsened even further after the referendum held in October 2004. According to its results, A. Lukashenka could be elected to the presidency an unlimited number of times (Respublikanskij referendum, 2004). The EU chose the election process, primarily its compliance to the democratic standards, to be the main criterion for assessing the readiness of Belarus to the democratization. This decision was *a priori* a dead end, since the Belarusian leadership excluded the realization of such a scenario.

Russia, in turn, recognized the referendum and all previous and subsequent presidential and parliamentary elections in Belarus. In addition, after the "Orange Revolution" in the neighboring Ukraine, the Russian leadership sought to provide A. Lukashenka with indirect support before every presidential election in Belarus. As a lever of pressure on the Belarusian government in-between elections, Russia continued to apply trade-economic and energy tools. They were quite effective, given the importance of Russian energy supplies for the Belarusian regime, as well as the access of Belarusian goods to the Russian market. At the same time, Russia's attempts to revise the preferential formats established for Belarus in the 1990s, and its claims for control of the Belarusian gas transportation system were rightly perceived by A. Lukashenka as a threat to his own power in the country. Conflicts in Russia-Belarus relations arose regularly², and to a certain extent they represent a way for the Belarusian leadership to find a room for maneuver in asymmetric relations with Russia.

The first signs of a threat to the existence of the Belarusian socio-economic model appeared in the end of 2007. Due to a difficult situation with the budget, the government of Belarus was forced to significantly reduce various benefits for vulnerable groups (students, pensioners, veterans and people with disabilities). The government's decision caused large-scale unprecedented public protests. In October, the opposition held in Minsk "the European march", and conducted "the Social March" in November.

Economic crisis coincided with the improvement in EU-Belarus relations. In January-February 2008, contacts between Belarus and the EU resumed. On March 7, 2008, the European Commission Delegation was established in Minsk. In May 2008, Belarus was included into the Polish-Swedish proposal to build the Eastern dimension of the ENP – the Eastern Partnership (EaP). Important reason for the suspension of the EU's isolation policy was the outbreak of the Russian-Georgian conflict in August 2008. As is known, Belarus did not support its partner within the framework of the Union State. The EU, in turn, intensified the preparation of the EaP, and one of the conditions of participation for Belarus was the refusal to recognize the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia (Treshchenkov, 2013, 313-320).

Improved relations with the EU provided Belarus with the opportunity to resort to borrowing from the International Monetary Fund. When during the period from 1995 to 2008, Belarus received from the IMF only 289 million US dollars; in the period from 2009 to 2010 it received 3.46 billion. The Central bank and the government fulfilled all the conditions envisaged by the program of cooperation with the IMF. For example, wages in the public sector were limited. Naturally, such a policy threatened the existing social contract between the president and his electorate. For this reason, in the end of 2010, Belarus was forced to violate its obligations to the IMF and to hold mass emission of cash. By doing so, the Central bank fulfilled A. Lukashenka's pre-election promises of higher wages (Plaschinsky,

2012). These measures failed to prevent the most large-scale opposition protests in the history of Belarus that happened at the election night. The opposition was severely subdued, with virtually all the opposition presidential candidates being arrested. Western countries reacted negatively to the events in Minsk. Against this background, just two days after the presidential elections, the National Assembly ratified a package of documents on the country's accession to the Eurasian Common Economic Space (Meshcheryakov, 2012, 47).

Since the measures of the Council of Ministers and the Central Bank exacerbated the problems that had been accumulating in the Belarusian economy and finance, the country faced a deep financial crisis. Given the West's reaction to the elections, as well as the violation of obligations to the IMF, there was no point in waiting for the necessary financial assistance from them³. In this situation, A. Lukashenka was counting on Russia to provide a loan of \$ 3 billion dollars (directly from Russia, as well as through the EurAsEC Anti-Crisis Fund). In response, Russia demanded that the Belarusian authorities take measures to improve the economy, in particular to start privatization of state property. Since compliance was delayed, the provision of the loan was postponed, too. The Central bank undertook devaluation of the Belarusian ruble. Real earnings of the population fell sharply. According to opinion polls, in June 2011, 44.5% of Belarusians blamed the President for the currency crisis, and only 3.9% blamed Russia. 59.1% of the respondents believed that the concentration of power in A. Lukashenka's hands brought only harm to the country (National survey, 2011a). The country was on the brink of serious social unrest. Even on December 19, 2010, the main claims of the protesters concerned the political system, and the majority of the population perceived opposition protests warily, or did not know about their content. Six months later, on June 8, 2011, people participated in the first silent protest under the slogan "Revolution through social networks" for socio-economic reasons, which was more dangerous for the Belarusian leadership (Treshchenkov, 2013, 338).

As a result, in the second half of 2011, after lengthy disputes, the Republic of Belarus began preparations for the privatization of several large state-owned enterprises⁴; the Russian Gazprom acquired the remaining 50% of the shares in Beltransgaz for 2.5 billion US dollars⁵. Russia, in turn, provided Belarus with the much-needed credit. In addition, the parties agreed on the construction of a nuclear power plant in Belarus (Meshcheryakov, 2012, 48-51). However, in subsequent years, the potential for conflict in the Russia-Belarus relations continued to appear occasionally.

Attempts to revise the price for gas, as well as the imposition of export duties on Russian oil supplied to Belarus were particularly painful for the Belarusian economy which was in the state of crisis. Therefore, the Belarusian leadership associated any steps within the framework of the Eurasian integration project with the resolution of contentious issues in its relations with Russia. Thus, as early as in June 2010, Belarus adopted the Customs Code of the EurAsEC Customs Union (CU) only after the parties had agreed that they would solve the issues with regard to export duties on oil (Vorobyova, 2010). On December 9, 2010, a special agreement concerning the order of payment of fees for oil and petroleum products was signed (Soglashenie o poryadke uplaty..., 2010). Only after that, and the strong reaction of the West to the presidential elections, Belarus ratified the package of documents on the Common Economic Space (CES).

Likewise, the signing of the Treaty on the formation of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) in the spring of 2014 was caught in the Russian-Belarusian oil dispute. Belarus insisted on the need to abolish export duties, since their existence within the CU and the CES more was nonsense, whereas Russia pointed at the importance of oil revenues for the budget of the country, and insisted on the introduction of a transition period for the elimination of export duties. Only after bilateral consultations between

Russia and Belarus, during which Minsk managed to secure an accelerated phased cancellation of the Russian export duty on the oil supplied to Belarus, it became possible to sign the Treaty on the EAEU. In addition, it was announced that in 2014 Belarus would obtain one more loan from Russia in the amount of \$ 2 billion US dollars in order to replenish foreign exchange reserves of the country (Rosbalt, 2014).

The situation repeated itself in 2017 with the renewed EAEU Customs Code. Its entry into force largely occurred with a delay due to A. Lukashenka's refusal to complete national ratification procedure of the relevant treaty. Ratification was completed in November 2017, only after Russia and Belarus managed to reach an agreement on energy supplies (Regnum, 2017). Participation in the EAEU was a natural result of the Belarusian path-dependence; however the further progress of the entire integration project has become dependent on Russia-Belarus relations.

The Essence of the Eurasian Integration Model and Its Importance for Belarus

Eurasian integration in the form of the CU and CES was viewed by the Russian leadership as a kind of response to the growing appeal of rapprochement with the EU for the post-Soviet states. It was assumed that the focus on trade-economic issues would give a new impetus to the integration process (Putin, 2011). Indeed, the dynamics of the formation of the CU and the CES was impressive. Many experts noted the transition from "ink on paper integration" to the actual working mechanism (Vasileva and Lagutina, 2017).

However, the Eurasian integration model is characterized by numerous contradictions. It reflects both the internal practices of the member states and the prevailing methods of interaction between them. The influence of internal practices is expressed in undivided domination within the EAEU of the political leaders of the member states, the weakness of supranational institutions, including the Court, in the absence of a parliamentary dimension. The political leadership of the founding members of the CU seeks to retain control over the mechanisms of participation of their countries in the integration process. This explains the institutional framework of the EAEU. The Eurasian integration model is characterized by an intergovernmental approach where the interaction takes place at the level of the heads of states and governments, with supranational institutions playing the role of technical agencies (Meshcheryakov and Treshchenkov, 2014, 159-168).

In the structure of the EAEU, each higher body has the authority to consider the decisions of the lower bodies with respect to their revocation. The Supreme Council has such authority in respect of the decisions of the Commission and the Intergovernmental Council, while the Intergovernmental Council has such authority in relation to the Commission, the Council of the Commission – in relation to the Board (Treaty on the Eurasian Economic Union, 2014). The weakness of the Eurasian Economic Commission leads to the fact that in disputes between the member countries, which will inevitably arise due to the deepening of the integration process, there is no impartial arbitrator represented by strong supranational institutions.

From the very emergence of new independent states, there have been a number of certain contradictions: on the one hand, Russia desires to delineate the post-Soviet space as its special area of "vital" interests, and on the other hand, the political elites of the region's countries are reluctant to be someone else's sphere of influence and to impose any restrictions on monopolistic disposal of resources. The leaders of Kazakhstan and Belarus are brought together by the idea that the EAEU is a "union of states on the basis of equality, non-interference in each other's the internal affairs, respect for sovereignty and inviolability of borders" (Nazarbaev, 2011). Both the ruling elite and the opposition in Kazakhstan and Belarus are united in their concerns regarding Russian dominance in integration projects.

Eurasian Integration of Belarus as Path-Dependence

In key documents of the Eurasian integration common tasks set by the member states for themselves are evident, but the prospects for their implementation are vague. Thus, one of the key tasks is the solution to the problem of comprehensive modernization and strengthening of the competitiveness of national economies (Treaty on the Eurasian Economic Union, 2014). Obstacles to its realization are many: starting from the weak interest of the ruling elites in the deep structural reforms shown in the previous decades and ending with vastly different economic systems and approaches to governance.

It is no coincidence that the relatively uniform customs and economic space is characterized by a high degree of fragmentation. There is no single trade policy: independently from each other, the EAEU member states apply restrictive measures to trade with third countries. Such examples include trade wars between Russia and the Ukraine. As is known, neither Belarus nor Kazakhstan supported Russia in this matter. This is understandable, given that in 2018 the Ukraine was the third largest trading partner for Belarus (after Russia and the EU): it had 7.6% of the total turnover (Itogi vneshnei torgovli Respubliki Belarus', 2018). The issue of the existence of different rates of the Common Customs Tariff (CCT) of the CU on the same goods is also relevant. After Russia's accession to the WTO and the revision of the CCT, Belarus and Kazakhstan acquired the right to use the old rates for some commodities (Reshenie Soveta..., 2012). Similarly, a number of exceptions were provided for acceding Armenia. The issues related to the import accounting by the individual CU member states also do not contribute to the unity of the customs space. They have manifested themselves most strikingly in the form of re-export from Belarus of the European products prohibited for import into Russia (RIA Novosti, 2014).

As can be seen, the Eurasian integration is not so much changing the participating countries, as is adapting to the political and economic practices existing in them. Taking this into account, S. Roberts and A. Moshes (2016) call the integration model of the EAEU reproductive. In this sense, the Eurasian project not only complies with the current Belarusian path-dependence, but is also more comfortable for the Belarusian leadership than real rapprochement with the EU. The latter, given the approach of the European Union, necessarily entails a change of the political regime in Belarus, as well as radical social and economic reforms.

For modern Belarus, the Eurasian integration is, above all, the preservation of extensive trade links with Russia. Thus, in June 2010, the threat that the Customs Union could be formed without the participation of Belarus due to its intractability (bilaterally, between Russia and Kazakhstan), influenced the stance of the Belarusian leadership. In 2018, Russia accounted for almost half of the total trade turnover of Belarus, the share of Kazakhstan was only 1.2%, Armenia accounted for 0.1, and Kyrgyzstan for 0.2 (Itogi vneshnei torgovli Respubliki Belarus', 2018). Russia-Belarus trade and economic relations may well be considered the basis of the EAEU. Russia and Belarus account for 88% of all exports within the Union (65 and 23%, respectively). Belarus also ranks first in terms of imports to other EAEU states. It accounts for 39% of all imports within the Union (Eurasian economic integration, 2019, 33).

The Customs Union market is more important for Belarus (51% of country's trade turnover) than for Kazakhstan and, even more so, for Russia. For example, the CU amounts to less than 10% in the foreign trade turnover of Russia (Ob itogah vzaimnoi torgovli, 2012). In the early years of the CU, Belarusian exports to the partner countries grew rapidly. Belarusian exports were more advanced than the raw exports of Russia and Kazakhstan.

Due to the niche occupied by Belarus, the leadership of the country has been able to continue to maintain the existing socio-economic development model in a relatively preserved form. Contrary to the opinion of the Belarusian opposition, Belarus' accession to the CU and CES in no way affected the degree of autonomy of the Belarusian leadership from Moscow with regard to political decision-making.

The question of further participation of Belarus in the Eurasian integration project is no less important for Russia than Belarus' participation in the Union State was earlier.

The fact that the Eurasian integration does not involve demands for democratization of the political system is also a matter of principle. The leaders of all the current member states are unanimous in this matter. The intergovernmental institutional framework of the EAEU contributes to the preservation of controls over the participation of Belarus in the Eurasian integration process in hands of Belarusian leader. He retains strong control over fundamental political processes, as well as economic and social resources of the state.

At the same time, despite the preservation of the positions of Belarusian exports on the Russian market, the terms of trade for Belarus have changed for the worse. Competition from Russian producers is increasing, and the rise in prices for Russian energy resources leads to higher costs for Belarusian producers. The dependence of Belarus on the economic situation in Russia has increased, which is indicated inter alia by the dynamics of exports of key goods from Belarus to Russia. Its sharp drop corresponds to periods of recession in Russia⁶. According to the Belarusian Ministry of Finance, Belarus's debt to Russia in August 2019 amounted to more than \$ 7.5 billion. Since 2012, it has doubled. At the same time, Moscow refused to refinance the current part of the Belarusian debt (RBC, 2019). Besides, the structures of the EAEU (first of all, Eurasian Development Bank) are also increasingly demanding the implementation of a reform package by Belarus (Naviny.by, 2018). All this increases the intensity of the Russia-Belarus conflicts, and checks Belarusian path-dependence for resilience.

SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The participation of Belarus in the Eurasian integration demonstrates a number of features hampering the development of the EAEU. The preservation of economic ties conditioned by the Soviet legacy must be harmonized with the demands of modernity. The future of the EAEU, its efficiency and the ability to integrate into wider integration networks depend on the advancement of the participating countries along the path of real and broad modernization. The political factor has a major impact on such prospects. Belarusian path-dependence will sooner or later be challenged by political regime change. In this case, the strengthening of the European vector in the foreign policy of the Republic of Belarus as well as realization of reforms is almost inevitable. In this situation, the terms of the participation of Belarus in the EAEU are likely to be revised. Especially, if by this time Russia and the countries of the West will fail to achieve conjugacy of the integration projects in Greater Eurasia.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

The key objective of the proposed article was to stimulate discussions on the need for a deeper understanding of the reasons and prospects for Belarus's participation in Eurasian integration. Without any doubt, in the future, the study could be continued with the involvement of a more detailed and systematic analysis of the correlations between the internal institutional dynamics in Belarus and its external context, including Russia-Belarus relations and participation in the EAEU. In addition, it is of great interest to study the impact on Belarusian institutions and internal practices of country's participation in Eurasian

integration, and in particular in the EAEU institutional system. Some of the currently available studies have already come close enough to this issue (Karliuk, 2018, 158-168).

CONCLUSION

Belarusian path-dependence lay in the refusal to conduct deep economic and political reforms. The Soviet heritage in the form of specific structure of economy, conservatism and inactivity in the society served as a pre-condition for it. The main actor in the maintenance of path-dependence in the beginning of 1990s was the ruling elite of Belarus. Since without significant external support deep market reforms and simultaneous economic stabilization were impossible, the stand of the European Union and Russia was also crucial in the issue of choosing a path of development by the Belarusian ruling elite. The Belarusian leadership used the rapprochement with Russia due to objective factors as a tool for the maintenance of many Soviet social and economic practices in a transformed form. Later on, the authoritarian political regime that had gradually developed in the country became one more component of this complex structure.

The European integration, as an alternative to the established path-dependence, turned out to be weak and unattractive, which was also due to the fault of the very European Union. The EU neglected the opportunity to influence the choice of the path of development by Belarus when it was available. On the contrary, its uncompromising stand adopted later did little more than contribute to the consolidation of A. Lukashenka's regime. The European alternative became increasingly illusive.

The Eurasian integration of Belarus should be considered not as the desire of the Belarusian leadership to achieve important qualitative economic transformations, but as an effort to maintain preferential relations with Russia. Such approach, in turn, makes it possible to keep the socioeconomic model and political regime currently existing in Belarus. For the moment, the very nature of the Eurasian integration model allows the Belarusian leadership to avoid manifestation of viable alternatives to the existing path-dependence.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

EAEU Common Customs Tariff: Systematized set of import customs duty rates applicable to goods imported into the customs territory of the Eurasian Economic Union from third countries.

EAEU Common Economic Space: Formally launched in 2012 to provide for four “freedoms” (movement of goods, services, capital and labor) in the EAEU, but is still in a process of implementation.

EAEU Customs Union: One of two pillars of the EAEU, formed in 2007-2010 by Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia within the framework of the former EurAsEC. With an application of the norms of the common Customs Code provides freedom of movement of goods. Includes a unified system of foreign trade and customs regulation, as well as a single legal framework in technical regulation.

Path-Dependence: A key notion of historical institutionalism. Explains how the set of decisions available for selection in the current situation is framed by decisions that were made in the past.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Among such practices are: regulation of the economy through five-year plans; forced labor and restriction of workers' rights (for example, Presidential Decree No 9 of 2012, or the use of students and state employees during harvesting); mandatory employment of graduates; sanctions for social parasitism (Presidential Decree No 3 of 2015); business and organization patronage over collective farms; regulation of prices for socially important goods etc. One of most discussed is a practice of promotion of full employment of the population, which is realized relatively successful when a state has enough resources for redistribution to subsidized and ineffective branches of economy (for example, to the state-owned industrial giants), and is not working in a proper way in times of crisis. In the latest case a state is forced to introduce ambiguous economic policy measures (Presidential Decree No 3 on social parasitism, Presidential Decree No 9 that envisaged sanctions for those who want to retire from employment in woodworking industry, etc.). Such measures violate social contract between President and people and provoke social tensions.
- ² Oil and gas crises in 2006-2007; «Milk wars» of the summer 2009; energy conflict of the winter 2009-2010, etc.
- ³ So, in May 2011 IMF rejected the application of the Republic of Belarus.
- ⁴ It should be noted that such large enterprises as BelAZ predictably have not been privatized.
- ⁵ Another 50 percent were sold to Gazprom in February 2010.
- ⁶ See respective data on exports of tractors, trucks, textile in 2010-2017 on <http://dataportal.belstat.gov.by/AggregatedDb>

Chapter 11

The Eurasian Idea of Nursultan Nazarbayev

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ABSTRACT

The First President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev had always emphasized the mutual influences of the culture and religions of people living in the country. Having absorbed both the European and Asian traditions Kazakhstan illustrates the principles of a diverse country that could build bridges among West and East. It became obvious that the newly independent nation led by Nursultan Nazarbayev was confronted with the need to find new forms of cooperation with the world community after the major geopolitical change. As a result, the Leader of the Nation proposed the long-term initiative, namely, the Eurasian idea that was designed to create an atmosphere of mutual confidence and cooperation. In this regard, this chapter will briefly identify the preconditions for the introduction of the Eurasian initiative with special emphasis placed on the transformation of Kazakhstan's vision of the issue. As a result, the conclusions of this chapter focus on the further prospects for integration between the Eurasian states within the frameworks of Nazarbayev's Eurasian concept.

INTRODUCTION

After independence in 1991, Kazakhstan entered the period of state construction and development, which was accompanied by a soviet-to-nation-state transformation. Kazakhstan focused on the search for identity-building policies that would be most suited for multi-ethnic society. Being a community of different nationalities, Kazakhstan has long accorded particular attention to the measures that improve inter-ethnic and inter-religious harmony. As of July 1, 2019, the population of the country amounted to

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18.5 million people (Statistics Committee of Kazakhstan, 2019a). Nowadays over 32.02% of Kazakhstan's population presented by ethnic minorities, such as ethnic Russians (19.32%), Uzbeks (3.21%), Ukrainians (1.47%), Uyghurs (1.47%), Tatars (1.1%) and others (Statistics Committee of Kazakhstan, 2019b). Therefore, it is not surprising that the First President Nursultan Nazarbayev had always emphasized the mutual influences of the culture and religions of people living in the country.

The vast steppe landscape of Kazakhstan also called the Great Steppe or the Eurasian Steppe gives rise to the very feeling of the Eurasianism. The Kazakh steppe's environmental conditions have a particular role in the establishing the nomadic style of life, which has left a lasting mark on the idea, traditions, customs and behavior (Laumulin & Laumulin, 2009). As a result, the socio-political structures of nomads generated desire to travel across boundaries blurring the lines between nations. Even in the 21st century Kazakhstan feels a connection with its cultural heritage associated with steppes and nomadic way of life. Located in the heart of the Eurasian Steppe, where East meets West, contemporary Kazakhstan is marked by ethno-cultural richness, which explained natural tolerance and openness of the Kazakh population to others. Under these circumstances, Kazakhstan claims that its unique combination of different cultures and traditions allows identifying itself as a Eurasian state. Therefore, there is a strong need to analyze Kazakhstan's approach to the integration among the Eurasian states.

The purpose of the chapter is to briefly define Kazakhstan's vision of Eurasianism and study its further development. Since the concept of Eurasianism has changed and evolved over time, the chapter raises key points in its evolution summarizing the benefits and advantages of Nursultan Nazarbayev's Eurasian idea for peacebuilding and economic development of the region in general and Kazakhstan in particular.

The analysis is based mainly on analytical materials of scholars specialized in the Eurasian studies with special attention given to books and articles authored by Nursultan Nazarbayev as a thought-leader of the Eurasian integration.

This chapter consists of three parts. The first part is devoted to analyzing the specific features of Nazarbayev's Eurasianism. The second part focuses on the evolution of Nursultan Nazarbayev's approaches to the Eurasian Union. In the third part, the author evaluates fundamental grounds of the Eurasian idea for the foreign and domestic policies of Kazakhstan.

BACKGROUND

The concept of Eurasianism came to Kazakhstan with Russian influence in the region and serves as a policy doctrine in implementing geopolitical ambitions, goals, and objectives. The Eurasian paradigm justifies Kazakhstan's ties with China, the West, Asia and the Middle East, counterbalancing Russia (Genté, 2010). This strategy involves a real opening up to the world. By a multi-dimensional foreign policy based on the Eurasianism Kazakhstan identifies itself as bridge lying between Europe and Asia.

For the purpose of review and analysis, the vast body of literature authored by the classical and modern writers of geopolitics and the concepts of Eurasia was studied. The literature on the issue can be conditionally divided into the supporters of the concept of Eurasianism and authors who criticize the concepts of Eurasia. The first group comprises both authors of Russian-origin and non-Russian researchers advocating for strengthening geopolitical ties within the Eurasian space. It is understandable that the founders of Eurasianism the so-called classical Eurasianists, like, Nikolai Trubetzkoy, Piotr Savvyzky, Nikolay Alekseyev, Georgii Florovsky, Andrey Liven, and Georgii Vernadsky, based their ideology on the Russian social-Orthodox school. Born in Europe among the Russian immigrants the Eurasianism

The Eurasian Idea of Nursultan Nazarbayev

movement was designed to oppose both Soviet totalitarianism, as well as liberal individualism of the West (Kofner, 2015).

At the early stages the Eurasianism represented an attempt to create an alternative way of development of Russia-oriented Eurasia in both cultural, political, economic, and religious spheres. Classical Eurasianism was aimed at creating a multiethnic Eurasian nation, as well as establishing a Eurasian Federation. Indeed, the movement has its unique objectives and philosophical roots. Having regained its popularity in 1980s, the Eurasianism concept attract many new supporters. For instance, inspired by the works of classical Eurasianists Lev Gumilev and Alexandr Dugin further elaborated neo-Eurasianism ideas¹.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union the Central Asian and Caucasian authors placed special emphasis on studying the Eurasianism challenging the Russian centric views. From their perspective the Central Asian or Caucasian states could maintain its leadership in defining the new agenda in Eurasia. The very fact that the Russia-oriented concept was classified as disputed demonstrated that there are different approaches to the Eurasianism on the post-Soviet space.

Indeed, from the perspective of Kazakhstan the post-Soviet countries have accumulated extensive experience in the mutual interaction that should not have been wasted. Calling for continued and increased collaboration and cooperation among the neighboring states, Nursultan Nazarbayev tried to keep a pragmatic attitude towards the issue. As a philosophical movement pragmatism claims that the usefulness of any idea is justified by its successfulness. It stresses that practical ideas should constitute the basis of political doctrines, giving priority to a successful experience over geopolitics. From this point of view, it would be unwise to destroy the system of economic ties formed during the Soviet era because of geopolitical transformations. Therefore, it is not surprising that the First President Nursultan Nazarbayev was the main advocate and proponent of attaining the vision contained reintegration in the region within the framework of the Eurasian paradigm.

The Leader of the Nation Nursultan Nazarbayev devoted his whole life to consolidate the post-Soviet space. A considerable number of arguments and roadmaps for implementing the policies of Eurasianism were presented in detail in Nazarbayev's publications. Books, articles, and monographs authored by Nursultan Nazarbayev² constituted an important category of the literature on the issue. Over the years, the First President of Kazakhstan has developed a suitable conceptual and theoretical framework for the process of the Eurasian integration contributing significantly to establishing economic, financial, political, and cultural foundation of the Eurasian Union (EAU). There is no doubt that the Eurasian Union has provided a model for future key initiative such as the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), which inherited the spirit of regional community with the special focus given to the economic backgrounds. In fact, the EAU idea came in reaction to the growing fragmentation of geopolitical space. Indeed, the Eurasian doctrine of Nursultan Nazarbayev is based on a new political direction for the nation, which formed a new type of political thinking. Moreover, presented at the 20th century the idea of Eurasianism in its updated and modernizing form meets the challenges of the 21st century.

Therefore, in order to trace the development of the Kazakhstani position regarding the concept of Eurasian integration there is a strong need to consider carefully the key points of the First President of Kazakhstan. As a result, Nazarbayev's publications occupy a central place in the following research.

A wide range of Kazakh scholars supports the Eurasian initiative as a background in defining country's identity. They strongly oppose the opinion, according to which Nazarbayev's concept of Eurasianism, containing practical step towards the establishment of a Eurasian Union, could be classified as an action plan for political elites, rather than the popular philosophical movement. It is undeniable that the Eurasian idea of Nazarbayev made a huge theoretical and practical contribution to the Eurasianism

doctrine, filling the concept with democratic values, tolerance, and social dynamics (Dugin, 2004). Therefore, Kazakhstani authors, like, Bulat Sultanov, Abdimalik Nyssanbayev, Murat Laumulin, Berik Dzhilkibayev, Almira Naurzbayeva, Sergey Kolchigin, Aliya Kuanysheva, Beket Kazbekov, Kalkaman Zhumagulov and many others generally support the above view. In fact, the study of the issues has become a hot topic in the Kazakh science especially recently. In their works, researchers consider the prospective viability of the Eurasian idea of the First President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev in the light of modern integration trends.

Having put forward the idea of creating the Eurasian Union at the end of the 20th century, Nursultan Nazarbayev assumed that delay with regional integration can cause irreparable harm. Expressing both concern at ensuring national security and the desire to provide spiritual interconnection between generations, integrating the cultures of Russia and Central Asia, Nursultan Nazarbayev initiated the Eurasian platform influenced by Chokan Valikhanov's ideas.

The Kazakh scholars are inclined to think that the very concept of "Eurasia" remained ambiguous. Seen from Brussels, Eurasia comes on the third place after Europe and Asia. However, it would be wrong to consider Eurasia only as a buffer region between West and East. From a different perspective, Eurasia is seen as the synthesis of the Western and the Eastern cultures with a predominance of Asian origins. Nowadays, there is a lack of mutual understanding between the Western and the Eastern nations. Consequently, it is necessary to look at the points of convergence between them excluding divergence.

Scientists of Kazakhstan largely agree that the Eurasian philosophy in its new interpretation is based on mutual understanding necessary for good neighborly interstate relations and integration processes in the Eurasian area. Therefore, the idea of founding the Eurasian Union, owned by the Nursultan Nazarbayev, was developed on the conviction of the ethno-cultural and mental closeness, the actual kinship of the Slavs and Turans. At the same time the idea removes both isolationist and imperial aspirations, implying friendly and harmonious relations between different ethnic groups, cultures, religions and countries.

Critics of the Eurasian idea express doubts and suspicions about the success of the proposed Eurasian Union. However, it can be easily seen that the Eurasian idea of Nursultan Nazarbayev has become the rallying point for the Eurasian peoples in the economic, political and cultural spheres. The activity of a number of international organizations such as the Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC), the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the Common Economic Space, the International Organization of Turkic Culture (TURKSOY) and others has become a real embodiment of the Eurasian integration (Sadykova, 2013).

As stated Nursultan Nazarbayev: "At the beginning of the 21st century, the idea of Eurasian integration takes real features... It has proven its historical prospective viability as a fair way to the prosperity and well-being of our countries and peoples" (Nazarbayev, 2011). In the light of above-mentioned, the Eurasian idea takes a new meaning, forming a new type of mentality, economic and political space.

Main FOCUS OF the CHAPTER

Kazakhstan's vision of Eurasianism launched and being implemented by Nursultan Nazarbayev fundamentally differs from those of Russia and other forms in terms of underlying goals, objectives, methods and mechanisms of implementation. In terms of foreign policy, the Eurasian idea helps to develop and maintain balanced and friendly relations with all regional actors, while from the domestic policy per-

spective, it used to consolidate multi-ethnic and multi-national society of the country. In fact, Eurasian idea was warmly welcomed in Kazakhstan's society, which characterized by multiculturalism.

SPECIFIC FEATURES OF NAZARBAYEV'S EURASIANISM

The idea of Eurasianism became an alternative foreign policy and foreign economic course of Kazakhstan. Nazarbayev focused on the intention to establish modern and more comprehensive concept of Eurasianism, which would be partly based on some ideas of classic Eurasianism. In fact, the key issue of the new idea is that Kazakhstan wants to bring together peace-making ideas and mutual cooperation values. Indeed, the Eurasian space became a launching ground for new models of interstate interaction. Actively advocating for strengthening multilateral relations in the region, the Eurasian initiative of Kazakhstan gave dynamism to the integration processes contributing to the creation of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), and etc. (Nazarbayev, 2014).

Proposing the creation of a Eurasian Union (EAU) in his speech at the Moscow State University in 1994, President Nursultan Nazarbayev pointed that post-Soviet independent states were connected to one another both by administrative ties and by "the very history and destiny". More than two decades ago Nazarbayev emphasized that all necessary elements critical for making major changes to improve interstate relations in the region were already in place (Sultanov, 2014). In another speech delivered on 3 June 1994, Nazarbayev brought the Eurasian Union project in a more concrete and detailed way. Unlike the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Eurasian Union was supposed to have a full-fledged institutional structure and possess a sufficient scope in the key sectors of the economy. (Yilmaz, 2017)

At the very beginning the projects includes not only prospect for economic cooperation, but also addresses the obstacles threatening the political unity. According to the initial vision, the EAU should have comprised supranational political entities such as the Parliament, which made it possible to speak of the attempt to go more deeply into issues of the integration. However, the new political reality emerged in the post-Soviet space required a step-by-step approach. Enjoying their independence, new independent states were not ready to get involved into another form of political confederation. As a result, there was a need to rethink the proposed concept. Nursultan Nazarbayev continued to systematically develop Kazakhstan's vision of Eurasianism searching for the country's real identity and belongingness.

There is no doubt that Kazakhstan was encouraged to follow its own cultural practices. Indeed, Kazakhstan underscores its aspiration for strengthening economic ties with neighboring countries. Therefore, there was a clear understanding from the very beginning that the Eurasian Union established on the economic pragmatism would be the mutual advantage of all. According to Nazarbayev, created on the principles of mutual respect for sovereignty the union should become a bridge between the dynamic developments in the EU, East, South-East and South Asia (Nazarbayev, 2003). It took time to realize that the Eurasian integration should not be perceived as something retrogressive and backward-looking. Since the Eurasian states historically have common political space, integrated power systems and intensive trade relations it was an entirely natural wish of Kazakhstan, at a minimum, to retain a system of good-neighborly ties.

Kazakhstan managed to transform the Eurasianism concept into an official ideology, aimed at building peace and unity on the basis of cultural and historical interactions of peoples of different ethnic and religious backgrounds. History of the Eurasian continent is rich in events that helped to create necessary

preconditions and atmosphere for the launching a strong integration process.(Nyssanbayev & Dunayev, 2010)

It is understandable that some individuals wanted to make a link between Kazakhstan and Europe, at the same time there was a vision that Kazakhstan should be in a close tie with the Asian “Tigers”. Taking into account that Kazakhstani citizens are both deeply committed to the Russian mentality and feel interlinkage with Turks there was no clear answer regarding the preferred way of development. In Nazarbayev’s own words: “In reality, Kazakhstan, as a Eurasian state that has its own history and its own future, would have a completely different path to travel down the road. Our model for development will not resemble other countries; it will include in itself the achievements from different civilizations”. (Nazarbayev, 1997)

As a result, Kazakhstan’s understanding of Eurasianism differs from the Russian approach, according to which Eurasia is a geographical and civilizational area that is distinct from both Asia and Europe. Indeed, ideologically contemporary Russia shares the vision that the Eurasian concept was mostly designed to ensure stronger influence of Moscow. Moreover, it would be deeply misleading to state that Nazarbayev’s Eurasian idea is synonymous with the Eurasian integration projects. As a policy doctrine, Kazakhstan’s Eurasianism places emphasis on the country’s role as a place where Asia meets Europe. (Cornell & Engvall, 2017)

Nazarbayev’s approach is free from stereotypes and prejudices of so-called “Imperial Eurasianism”. The classical Eurasianists of Russian origins believed that the most appropriate way to give greater impetus to the integration process in the Eurasian region is to build an empire. However, it is obvious that all great empires ever created in Eurasia were established at the cost of tremendous sacrifices, destruction and losses. In fact, a large number of modern supporters of integration in Eurasia are talking one way or another about the need for the uniting region under control of dominant power. Implementation of imperial scenario in a modernized form would definitely result in a loss of independence. The desire to implant unity by force or dominance is not a price that Eurasian states are willing to pay for integration.

In fact, Nursultan Nazarbayev’s vision is completely different. In his book “Strategy of Independence” (2003) he points out that the EAU is a union of equal independent states, which make their choice to use potential integration potential of the region. Therefore, the basic requirements placed on the potential EAU members are the mutual recognition of the borders, sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as non-use of force. As a result, the distinctive features of Nazarbayev’s Eurasianism concept can be described as follows:

- Integration of Eurasian countries should be made on the basis of the voluntary decision and shared interests. The strategic focus has been removed from nations and placed on the sovereign states.
- Integration in the Eurasian region should be developed, excluding any political or economic pressure and the use of armed force. Indeed, global peace-keeping initiatives became an integral part of Kazakhstan’s foreign policy. Nursultan Nazarbayev has consistently supported an idea of achieving a world free of nuclear weapons, strengthening confidence-building measures and settling regional conflicts. Kazakhstan has been successful in ensuring peace, security and stability in the region through a wide range of initiatives such as the convocation of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), the Astana process, the contribution to the settlement of the Afghan crisis, etc. (Verkhoturov, 2008)
- Eurasian integration should be beneficial for all participants without exclusion. Advantages of integration should not be concentrated on a few member-countries of the union.

The Eurasian Idea of Nursultan Nazarbayev

- Integration of Eurasian states should not oppose any other states of powers in other parts of the world. EAU member states need to be ensured that they will not be involved into geopolitical confrontation.
- Eurasian integration should not provide grounds for elimination of national traditions, languages and customs by creating new unified culture. There is a necessity to retain and protect values and identify of national culture in Eurasia. Preservation of the diversity of cultures could guarantee further development of the region.(Nazarbayev, 1994)

Nazarbayev's vision of national identity and Eurasian identity are interconnected, however, these two concepts are not equivalent. The national policy is aimed at focusing at the socio-political dimension, while the Eurasian idea includes ensuring interstate cooperation and integration. In order to achieve the Eurasian identity in its modern interpretation, it is necessary to strengthen mutual understanding based on the national idea. In this regard, Eurasianism needs to be perceived not as only the model of the Slavic-Turanian brotherhood, but as a foundation for the worldwide unity of the people. Therefore, the Eurasian doctrine suggested by the First President of Kazakhstan was initially developed in a post-imperial context. (Ayassanova, 2013)

THE EVOLUTION OF NURSULTAN NAZARBAYEV'S APPROACHES TO THE EURASIAN UNION

The Eurasian idea was first presented by Nursultan Nazarbayev in his speech at the Royal Institute of International Affairs "Chatham House" on March 22, 1994. During his speech in London Nazarbayev said: "The development of the post-Soviet area is now defined by two trends: the formation of the national statehood, and the move toward the integration of CIS countries". (Nazarbayev, 1997a) A week later, he delivered a speech at the meeting with the faculty of Moscow State University named after M. V. Lomonosov, after which the Eurasian idea was given a new shape. (Bisenbayev, 1994)

During his report Nazarbayev called to the following: "The Eurasian Union could become a new international association formed on the principles of voluntariness and equality. It must be based on the principles different from CIS's ones, and consist of supranational bodies, designed to solve two key issues: the formation of a common economic space and the implementation of common defense policy". (Tom III. N.A. Nazarbaev i vneshnjaja politika Kazahstana: sbornik dokumentov i materialov v treh tomah, 2010)

The Nazarbayev's Eurasian strategy was officially presented in the draft document "On the Formation of the Eurasian Union" on June 3, 1994. The President of Kazakhstan gives the following definition of a new integrative association: "EAU is an independent union of equal independent states, aimed at the realization of national interests of each member state and the existing set of integration capabilities".(Nazarbayev, 2003b)The EAU project was supposed to lay the legal preconditions for deepening integration by creation the economic, monetary and political union. EAU member states were allowed to participate in other integration associations. It was also proposed to establish the supreme political and advisory bodies of EAU such as the Council of Heads of State and Heads of Government and the EAU Parliament. It is noteworthy that the Eurasian Union does not provide for the common EAU or dual citizenship .In fact, this formula leaves no room for doubt on the fundamental issue of sovereignty.(Evolutsiya evraziiskoi doctryny N. A. Nazarbayeva (Evolution of Eurasian Doctrine of N. A. Nazarbayev),

2015) As a result, fundamental political principles such as equality, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, inviolability of state borders and others form the core of Nazarbayev's integration conception.

Moreover, in order to create a common economic space it was proposed to establish a number of supranational coordinating structures such as an Economic Commission of the EAU, Commission on the Raw Material Resources, Fund for Economic and Technical Cooperation, International Investment Bank, as well as Commission for introducing a common unit of account. In addition to that the EAU project presupposes the establishment of a single defense area in order to coordinate defense activity, including both inking a treaty on joint action to strengthen the national armed forces of the EAU member countries and forming collective peace-keeping forces of EAU.

The First President of Kazakhstan found it necessary to create a number of supranational coordinating structures after an analysis of the European Union's experience. He highlighted the urgent need to establish a new economic order in CIS by harmonization of economic policy and the adoption of joint programs of economic reforms. Nursultan Nazarbayev has directly pointed to the main problem of the CIS - the decisions made are not implemented. Hence there was a clear understanding that the post-Soviet states should develop a new approach towards regional interaction. Therefore, the Eurasian integration was not aimed at isolation from the global world, on the contrary, the EAU project was introduced "to enter the 21st century in a civilized way". The project served as the basis for further actions on the Eurasian integration agenda.

In fact, at the time Kazakhstan's partners were not ready for the Eurasian initiative, but still Moscow review its policies of "going West" and "shedding the burden" of Central Asia. (Kassenova, 2012) Leaders of Central Asian countries also expressed their support for the Eurasian idea with particular attention paid to the fact that Nazarbayev's concept excludes the possibility of reanimation of the former Soviet empire. "Nobody could turn the clock back; there is only option - global integration, primarily in the Eurasian space. This is the only way of protection against the final disintegration and the only guarantee against possible geopolitical disasters and sociopolitical cataclysms". (Nazarbayev, 1997b) Nazarbayev continued to develop this point: "The greatest danger for real integration is to face with the attempts of reintegration by force. The post-Soviet space is not a fire phoenix ready to be reborn from the ashes. Therefore, any options for reintegration by force should be considered as a nostalgia, which leads to real blood for creating a temporary utopia". (Nazarbayev, 2003c)

Despite the fact that first efforts to create an enabling environment for designing integration in the Eurasian space have met with little success, the Eurasian states entered the period of searching for the most suitable models of economic and political cooperation. As a result, there were institutional attempts to strengthen and expand the existing regional integration initiatives. For instance, in 1995 Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan established first Customs Union. In order to overcome difficulties related to reemerging closer economic ties within the region it was decided to create the Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC) in 2000. The Community has a clear mandate to create common customs borders among its member states namely, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan, to elaborate on a common tariffs and price policy and other mechanisms needed for common market. (Qoraboyev, 2010)The EurAsEC member states had highly ambitious goals of creating an efficient Customs Union, which was finally established in 2010 between Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia. From this moment forward the course of events including inking an agreement on the Common Economic Space in 2012 led to the creation of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) in January 2015.

In fact, the Leader of Kazakhstan clearly realized that the implementation of the EAU project in its original form remains problematic. It would be too optimistic to expect that in the near future the integration in the post-Soviet space would result in an organization more effective than CIS. Therefore, Kazakhstan has focused on ensuring the idea of integration based on a multi-tiered and multi-process approach. Indeed, it is obvious that the concept of the multitude of “integration centers” was initially anticipated in the EAU project. As a result, in modern conditions it is more productive to move forward with the creation of integration associations focused on cooperation in specific spheres. Moreover, to be successful, member states of the integration organization should have similar levels of economic development and standards of living.

For instance, there was an attempt to construct the Central Asian Union, which does not contradict the provisions of Nazarbayev’s Eurasian idea. On the contrary, the intention to adopt legal mechanisms for widening socio-economic and political cooperation between Central Asian states comes into harmony with the spirit of the EAU project.

Moreover, the First President of Kazakhstan openly recognized the general tendency towards the formation of strong presidential republics in the post-Soviet space. Nazarbayev concluded that such a high rate of political synchronization confirms the similarity of political transformation strategies among the Eurasian countries. As a supporter of a realistic approach to integration, he did not idealize the situation. Quite the opposite, Nazarbayev warned against becoming pessimistic, encouraging harnessing political will and human resources in an effective way.

In his article in the newspaper “Izvestia” Nursultan Nazarbayev estimated the real picture of the development of integration associations in the post-Soviet space, making some predictions for Kazakhstan. First of all, he confirmed that four basic principles that the Eurasian Union should be based on: 1) economic pragmatism; 2) voluntary participation of the member states; 3) equality, mutual respect for sovereignty and non-interference in the domestic affairs of others; 4) principles of consensus of all participants without giving up national sovereignty. (Nazarbayev, 2011) Since economically the Eurasian Union aims to become a bridge between the dynamic developments in the EU, East, South-East and South Asia, the member states should give priority to the economic component of integration.

As can be seen, the EAU project shifted its focus on strengthening economic activity among the post-Soviet space. In fact, the creation of the Eurasian Economic Union perfectly correlates with the intention of Kazakhstan to form coordinated approaches to market reforms with its Eurasian partners. There is no doubt that the establishment of the EAEU by Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia is a big step on the road to achieving Nazarbayev’s Eurasian idea.

EURASIANISM AS A CORNERSTONE OF KAZAKHSTAN’S FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC POLICIES

It is widely known that Kazakhstan’s Eurasian policy is designed to serve multiple goals and purposes. (Mostafa, 2013) Claiming to be considered as an anchor of stability with successful multi-national and multi-ethnic policy in the region, Kazakhstan balances its relations with global powers. In fact, the Eurasian paradigm enables Nur-Sultan to interact with a wide range of partners in the different parts of the world. Since the Eurasian paradigm does not limit interaction with the European and Asian states, Kazakhstan managed to institute an active foreign policy, becoming a member of authoritative international organizations with different areas of specialization.

As of today, Kazakhstan belongs to a large number of international organizations, hosting major multilateral platforms³. According to the Concept of the Foreign Policy for 2014-2020, one of Kazakhstan's main foreign policy objectives is to ensure national security, defense capacity and sovereignty. (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2014) Finding itself enclosed between Russia, and an emerging China, Kazakhstan constructed its foreign policy on principles of multi vectoral relations. In fact, Nur-Sultan still focused on balancing its relations between the West, Russia and China, adopting partnership without creating any pronounced adversaries in the international arena. (Dirik, 2019) Viewing Russia as key strategical partner, Kazakhstan shares the vision that

Eurasian economic integration is an effective tool for promotion of a sustainable position in the modern world. There is no doubt that the Kazakh authorities will continue to strengthen relations with Mosco what all possible spheres of cooperation, especially, CSTO.

In order to compensate the Russian track, Kazakhstan will deepen the comprehensive strategic partnership with China within the framework of high-level political dialogue. Over the past 27 years, Kazakhstan-China relations have witnessed advance development. As a result, Nur-Sultan is strongly interested in deepening alignment of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the "Nurly Zhol" (Bright Road) economic policy. (ChinaDaily, 2019) Moreover, China shows intention to enhance cooperation with Kazakhstan within the frameworks of the SCO and the CICA, contributing to regional security.

In the light of both worsening the relations between great powers and declining the interest in Central Asia Despite Kazakhstan is eager to provide proactive foreign policy in order to preserve the harmony between the international actors. (Sullivan, 2019) Therefore, the recent activity on the world stage such as joining the World Trade Organization, hosting EXPO 2017, assuming a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council for two-year period could be classified as an attempts to enhanced international credibility.

Aware that the first attempts to make decisive progress towards regional integration confronted significant challenges, Kazakhstan launched systematic work on improving its image of reliable partner. Over the period 1990-2000 the countries of the post-Soviet space on a regular, nearly yearly, basis introduced new integration initiatives expecting to produce integration breakthrough. However, such a situation only served to further discredit the very idea of integration in the Eurasian region, generating disappointments and mutual reproaches. (Nazarbayev, 2002) Therefore, creation of the positive examples demonstrating the benefits of the Eurasian concept has always been a matter of the highest priority for Kazakhstan.

Indeed, in the XXI century the Eurasianism has moved from being a strictly an idea of a geographical and spiritual nature to the concept, which largely determine the principles of a new geopolitical balance. Some postulates of the classic Eurasianism in our time seem unacceptable, others, in turn, are becoming increasingly important. Since independence, Kazakhstan correlates itself with the concept of "Eurasia", which can be considered on the one hand, as a continent, and on the other - as civilization with unique geopolitical, natural, demographic and socio-cultural characteristics. (Egorov, 2014) Therefore, the EAU project became one of the most important components of Kazakhstan's foreign policy, which defined the strategic objectives for the long term planning. As a result, the idea of Eurasian integration could be identified as a cornerstone of the Kazakhstan's international strategy. The newly elected President of Kazakhstan Kasym-Zhomart Tokayev stated that "Nazarbayev quickly perceived the realities of the post-Soviet period as an advantage. By proposing the idea of the Eurasian Union Nazarbayev became widely known as the outstanding statesman". (Tokayev, 2010)

The Eurasian idea has become an indispensable feature of Kazakhstan's internal policy. In fact, Friendship of Nations inherited from the Soviet period was not false slogan and turned into a mental

property of Kazakhstani people. Representatives of Slavic ethnos feel that they are full-fledged citizens of the republic. Therefore, it was necessary to continue formation of the Eurasian cultural type by uniting it with the Kazakh traditional culture. (Manassova & Gabitov, 2015) As a titular ethnic group, the Kazakhs themselves are characterized by openness and tolerance. The scientific evidence is strong and growing that the Kazakhs are flexible enough to adapt the achievements of modern civilization. Consequently, contemporary Kazakhstan's society is characterized by multiculturalism.

However, Nursultan Nazarbayev stated that multiculturalism should never be an end in itself. Humanity values should not overshadow the long-range goal for self-development, which is particularly crucial during the crisis era. It is not surprising that the idea of Eurasianism has found so many followers among Kazakhstani people. Citizens of the republic refused to follow the way of fragmentation of diaspora cultures, which could lead to "provincialization" of mentality. On the contrary, they supported the synthesis of cultures based on a dialogue. It was necessary to prevent the Kazakhs culture from being over influenced by the other ethnic groups. On the other hand, the titular nation should have remained open for cultural innovations.

To sum, by uniting ethnic diasporas within the Eurasian paradigm it would be possible to create the channels for strengthening interstate communication. Nazarbayev's Eurasianism concept complemented both the multi-vector foreign strategy of Kazakhstan, so as domestic multi-ethnic and multi-religious policies.

SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Today the main task for the Eurasian states is to overcome rather difficult stage in the history of region – the period of global rebalancing of power. At the end of the 20th century the world entered into a global civilizational crisis, which according to forecasts will continue until the end the first quarter of the 21st century. The global geopolitical turbulence is a unique phenomenon that should be properly addressed by regional powers. In this regard, it is important to focus on identifying the deep-seated defects of the global political system. (Nazarbayev, 2009) In this regards the following recommendations could be presented:

- to continue conducting analytical studies, which address the issue of Eurasian integration;
- to strengthen economic component of the EAEU activity developing a draft "road map" for initiatives in the political spheres;
- to widen the Eurasian idea platform by combining approaches of the EAEU member states.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Despite considerable support from the scientific community and political leaders the Eurasianism presented by the First President Nursultan Nazarbayev is not yet clearly defined and understood by the public at large. Moreover, some critics argued that Nazarbayev's Eurasian Idea should be developed in more analytical and methodological frameworks. Therefore, it is necessary to continue studying evolution of Kazakhstan's vision of Eurasian integration. Especially after Nazarbayev's decision to step down from the presidency of Kazakhstan.

CONCLUSION

It is obvious that the Eurasian ideology was borrowed by Kazakhstan in order to articulate internal and external issues. A number of researchers contend that the First President of Kazakhstan paved the way for so-called pragmatic Eurasianism, which was less philosophical, but still addressed the integration mechanism in the region. In fact, it is impossible to underestimate the contribution made by Nursultan Nazarbayev to the adaptation of the Eurasian concept to the current configuration of the multipolar world. What is more, the core of Kazakhstan's long-term development strategy was based on the Eurasian paradigm. Putting forward the proposal, which suggested the post-Soviet integration, the Eurasian idea of Nazarbayev transformed into a strategy-based platform both for external and internal politics.

The Eurasianism idea could accumulate positive energy necessary for dialogue and cooperation. Since the Eurasianism paradigm requires unity by its nature, we are witnessing the process of establishing a new form of communication between two supercivilizations. Mental type of Eurasian culture includes openness to any person and nation, which could serve as the foundation for the worldwide brotherhood. In other words, the Eurasian idea, being original and specific in comparison with the ideas of East and West, at the same time does not contradict them, although it goes much further than their sum.

It is obvious that the Eurasian integrative project became the most ambitious attempt to reshape regional economic relations. However, it is only a part of more complex vision of Eurasianism that was placed by the First President of Kazakhstan in order to reassess the role of the region in the global arena.

Located in the middle of the Eurasian continent with the capital Nur-Sultan, located in the heart of Eurasia, Kazakhstan is an example of how inter-ethnic and inter-religious harmony can be achieved. Moreover, since the early days of independence, Kazakhstan declared its intention to follow the course on achieving and maintaining a balanced relationship with major partners. All this created favorable conditions for developing the Eurasian idea that will become increasingly relevant for the region.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Eurasia: A large land area, comprising Europe and Asia. Eurasia is also one of the most important geopolitical concepts.

Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU): An international organization for regional economic integration formed by Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia in 2015.

Eurasian Integration: One of the most important topics for the post-Soviet countries. It includes reestablishing closer political, economic and social relations within the Eurasian region.

Eurasianism: A political movement in Russia, that posits that Russian civilisation does not belong in the European or Asian categories. It was further developed by Nursultan Nazarbayev, who introduced the concept of “pragmatic Eurasianism”.

Eurasian Union (EAU): An organization for regional economic, political and cultural integration proposed by Nursultan Nazarbayev in 1994.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Gumilev's passionarity theory of ethnogenesis helped to depoliticize the Eurasianism concept strengthening ethnology and historiography components, while Dugin's works appealed to geopolitical aspects bringing Russia closer to Asia.
- ² The most important publications of Nursultan Nazarbayev on the issue of Eurasianism are the following: *The Strategy of Transformation of Society and the Revival of the Eurasian Civilization* (2002), *In the Mainstream of the History* (2003), *Strategy of Independence* (2003), *On the Threshold of the XXI Century* (2003), *Eurasian Union: from Idea to History of the Future* (2011), etc.
- ³ Over last decade Kazakhstan hosted a wide range of international events including Astana Process Syria Peace Talks, Third Ministerial Conference of the Istanbul Process on Afghanistan in 2013, the 67rd Session of United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, World Health Organization Conference, etc. Kazakhstan became the chair of the Foreign Ministers' Council of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in 2011, and hosted the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Summit in Astana in 2010.

Chapter 12

The New Model of Cooperation in Eurasia: EAEU and SCO Within the Framework of the “Greater Eurasian Partnership”

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ABSTRACT

The authors analyze the main characteristics of the EAEU – SCO partnership as a model of interstate interaction that can provide an institutional and value platform for the “Greater Eurasian Partnership”. The chapter provides the comparative analysis of the two regional associations, forms, and mechanisms of cooperation, identifies areas of intersection of their activities, and determines the synergetic effect of their interaction. The relevance of the study is determined, first of all, by the need to understand the new regional agenda, as well as to develop new approaches to the development of cooperation within the framework of the “Greater Eurasian Partnership”. As a result of the study, conclusions are made about the prospects for the formation of a new model of cooperation in Greater Eurasia, its value and institutional content, the possibilities of achieving a new balance in the socio-economic development of the countries of the region.

INTRODUCTION

The process of building qualitatively new formats of interaction between the states belonging to the macro-regions of the world can become a major trend in the development of the modern world order. More and more countries are trying to form a system of stable economic relations. At present, regionalization is taking increasingly diverse forms, from classic examples of regional integration, which include the creation of supranational regulatory systems, to more flexible models of cooperation based on ‘open’

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or ‘new’ regionalism (Söderbaum Fredrik, 2013). New mixed partnership models are also created like ‘Greater Europe’ or ‘Greater Eurasia’. The goals and objectives of such partnerships are determined, first of all, by the need to solve urgent regional problems, the common desire of for dialogue and search for approaches to achieving mutually beneficial sustainable development of the entire region.

The idea of ‘Greater Eurasia’ (as a space from the Pacific Ocean to the Atlantic Ocean) was preceded by the idea of ‘Greater Europe’ as a project of integration or convergence of the leading European countries and Russia. After the creation of Eurasian Economic Union the implementation of the idea of ‘Greater Europe’ was associated not only with the interaction of the EU and Russia, but also of the EU and the EAEU – the Lisbon to Vladivostok connectivity (as declared by the President of Russia Vladimir Putin in his speech at the EU-Russia summit in 2005).

The idea of ‘Greater Europe’ started losing its relevance with the advent of the ‘Belt and Road’ Initiative (BRI) proposed by China’s President XI Jinping in 2013, as BRI had all the ingredient required to fundamentally alter the geopolitical situation in Eurasia. The ‘Belt and Road’ Initiative – now aggressively under implementation – would lead to an integrated economic corridor through the entire Eurasian space that will connect China with Russia and European countries. The implementation of the BRI hypothetically can give all the countries of Eurasia involved in the project such advantages as the economic growth; development of transport and logistics networks; prospects for creating a common economic space in Eurasia; etc. Both the Eurasian Economic Union and the European Union are particularly interested in the implementation of the Silk Road Economic Belt, at the same time; China proposed to create a regional free trade area in the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. That means that in future ‘Greater Eurasia’ can represent a common space between Europe, EAEU, SCO and Asia, so the EAEU and SCO have new platform for cooperation and could play the new role of a centre of integration for Asia and Europe with the new form of the interregional cooperation (Söderbaum Fredrik, 2012).

This chapter analyzes the role and place of the Eurasian Economic Union and Shanghai Cooperation Organization the in the development of interstate and interregional cooperation in the Eurasian space, as well as the status and prospects of the main directions of multifaceted cooperation between the two regional organizations. The author analyzes the main characteristics of the EAEU-SCO partnership as a model of interstate interaction that can provide an institutional and value platform for the “Greater Eurasian Partnership”.

The concept of a Great Eurasian Partnership began with the speech of Russian President Vladimir Putin, who announced the Russian government’s desire for a greater Eurasian partnership at the St. Petersburg Economic Forum in June 2016 (President of Russia, June 17, 2016). Since then, Putin has consistently promoted the project in his addresses to the Federal Assembly, in meetings with foreign leaders, and at different international forums. The idea for the Greater Eurasian Partnership emerged at a time when the Kremlin tried to avoid isolation from the West and to develop Eurasian integration on new stage. In general the Greater Eurasian Partnership has two broad economic goals:

1. to connect Russia and the EAEU to China’s Belt and Road Initiative
2. to move beyond China and connect the EAEU with Iran, India, and Southeast Asia.

For the decision of the first aim Vladimir Putin and Xi Jinping first agreed to connect the Eurasian Economic Union and the Belt and Road Initiative in. Putin asserted that the Eurasian Economic Union and the Belt and Road Initiative “are efficiently complementing each other. Harmonization of these projects

can lay the foundation for establishing a Greater Eurasian Partnership – an economic cooperation space that is as free as possible from all barriers.” In May 2018, in Astana, China and the EAEU signed the Trade and Economic Cooperation Agreement, which covers areas including customs cooperation and trade facilitation, non-tariff barriers, and intellectual property rights.

For the second aim, Russia has been able to sign agreements between the Eurasian Economic Union and several countries in Asia, the most important of them is the trade agreements signed with Vietnam and Iran.

Generally this new project of “Greater Eurasian Partnership” strengthens Russia’s self-conception as a great power and extension of Russia’s vision for a multipolar global order, which has been constant since the mid-1990s. In order to realize this project Russia can use institutions and mechanisms of the regional organizations like SCO and EAEU which are leading in the formation of Greater Eurasia.

The chapter provides the comparative analysis of the two regional associations, forms and mechanisms of cooperation, identifies areas of intersection of their activities, and determines the synergetic effect of their interaction. The primary sources in writing of this chapter were international agreements, key documents of the Eurasian Economic Union, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, legal acts and analytical materials of the Eurasian Economic Commission, reports and analytical materials of the Eurasian Development Bank, the Russian Council for International Affairs, the Valdai Club, and so on.

The research literature of Russian and foreign authors used in the chapter can be divided into three blocks: 1) general publications on international integration and regionalism, such authors as Aris S., Söderbaum F., Voskresensky A., Karaganov S., Kostyunina G., Shemyatenkov V., Shishkov Y., Baykov A.; 2) publications on the development of Eurasian integration and the EAEU, such authors as Kuzmina E. Libman, A., Vinokurov, E. Lagutina M. 3) publications on the development of the SCO, such authors as Cohen A., Haas E., Kubicek P., Huasheng Zh., Roy S., Peyrouse S., Boonstra J., Laruelle M., Alimov R., Baranov A., Bykov, A., Borisov D., Bochkareva I., Ivashchenko M., Komissina I., Kurtov A., Khabrieva T., Kamynin V., Koldunova E., Lukin A., Luzyanin S., Nikitina Yu., Serebryakova N., Smirnova M., Ryzhov I., Rogozhina E., Safronova E., Shaymergenov T. and et al.

This chapter consists of three parts. The first part is devoted to the analysis of SCO mechanisms and priorities. The second part assesses the current international agenda of the EAEU in the trajectory of interaction with the SCO. In the third part, the author gives a comparative analysis of the two integration groups’ geography, potential, promising areas of cooperation, key points of development until 2025, as well as a SWOT analysis of the prospects of interaction between the two integration associations within the framework of the “Greater Eurasian Partnership”.

BACKGROUND

The idea of establishing the Eurasian Union was first voiced by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, N.A. Nazarbayev, on March 29, 1994, in his speech addressing the teaching staff and students of Lomonosov Moscow State University. But at that time, countries were not ready for close economic integration. There was only a weak Community of Independent States (CIS) within the framework of all spheres of interaction of the former Soviet republics. Meanwhile, from the mid-90s, several sub-regional organizations were created, and by the end of the 90s, competition in the post-Soviet space sharply increased and even an anti-Russian group of GUAM (Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Moldova) was created. In these conditions, Russia stepped up efforts to create effective integration mechanisms.

The first serious attempt to create an effective organization was the Eurasian Economic Community. The agreement on the establishment of the Eurasian Economic Community was signed on October 10, 2000, in Astana and came into force on May 30, 2001, upon ratification by all member states. EurAsEC's main objective was the development of economic interaction, trade, effective promotion of the Customs Union (CU) and the formation of the Single Economic Space (SES), as well as coordination of actions of the Community's member states in the course of integration into the global economy and international trading system.

The next stage of Eurasian integration was the creation of the Single Economic Space of the CU member states. The plan for SES formation was approved in December 2009. In total, 17 basic agreements introduced since January 1, 2012 were concluded within the framework of the SES.

The EurAsEC demonstrated the possibility for a more effective economic integration, laid the legislative, legal, and functional framework for Eurasian integration, and continued to exist until the EAEU was launched. On October 10, 2014, the Heads of State signed documents to end EurAsEC activity following the establishment of the Eurasian Economic Union.

The most significant event for the development of Eurasian integration took place on May 29, 2014, in Astana (now Nur-Sultan), where the Presidents of Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus signed the Treaty on the Establishment of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) in the course of the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council meeting. Nursultan noted:

By developing the integration, we are proceeding through a free trade zone – the Customs Union. We will have to show the entire world that our decision is correct. We had very little time to come to today's decision. Huge amount of work has been done, complicated issues have been solved. The day of May 29 shall become a commemorative date – a Eurasian Integration Day. (V Astane Prezidenty Belarusi, Kazahstana i Rossii podpisali Dogovor o Evraziiskom ekonomicheskom soyuze)

The main objectives of the Union were set forth as follows:

- to create proper conditions for sustainable economic development of the member states in order to improve the living standards of their population;
- to seek the creation of a common market for goods, services, capital and labour within the Union;
- to ensure comprehensive modernization, cooperation and competitiveness of national economies within the global economy (Article 4 of the EAEU Treaty).

The Treaty on the EAEU provides for the completion of the formation of the Customs Union and the Single Economic Space. Agreed macroeconomic policy shall be implemented within the Union providing for the development and implementation of joint actions by the Member States aimed at achieving macroeconomic stability and their balanced economic development.

In order to deepen economic integration, the Member States of the Eurasian Economic Union also agreed to coordinate monetary and financial policy, establish a common financial market within the Union, and define the objectives and principles for regulating the financial market, as well as the principles of interaction in taxation.

The Union also sought to coordinate transport policy aimed at ensuring gradual formation of a common transport space. Member States agreed on cooperation in industrial policy and on the implementation of

The New Model of Cooperation in Eurasia

a coordinated (agreed) agricultural policy. Thus, the Treaty provides for a wide range of cooperation and integration: from macroeconomic policies to interaction between business communities of member states.

The creation of the EAEU was the result of the search for a format and areas for mutually beneficial cooperation. The existing economic realities characterized by the trends of globalization and regionalization made the EAEU member states take the path of bringing together (“synergizing”) the potentials of national economies for their sustainable development.

At present, the aggregate economic opportunities of the EAEU member states create broad prospects for strengthening their influence on the development of the world economy. The evaluation of potential integration effects was published by the Commission in open materials, in particular: “Eurasian Economic Union: New Reality. New Opportunities” (Valovaya, 2017). Potential effects can be either general (GDP growth of the Member States) or sectoral (growth of non-oil and gas exports, growth of foreign direct investment).

Successful fulfillment of the main objectives of economic development can provide an additional increase in the GDP of the EAEU by USD 210 billion in current prices by 2030. For a number of member states the effect from EAEU membership is estimated at 13% of additional GDP growth by 2030 (Eurasian Economic Integration: Facts and Figures, 2018). The potential of attracting investments from third countries due to market growth and the attractiveness of integration projects may amount USD 90 billion (cumulative to 2030), with an estimated increase in the volume of non-oil EAEU exports by 11.6% or USD 71.3 billion. Due to the creation of conditions for growth of business activity, the volume of mutual trade in intermediate consumption products may increase by 80% (Eurasian Economic Integration: Facts and Figures, 2018).

This integration potential can be achieved both through a system of general economic measures, and with the industry and project approach that allow for the fine-tuning of supranational regulation under the specific conditions of the industry. Further deepening of integration depends on the activity of the EAEU at the international level. Negotiations on the establishment of a Free Trade Zone (FTZ) with Iran, Israel, India, Serbia, Egypt and Singapore are currently under way.

The Union shall have the right to engage in international cooperation with states, international organizations and international integration associations, whether independently or jointly with the member states (Article 7 of the EAEU Treaty). The current direction of development of external relations of the EAEU is relations with the China and Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

This is a fundamental difference between the EAEU and previous integration groups. The CIS, EurAsEC, OCAC (the Organization of Central Asian Cooperation) were built on the principles of old regionalism; the EAEU is built on the principles of new open regionalism and the creation of interregional ties. The SCO in this regard opens up wide opportunities for access to Asia and for construction of Greater Eurasia.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization, instituted in June 2001 by six founding countries (the Republic of Kazakhstan, the People’s Republic of China, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan), has evolved in a short historical period from a consultative mechanism on resolving border issues and strengthening confidence-building measures in the military area (at the stage of the existence of “the Shanghai five group”) to a multispectral international organization with significant military, political and economic potential.

If we consider the history of the organization, we can distinguish the following stages: the first stage – regional (Central Asian) activity in 1996-2004 period. At this stage, security issues were the main activity of the organization. The second stage is the intensification of economic cooperation, more

extensive Eurasian activity (from 2004 to 2013). Currently, the researchers say that the organization is entering a new, third stage in its development – the stage of intensification of the economic direction and expansion of the organization, strengthening of political influence and, possibly, the formation of a new model of cooperation in Greater Eurasia (Luzyanin, 2015).

Originally, the tasks of comprehensive strengthening of stability and security in the wider Eurasian space, the fight against terrorism, separatism, extremism (referring to Chinese vocabulary, the fight against the “three evils”), as well as the fight against drug trafficking and illegal migration were announced as the main tasks of the organization, which have not lost their relevance at the present time. Currently, cyberterrorism, which has appeared as a severe challenge to the entire international community, as well as for individual states and business structures, has been added to these forms of threats.

At the same time, the SCO’s goals are not confined to this critical area of interstate cooperation but include a significant and increasingly significant economic component. The essential document of the SCO – the Charter of June 7, 2002 – blueprints the achievement of the following goals and objectives:

- construction of a new democratic, just and rational international economic order;
- promotion of the effective regional cooperation in trade and economic, scientific and technical, educational, energy, transport, credit and financial and other areas of joint interest;
- promotion of the comprehensive and balanced economic growth and social development in the region through joint action on the basis of equal partnership with a view of steadily improving the standard and living conditions of the peoples of the member states;
- coordination of approaches at the integration of the countries into the world economy (Hartiya, 2002).

In order to implement these tasks, documents defining the regulation of economic processes in the SCO space were signed: a Memorandum among the Governments of the SCO Member States on the Main Goals and Vectors of Regional and Economic Cooperation (Memorandum, 2001), as well as a Program of Multilateral Trade and Economic Cooperation for 20 years (Programma, 2003). These documents propose the establishment of a Free Trade Area in the SCO as a long-term goal, and in the short term activation of the process of creation of favorable conditions in trade and investment.

The strengthening of economic integration trends in the SCO, as well as the negative impact of economic instability and crisis phenomena in the world economy, led the participating countries to develop a strategically important document – the Development Strategy of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization until 2025 (Strategiya, 2015).

The Strategy sets out the need to bring the SCO to a qualitatively new level, defines seven main areas of deepening cooperation: politics, security, trade and economic cooperation, cultural and humanitarian, information dimension, the policy of openness and partnership, international cooperation. In the present case, we are primarily interested in trade and economic cooperation. The long-term objectives of the SCO Strategy until 2025 will be considered in the third part of this Chapter in comparison with the points of growth of the EAEU until 2025. We will mention here the importance of cooperation of the participating countries of SCO in the area of transport and energy.

Transit capability is one of the SCO’s main potentials, and the development of the transport system within the SCO is also one of the main priorities, notably after China advanced the strategy of the “Silk Road Economic Belt” (SREB) in 2013 with the aim to develop regional trade with the countries of

The New Model of Cooperation in Eurasia

Central, South and West Asia and the Caucasus. According to the bottom line of the SCO summit in Dushanbe in September 2014, the priority areas of collaboration are cooperation in transport and energy.

During the summit, the idea of joint construction of an economic corridor along the Silk Road, which is aimed at achieving joint development and cooperation, was advanced. In order to create such an economic corridor, it is necessary to form a universal transport system of the SCO. Within the framework of the Silk Road concept, there is a possibility of geopolitical consolidation of Eurasia, excluding the confrontation of national economies, the idea of a new platform and model of cooperation, which will contribute to the configuration change of the geo-economic map of the Eurasian continent.

During the 2017 Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation it was announced that the Silk Road Fund and the Interbank Association of the SCO agreed on signing a “Memorandum of Understanding on the Basis of Partnership” (Xinhua, 2017).

Moreover, at the 2017 SCO Summit in Astana, Xi Jinping linked the Shanghai Cooperation Organization to the Belt and Road Initiative and in the common declaration the leaders of the SCO countries stated that they “praised the results of the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation held on 14-15 May 2017 in Beijing and spoke in favour of their implementation, including by means of coordinating international, regional and national projects aimed at cooperation in maintaining sustainable development based on the principles of mutual respect, equality and mutual benefit.” (Roy, 2017).

June 8, 2017 the Silk Road Fund and Interbank Consortium of the SCO signed “Memorandum of Understanding on the Basis of Partnership”. Accordingly to the Memorandum the Silk Road Fund and Interbank Consortium will jointly promote diversified investments in the SCO region to build an efficient and mutual beneficial framework for long-term cooperation.

During the second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation (April 26, 2019) President of Russia Vladimir Putin emphasized that Belt and Road initiative rimes with Russia’s idea to establish a Greater Eurasian Partnership, a project designed to ‘integrate integration frameworks’, and therefore to promote a closer alignment of various bilateral and multilateral integration processes that are currently underway in Eurasia. Putin noted at the forum:

“Great Eurasian Partnership and Belt and Road concepts are both rooted in the same principles and values: the natural aspiration of nations to live in peace and harmony, benefit from free access to the latest scientific achievements and innovative development, while preserving their culture and unique spiritual identity. The comprehensive approach that underpins both concepts will help us further enhance economic cooperation within the continent, develop shared transport and energy infrastructure and promote digital technology. In other words, we are united by our strategic, long-term interests.” (Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation).

Thus, a framework of strategic partnership and the beginning of cooperation between the three Eurasian projects – the SCO, the EEU and the SREB – was created.

MAIN FOCUS OF THE CHAPTER

Today the Eurasian Economic Union and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization are the most successful examples of regional integration in Eurasia. The two organizations have an institutional and value basis for the formation of a broad Eurasian partnership. The attempt to match the projects of the Eurasian Economic Union and the “One Belt, One Road” initiative can allow to minimize the rivalry between Russia and China. One of the main problems for the development of regional economic integration is an aggressive

external environment, economic sanctions against Russia and the trade wars of the United States and China. In order to defend their economic interests and create a broad platform for mutually beneficial cooperation, the participating countries EAEU and SCO should develop a new model of interaction.

SHANGHAI COOPERATION ORGANIZATION: MAIN VECTORS OF COOPERATION, SPECIFICS OF REGIONAL INTEGRATION

Today, the SCO is creating a mechanism uniting producers, consumers and transit countries of energy resources within the framework of the Energy Club (starting 2013), which functions as a widely accessible open platform aimed at promoting the development and expansion of the SCO countries' cooperation in the field of energy resources. The SCO member states include several countries leading in the energy resources production, first of all, Russia and Kazakhstan, as well as the largest consumers, in particular, China and India. Based on this, we can say with confidence that energy cooperation within the SCO will be further developed.

Geo-economic and geographical activities at large are of great importance for the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Even before the decision to expand its membership, the SCO had a serious capacity in terms of territory, population, region-wide GDP and other parameters.

On June 8-9, 2017, a historic meeting of The Heads of State Council of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization was held in Astana (the capital of Kazakhstan, now the city of Nur-Sultan), during which the Republic of India and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan received the status of a member state of the organization.

Some analysts, including UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, hope that, by having both countries in a new multilateral setting, there could develop possibilities for informal negotiations to resolve finally the border disputes that have existed since India and Pakistan became independent states in 1947, just as the 'Shanghai Five' group had made possible for Russia and China (Mitra 2017; Stobdan 2017; Bhadrakumar 2016; Pantucci 2015). Others are less optimistic about such prospects. Some observers suggest that Russia welcomed the entry of India and Pakistan into the SCO as a way to diminish the outsized role of China's economic power within the group (Gabuev 2017; PTI 2017).

Thereby, at present eight countries (India, Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan) are Members; four countries (Afghanistan, Belarus, Iran, Mongolia) have Observer status; and countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Cambodia, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Turkey) are Dialogue partners.

In general, the geographical coverage of the SCO extends from Europe to South and South-East Asia. After India and Pakistan joined the SCO, the organization increased its influence and authority in the world and became the largest international organization after the UN in terms of the total population of the member states. India and Pakistan not only expanded the size of the organization and the internal market of the integration association but also provide the access to warm waters of the Indian; which becomes of interest as China pushes with its "Maritime Silk Road". Also, today, Russia and India are in the process of creating an international "North-South" transport corridor linking Russia with the Indian Ocean.

The next full member of the organization could be Iran, which also occupies a strategically important geographical position (Usmonov Farrukh, 2014). Iran has access to world markets, through the Persian Gulf and to the countries of Central Asia through Turkmenistan as well as the Caspian Sea. Iran is also a crucial link in the "North-South" transport corridor. Besides, Syria, Egypt and other states (more

than ten countries in the world) are also interested in establishing cooperation through the SCO, which indicates that the SCO's international prestige is steadily increasing, and the organization can act as an emerging center of power capable of resisting a unipolar world order.

Scholars' views differ substantially on the effectiveness of SCO: some even see it assuming as potent a role as becoming a countervailing force for NATO and thus becoming an anti-West grouping. Yet, some experts noted that a lack of resources may hinder the process. This opinion was dominated in 2000s. Then there was a certain evolution of the views of foreign researchers on the role of the SCO. When the SCO celebrated a first decade (2001-2011), some American sources wrote that the United States and the SCO can and should interact in the field of regional security, and especially in solving the Afghan problem. For example, Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Robert Blake said in meeting with SCO officials in mid-March 2011 that, the US thinks "the SCO is a good platform for discussions on how to improve stability and prosperity" (Boland J., 2011). Now most of the western researches think that the SCO has limited region-building power, but it has "carved out a significant role for itself as a forum for regional cooperation on specific issues" (Aris, 2013).

SCO, which was originally created for joint protection of borders of the states parties, fairly quickly acquired the economic vector of their activities. At the same time, the organization did not become either military and political bloc of anti-Western orientation, anti-NATO as the researchers saw the organization in the first years of its existence, or a classical integration group undergoing stages of development from the Free Trade Zone to the Economic Union.

In general, the integration processes in the region allow the participating countries to address significant security issues and at the same time to develop socio-economic cooperation. Positive it is that within the framework of the SCO, in quite short time, parameters of regional security and measures for economic and development cooperation forged together. Secondly, in the economic area within the framework of the organization the structure of optimal interaction at various levels is formed and tested (for example, the mechanism of meetings of relevant ministers; functioning of special working groups on certain areas of cooperation, including customs cooperation, e-commerce, investment promotion, development of transit potential, fuel and energy complex, modern information and telecommunication technologies; activities of the Business Council and the SCO Interbank Association).

Prerequisites are being created for harmonization of the legal space; attraction of foreign investments; access of goods to the markets of other states; creation of institutions ensuring stable economic activity; facilitation of trade and transport interaction; dissemination of commercial information. (Bykov, 2016). Positive results have been achieved in trade and investment promotion. The parties develop cooperation in such areas as protection of intellectual property rights and information exchange in the field of control over the energy resources movement; financial cooperation; facilitate border crossing procedures.

However, most experts agree that multilateral economic integration is developing extremely slowly, and many decisions taken in this area are not being implemented. Major joint projects exist mainly on paper. As a result, the gap between the economic potential of the SCO and its practical implementation remains, and the discussion of the topic of economic cooperation in the SCO is conducted rather in the mode of a "discussion club".

The organization's work is hampered by the continued declarative nature of economic tasks in its work and the divergence of Chinese and Russian priorities. Thus, China, considering the SCO countries as a promising market and a source of natural resources, initially sought to form a common economic space here, for which it put forward the idea of creating a Free Trade Zone within the framework of the organization.

An essential aspect of economic cooperation within the framework of the SCO is that the mechanism of the organization does not require the participation of all eight member countries in specific projects. SCO is a rather flexible regional organization. Various projects can have the SCO format, even if they are not carried out with general participation. Therefore, on the one hand, many states parties find mutually acceptable solutions to problems on a two- or three-sided basis thanks to their membership in the SCO. On the other hand, due to the different economic conditions and different needs and interests, the SCO member states are not able to conclude the entire package of agreements and start cooperation in all areas, so today the parties are forced to establish cooperation only in crucial areas (Sun' Chzhuanchzhi, 2011).

International legal regulation of economic relations within the SCO is not yet universal for all members, there are no mechanisms for implementation and control over the taken decisions. There is no supranational principle of decision-making within the organization. SCO positions itself as an open and equal organization, but there is a clear dominance of China, and disagreements within the organization itself (Aris, 2011).

At the same time, the SCO is an open organization, so the economic partnership provides for the participation of other countries and associations. And it can be not only observer countries, but also third ones. As a result of the expansion of the SCO, the leading powers of Eurasia have another platform for cooperation and the formation of a center of power capable of resisting the unipolar world order and contributing to the construction of a polycentric world. Great opportunities in this regard open up with the development of cooperation with the Eurasian Economic Union and access to the development of the "Greater Eurasian Space".

THE EXTERNAL CONTOUR OF THE EAEU. POSSIBLE PATHS OF INTERACTION WITH THE SCO

May 29 2019 marked the fifth anniversary of the signing of the Treaty on the Eurasian Economic Union (hereinafter – the Union), and so far significant work has been done to start the functioning of the new regional economic organization, to develop the main areas of cooperation between the EAEU and external partners. The initial membership of the Union was expanded (on January 2, 2015, Armenia became a full member of the EAEU, and on August 12, 2015, Kyrgyzstan), and the "external contour" of the EAEU – the system of relations with external partners, was designated.

Among the main priorities for the further development of the EAEU, in addition to ensuring maximum efficiency of the single market, the formation of the "territory of innovation", stimulating scientific and technological progress and human development, the task of "forming the EAEU as one of the most important centers of development of the modern world, open to mutually beneficial and equal cooperation with external partners and constructing new formats of interaction", which is reflected in the active international practice of the Union, are highlighted.

Following the Agreement of May 29, 2014, the Union is entitled to carry out international activities within its competence aimed at solving the problems of the organization (Dogovor o Evraziyskom ekonomicheskom soyuze, 2014). Within the framework of international activities, the Union is entitled to carry out international cooperation with states, international organizations and international integration associations and conclude international treaties with them on issues within its competence. The procedure for the implementation of the EAEU international cooperation is instituted by the decision of

The New Model of Cooperation in Eurasia

the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council. At the moment, the interest in cooperation with the EAEU has shown not only by the countries of the former Soviet Union but also far abroad.

Over the past period (2014-2019), the Eurasian Economic Commission has developed several underlying mechanisms for the formation of relations with third countries: 1. signing memorandums of cooperation to expand economic interaction, 2. establishment of a Free Trade Zone with third countries, 3. building exclusive partnerships between integration associations. It should be noted that the geography of international relations of the EAEU is already quite comprehensive and covers almost all regions of the world.

The Eurasian Economic Commission signed memorandum of cooperation to expand economic cooperation with the EAEU with such countries as Chile, Peru, Singapore, South Korea, Moldova, Thailand, Mongolia, Jordan, Morocco, etc. These agreements record the will to expand mutually beneficial economic interaction.

The Treaty with the People's Republic of China is the most important in this group of agreements. The agreement was signed on May 17, 2018, within the framework of the Astana Economic Forum (Soglashenie o Torgovo-Ekonomicheskoy Sotrudnichestve..., 2018). Main Purpose of this Agreement is to create a framework for further development of economic relations between the Parties by ensuring cooperation in the areas covered by this Agreement, and to simplify the interaction between the Parties matters covered by this Agreement.

China is the largest trading partner of all the EAEU member states, and the mutual trade turnover volume exceeds \$100 billion per year (Eurasian Economic Integration: Facts and Figures, 2018). For the EAEU countries, this agreement, on the one hand, meets national interests, on the other hand, allows entering a new market, since it is not a Free Trade Zone that would give advantages, first of all, to China, but a special type of agreement that takes into account the interests of all parties.

The key issue in cooperation with China is the development of transport infrastructure and cooperation in the implementation of the Chinese initiative "One Belt – One Road" (the creation of transport and logistics hubs and the development of key transport hubs). For the EAEU countries, it is important to clearly define transport corridors within the framework of the so-called interface of the EAEU with the "Silk Road Economic Belt" (Kuzmina 2017, 229-239). In addition, the interface project should be aimed not only at the creation of infrastructure but also at the development of adjacent territories (Shaymergenov 2015).

The second format of relations is the creation of Free Trade Zones. For the Union, this is the most appropriate format, since the WTO conditions for the EAEU countries are less favorable than for other members of the organization who joined the WTO in an earlier period. The functioning system of the Free Trade Zones network will contribute to more favorable terms of trade of the EAEU countries in foreign markets.

The first positive experience of the Eurasian Economic Union in this direction is the Free Trade Zone with the Republic of Vietnam. The EAEU Treaty on the FTZ with Vietnam was signed on May 29, 2015, and remains the only full-fledged Treaty of this kind (Lapenko 2017, 212-215). Customs rates with Vietnam were zeroed by more than 50% of the commodity nomenclature, then a transition period of 5 to 10 years for further zeroing was established. In a short period, the FTZ contributed to the growth of trade turnover by 35%, with both exports and imports (Eurasian Economic Integration: Facts and Figures, 2018).

On May 17, 2018, in Astana, an interim agreement on the formation of a Free Trade Zone between the EAEU member states and Iran (Interim Agreement, 2018) was signed. The temporary nature of the

agreement is determined by the fact that the Islamic Republic of Iran is under the sanctions regime, and the mechanisms of cooperation with this state must be tested. If a positive result is achieved in three years, the agreement will become permanent. Iran is quite a promising partner for the EAEU countries. Also, in particular, taking into consideration the implementation of the North-South international transport corridor project, Iran could become an essential link in the movement of goods, services and technologies from South-East Asia to Europe and back. Besides, it is important to make maximum use of the mechanism of special economic zones created by Iran, Russia and Kazakhstan in the Caspian Sea.

The FTZ agreements with Singapore and Serbia are in the final stages of EEC negotiations. FTZ agreements with Egypt, Israel and India, are under discussion. It is important to mention that each agreement is separate and unique. The main task is to coordinate the interests of the five participating countries, expand export opportunities, but at the same time protect the most sensitive groups of goods. In general, more than 60 countries have expressed interest in establishing the FTZ with the EAEU and asked the EEC to consider such a possibility. Some countries have already been refused, such as Mongolia and South Korea. However, in General, the creation of the FTZ is the most effective of all the currently existing options for expanding export opportunities and improving the competitiveness of the EAEU countries.

Thus, Eurasian Economic Union has been quietly making inroads across the entire Eurasian landmass, in addition to North Africa and large parts of Asia and numerous other nations are stepping forward to be part of this new trade bloc (Eurasian Economic Union Gaining Massive Regional Traction across Europe, Asia, and North Africa).

The third area of international activity of the EAEU is cooperation with other integration associations. Of course, the cooperation with the European Union, which is a priority partner for each member state of the EAEU, is the most significant for the EAEU. This cooperation is an essential goal of the Eurasian integration and the formation of the EAEU as a competitive Union and the creation of a platform for constructing a new, balanced economic system on the continent in the future. The prospect of development of relations between the EU and the EAEU at the academic level is considered and justified by experts as “integration of integrations.”

However, the practical implementation of this idea is hampered by the political crisis around Ukraine and the sanctions regime. At the same time, despite the problematic relations, some European officials have marked the relevance of this issue, and European business is trying to get the opportunity to negotiate with representatives of the Eurasian Economic Commission.

Interaction between the EAEU and integration groups in Latin America has been actively developing. Cooperation agreements are signed with the Andean Community, MERCOSUR. An agreement with the Pacific Community and other groups is under preparation. Economic ties with the Asia-Pacific region are of particular interest for expanding the external format of interaction. In this regard, serious efforts are being initiated to develop cooperation with the Association of South-East Asia. There also was no exception for the African continent for strengthening dialogue with the regional associations. In particular, the East African Community (EAC) is organizing a dialogue.

The subject of our analysis is the process of interaction between the EAEU and the SCO. The most important prerequisites for the interaction of the two organizations at the present stage are such factors as economic growth in the region; participation in the formation of trade and investment flows in Greater Eurasia; geography and size of economies; economic resources; social orientation of economic policies; strategic cooperation of the parties; the need to reform the system of global governance taking into consideration the interests of countries and emerging markets (Mukhamedzhanova D., 2015). In addition, organizations cannot cooperate simply by definition, having a cross-membership (Safronova, 2015).

The New Model of Cooperation in Eurasia

May 9, 2015, Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin made a “Joint Statement on Cooperation to Integrate the Construction of the SREB and the EAEU” (Sovmestnoe zayavlenie, 2015). The implementation of this project requires an institutional guarantee, the functions of which can be assumed by the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. The level of integration in the EAEU is currently higher than in the SCO since the Shanghai group has not yet instituted even a Free Trade Zone, but the opportunity of real economic integration within the EAEU and the SCO cannot be excluded.

In general, the SCO’s role for the EAEU can be expressed in three aspects – ensuring regional security, the economic area and the area of humanitarian cooperation. Eurasian integration is a purely economic process, but without regional stability, it is impossible to ensure economic growth. The SCO is the institutionally and legally capable of solving the most sophisticated regional problems. The economy should become a unifying platform for cooperation between the two blocs. As for the third aspect, the success of integration is determined not only by economic achievements but also by the presence of a common socio-cultural platform (Safronova, 2015), if not an ideological one. The EAEU has not succeeded in this yet, and the SCO has some positive experience. These aspects will be discussed in more detailed in the next section of the chapter.

These international initiatives of the EEC are essential steps towards the formation of a broader integration format, which is often called the “Eurasian Continental Partnership.” For the first time, the idea of creating the Greater Eurasian Partnership with the participation of the Eurasian Economic Union, the SCO states and ASEAN was proposed by President of the Russian Federation V. Putin at a plenary session of the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum in 2016. Since then, it has generated theoretical and institutional discourse.

Putin also referred to this issue several times at the 14-15 May 2017 Belt and Road Summit in Beijing. After a meeting with Xi, Putin said that “the integration” of the Eurasian Economic Union and the Silk Road “actually implies a common economic space on the continent”, and in his formal speech at the Summit he said that “by adding together the potential of all the integration formats like the EAEU, the ‘One Belt, One Road’, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the ASEAN, we can build the foundation for a larger Eurasian partnership”. At the same summit, Kazakhstan’s president Nursultan Nazarbayev said “the idea of creating a single economic space of Greater Eurasia acquired a new meaning. The SREB can advantageously link the platforms of the SCO, the EAEU and the European Union into a single regional prosperity area” (Silk Road Briefing, 2017).

The idea of merging these organizations or at least expanding trade cooperation between them, has been discussed by both China’s President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin at their 3-4 July 2017 meeting in Moscow. The concept, dubbed the Great Eurasian Partnership could be a global game changer, especially when one considers that it may also include the ASEAN nations – Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.

“GREATER EURASIAN PARTNERSHIP”: THE PATTERN OF COOPERATION FOR THE EURASIAN ECONOMIC UNION AND THE SHANGHAI COOPERATION ORGANIZATION

Under its Greater Eurasian Partnership, Russia has started seeking closer cooperation and partnership with other Asian states, while expanding cooperation with China remains a priority. They include India, Japan, South Korea, ASEAN nations and other Asian organizations. In a recent development, Russia

has even indicated its willingness to give more room to the SCO's economic dimension. For future SCO cooperation, the organization would successfully consolidate and become a pillar not only of a stronger Sino-Russian cooperation in Central Asia, but of Eurasian cooperation at large, also including India. If China and Russia found a way to combine the organization's regional and international elements to suit their interests and remain committed to the organization as a relevant tool in their respective foreign policies, the SCO would likely remain relevant to the other SCO members as well.

But the precise definition of the new terminology of the "Eurasian Continental Partnership" or "Greater Eurasian Partnership" has not yet been developed, while the EAEU and the SCO intend to work on the preparation of the draft "Agreement on the Eurasian Economic Continental Partnership". An attempt to summarize the available theoretical material allows us to deduce the following definition:

"GREAT EURASIAN PARTNERSHIP" IS A NEW FORMAT OF ECONOMIC MEGA-PARTNERSHIP, THE CORE OF WHICH IS THE TERRITORY OF GREATER EURASIA

Greater Eurasia is a space of a modern technological process, industrial cooperation and new production chains; a space associated with a consolidated fuel and energy and common transport infrastructure, providing competitive advantages to the participating countries (simplification of customs procedures, harmonization of technical regulations) and ensuring effective connection to global logistics chains.

At this stage, the formation of the partnership is reflected in the system of created Free Trade Zones and the mechanism of connecting the EAEU with the Silk Road Economic Belt. Finding a consensus and ensuring benefits for all the EAEU member states is a very difficult task, but not striving for its implementation, would certainly to a loss in the new global economic conditions.

The idea of the Agreement on the Eurasian Economic Continental Partnership is unique in its scale and spatio-temporal scope, as it is an attempt to build a system of economic relations in the entire Eurasian vector from East to West. The implementation of the SREB becomes only a part of the project, as the increased competition of integration projects has led to the fact that the Eurasian countries have begun to actively implement their own economic and political interests. An example is the creation of an international transport corridor "North-South", connecting Russia through Azerbaijan with Iran, and in the future with India and South Asia. On the basis of the project, a trilateral strategic partnership between Russia, Iran and Azerbaijan was formed. Therefore, it is important to develop common rules of the game. The real practical results of the new partnership will not be felt until 2025, but now it is possible to find overlapping trajectories of development of the two groups and the basis for the formation of a new pattern of cooperation.

We will determine the geographical coordinates of cooperation (membership, partnership, the special format of relations) in Table 1.

A capsule review of the membership and various formats of the partnership between the EAEU and the SCO allows us to say that the two integration groups have cross-membership and partnership relations in a number of key Eurasian countries with the prospect of entering Europe, South-East Asia, the Middle East and North Africa, and even Latin America. In general, the geographical coverage of the two organizations guarantees the formation of a stable Eurasian Economic Space (it has already included key regional economies – Russia, Kazakhstan, China, India, Iran).

The New Model of Cooperation in Eurasia

Table 1.

The countries	Eurasian Economic Union	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
Azerbaijan	No	Yes
Armenia	Yes	Yes
Afghanistan	No	Yes
Bangladesh	Memorandum of Understanding	No
Belarus	Yes	Yes
Vietnam	FTZ	No
Greece	Joint Declaration on Cooperation	No
Egypt	Negotiations on FTZ	No
Israel	Negotiations on FTZ	No
India	Negotiations on FTZ	Yes
Iran	Interim Agreement on an FTZ	Yes
Jordan	Memorandum of Cooperation	No
Cambodia	Memorandum of Understanding	Yes
Kazakhstan	Yes	Yes
China	Agreement on Trade and Economic Cooperation	Yes
Cuba	Memorandum of Understanding	No
Kyrgyzstan	Yes	Yes
Moldova	Yes	No
Morocco	Memorandum of Cooperation	No
Mongolia	Memorandum of Cooperation	Yes
Nepal	No	Yes
Pakistan	No	Yes
Peru	Memorandum of Understanding	No
Russia	Yes	Yes
Serbia	Negotiations on FTZ	No
Singapore	Negotiations on FTZ	No
Tajikistan	No	Yes
Uzbekistan	No	Yes
Faroe Islands	Memorandum of Understanding	No
Chile	Memorandum of Understanding	No
Sri Lanka	No	Yes
Ecuador	Memorandum of Understanding	No
South Korea	Memorandum of Cooperation	No

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Comparative analysis of the development prospects of the EAEU and the SCO up to 2025 (based on the SCO Development Strategy up to 2025 and the SCO Action Plan up to 2030, on the basis of the EAEU Treaty and the EAEU Strategy up to 2030) allows to identify control points or as they are called

in the analytical literature “growth points”, as well as to identify both general and specific goals for the long-term development of the two associations.

Among the common goals, the most important are: strengthening mutual trust and good-neighbourliness between the member states; deepening trade, economic and investment cooperation, as well as joint project activities in the priority areas of cooperation for the sustainable development of the member states, improving the welfare and living standards of their population; increasing international prestige.

Guaranteeing regional security, countering the challenges and threats to the security of the participating states, expanding cultural and humanitarian ties, including science and technology, health, environmental protection, education, and developing contacts between people are also important for the SCO. Until 2025, the SCO plans to create an indivisible space of security; a space of peace, stable development, economic growth and progress, mutual trust, good-neighbourliness, friendship and prosperity; improvement of the SCO as a multi-profile regional organization with supranational governance institutions.

- Until 2025, Eurasian Economic Union determines the following key points of growth:
- formation of the common economic space with free movement of goods, services, labour and capital;
- formation of the common electric power market, oil and oil products market, the gas market of the EAEU;
- formation of the common financial market of the EAEU;
- creation of a the digital space,
- creation of the common transport and logistics area.

Thereby, the goals and prospects for the development of the EAEU and the SCO create prerequisites for the formation of a new pattern of interaction within the “Greater Eurasian Space”. In the Table 2, we will conduct a SWOT analysis to identify opportunities and constraints in the development of this process.

Based on the above analysis, we can conclude that to date, there are prerequisites for the transition of interaction between the EAEU and the SCO to a qualitatively new level, characterized by increased efficiency and the extent of influence both at the global and regional levels. The main priority of cooperation is trade and economic cooperation with the prospect of creating a continental space for the free movement of goods, services, labour and capital, with a common energy system and the Eurasian international transport corridor.

The main challenges of this process are the profound transformation of the world economic system, the intensification of competition between the centers of world economic development, up to the beginning of world trade wars. SCO’s security efforts are an important complement to trade and economic cooperation and contribute to the formation of a stable regional system. Ensuring regional security is a necessary condition for stable development and sustainable growth in the Greater Eurasia. Within the framework of the XII Astana Economic Forum, held in Nur-Sultan on May 16 of this year, the First President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev proposed to create a common security territory on the Eurasian continent. Nazarbayev also stated the need to initiate an investment dialogue between the EAEU, the European Union and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

A distinctive feature of cooperation in the SCO is mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, mutual consultations, respect for cultural diversity and the wish for joint development. These principles, called the “Shanghai Spirit”, can and should become the basis for cooperation with the EAEU member states.

The New Model of Cooperation in Eurasia

Table 2.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The normative-legal framework of the EAEU, SCO. ● Availability of long-term strategies of the EAEU and SCO. ● Mechanisms of multilateral cooperation. ● Formation of regional and trans-regional transport and transit corridors. ● Modernization of infrastructure and logistics. ● Mutually beneficial and diverse cooperation in the energy field. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The lack of a common long-term development strategy. ● The lack of Agreement on the Eurasian Economic Continental Partnership. ● Maintaining differentiation in the development of the member states. ● Preservation of different approaches to the integration processes development. ● Competition of transport projects of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the ITC “North-South”.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The opportunity to participate in the formation of a polycentric democratic system of international relations. ● The opportunity to participate in the formation of a more equitable international financial order. ● Achieving macroeconomic stability. ● The opportunity of building a comprehensive, integrated, inclusive, transparent architecture of indivisible and reliable security and sustainable growth in the region. ● The prospect of creating a common transport space and the development of Eurasian transport corridors. ● Elimination of existing barriers to the free circulation of goods and labour, services and capital. ● Creation of a common digital space. ● The establishment of joint industrial ventures. ● Implementation of joint high-tech projects for the production and processing of agricultural products. ● Adaptation of innovative technologies. ● The opportunity to implement joint research programs and projects of mutual interest. ● Cooperation in health care and tourism. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Transformation of the world economy. ● The crisis of the WTO system. ● Intensification of economic competition in the world market. ● Increasing global challenges and threats, as well as uncertainties and unpredictability. ● The intertwining of security threats. ● Strengthening the struggle in the information space. ● Cyber threats.

(Authors: Lapenko Marina, Kurilev Konstantin)

In the final analysis, thanks to the formation of a new pattern of interaction between the EAEU and the SCO, it is possible to create a new “center of power” on the territory of the Greater Eurasia. This is one of the most favorable scenarios for the development of the EAEU, but it is possible to expand its geographical scope to the “Greater Eurasian Partnership.” The implementation of this scenario will allow the participating states to ensure macroeconomic stability; increase their share in the world economy; achieve innovative development and modernization of the economy; implement the digitalization of the economy; to ensure the availability of financial resources and the formation of a common financial market; to ensure the maximum infrastructure development, including the implementation of transit potential; to achieve the development of human resources potential.

SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to form a new model of cooperation in the region of Greater Eurasia, it is necessary:

- to define the “road map” of the “Great Eurasian Partnership”;

- to agree on countries' positions, approaches and views on the future development of integration in Eurasia;
- to formulate long-term development strategy of cooperation between EAEU and SCO;
- to create the Agreement and the Action Plan on the Eurasian Economic Continental Partnership;
- to achieve convergence and reduce differentiation in the development of the member states;
- to coordinate the transport projects of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the ITC "North-South";
- to accelerate the processes of digitalization, industrial cooperation and the implementation of a common financial policy;
- increase humanitarian cooperation and develop human potential.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

The study needs to be continued, because it will be possible to sum up the interim results of the success or failure of the creation of the Great Eurasian Partnership by 2025, when the organizations will pass the development control points. It is necessary to analyze:

- Developing integration in the framework of Greater Eurasian Partnership (EAEU and SCO): key points up to 2025;
- Development of the EAEU/SCO Single Market for Goods up to 2025;
- Transport and Infrastructure up to 2025;
- Energy market up to 2025;
- Implementation of Digital Agenda up to 2025.

CONCLUSION

The trends in the development of integration processes in the Eurasian space indicate that the Eurasian Economic Union and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization are the most successful integration associations in the region. At the same time, both organizations have outgrown the regional level and are capable of becoming a new integration core of broader macro-regional cooperation or, as it is often called, the "Greater Eurasian Partnership".

The modern world is going through a stage of deep transformation, the defining trends of which are the intensification of global competition, the crisis of the WTO (and IFIs') mechanisms, the shift in business activity and world trade to the East. Global challenges and threats are growing in the world, as well as factors of uncertainty and unpredictability. In this regard, the new format of interaction between the EAEU and the SCO can become the basis not only of regional stability and economic development, but also contribute to the formation of its own "center of power" - Greater Eurasia as part of a polycentric world pattern.

Among the member countries of the Eurasian partnership, on the one hand, there are rivalry and different ideas about the prospects for the integration agenda, on the other hand – shaped mainly by hostile external environment – there is also a growing desire for peace, development, equal and mutually beneficial cooperation, the formation of a community of universal peace and prosperity, on the other. To achieve this goal, we need a long-term interaction strategy that would lead to a synergistic effect in

The New Model of Cooperation in Eurasia

all areas. The main joint tasks that stand in the framework of the partnership are the implementation of the digital agenda, a coordinated industrial and agro-industrial policy, the formation of a common Trans-Eurasian transport corridor, a coordinated financial policy, and close humanitarian and cultural cooperation aimed at developing human capital.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Digital Platform of the EAEU: A digital platform that implements access of interested parties to digital assets of the EAEU, state and certified private digital services within the digital space of the EAEU, which ensures operation of industry digital platforms, integration with digital platforms of other countries and integration entities, built on the basis of a unified architecture (model) of the EAEU.

Digital Space of the EAEU: A combination of social mechanisms, business relations and common markets utilizing digital technologies and digital infrastructure that form and operate digital assets.

Eurasian Economic Commission (EAEC): The permanent regulatory body of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), which aimed to ensure the functioning and development of the EAEU, and developing proposals for the further development of integration.

Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU): An international organization for regional economic integration that has international legal personality and is established by the Treaty on the Eurasian Economic Union.

Free-Trade Zone (FTZ): A form of international economic integration, according to which trade restrictions between member countries of the integration association are abolished and customs duties and quotas are reduced or canceled. In this case, each of the members maintains its own trade regime in relation to third countries.

Greater Eurasian Partnership: The current Eurasian strategy of Russia, aimed at the formation of a complex, multi-level system of multilateral cooperation with the participation of the EAEU, ASEAN, APEC and SCO countries.

Silk Road Economic Belt: (the “Belt”): Component of the Belt and Road Initiative, announced by Xi Jinping in 2013, represents an ambitious Chinese vision to promote infrastructural development and connectivity, and stimulate economic integration across the Eurasian continent.

Section 4

“External Contour” of Eurasian Integration

Chapter 13

Connecting Eurasia: Is Cooperation Between Russia, China, and the EU in Central Asia Possible?

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ABSTRACT

As China further embarks on implementing its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and remains firmly set on pursuing the ambitious goal of connecting China overland with Europe, the European Union (EU) and Russia - as indispensable stakeholders for this continental connection to successfully materialize – have been developing policy responses to China’s initiative that reveal an unexpected willingness to cooperate. In scrutinizing the likelihood of cooperation on connectivity between the EU, China, and Russia in Central Asia, this chapter identifies the common interests between the three sides, and highlights to what extent cooperation between them is possible in Central Asia. In doing so, the chapter points to the main opportunities while outlining the main bottlenecks, which mostly stem from the underlying geopolitical rivalry between these three actors, as well as their diverging beliefs and approaches to connectivity and development.

INTRODUCTION

Given the ongoing tensions between the European Union (EU) and Russia, only few experts (Amighini, 2017; Biscop, 2018; Krapohl & Vasileva-Dienes, 2019) will give serious thought to the prospect of trilateral cooperation on connectivity between the EU, China and Russia in Central Asia. However, as China further embarks on implementing its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and remains firmly set on pursuing the ambitious goal of connecting China overland with Europe, the EU and Russia - as indispensable stakeholders for this continental connection to successfully materialize - have been developing

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policy responses to China's initiative that reveal an unexpected willingness to cooperate. Although the idea of trilateral cooperation may be too far-fetched for the time being, there is scope for cooperation between the three sides, be it more in the form of bilateral cooperation than trilateral cooperation. The EU even recognizes this formally. In the EU's new strategy for Central Asia, which was released in May 2019, connectivity is identified as one of the areas where possible synergies with other external partners should be established (European Commission and HRVP, 2019). However, it remains to be seen how such synergies will be achieved in concrete terms, especially with Russia.

One thing is clear, China, Russia and the EU have a common interest in advancing connectivity along the transport corridor between China and Europe that passes through Russia, and which is part of the Silk Road Economic Belt of the BRI. This land corridor is known as the New Eurasian Land Bridge, and passes through Central Asia, namely through Kazakhstan.

Substantial investments have already been made by China to make this land bridge a reality. Part of the first leg is already completed, namely the rail line that connects China with Kazakhstan through the border crossing at Khorgos. China, the EU and Russia are increasingly aware that they need each other's support and involvement if this Eurasian transport corridor is to be successfully completed.

There is one more land corridor between China and Europe under the Silk Road Economic Belt that passes through Central Asia, the China-Central Asia corridor. This one, however, bypasses Russia. Also in the construction of this corridor China has already been heavily investing.

The purpose of the chapter is two-fold. The primary goal of the chapter is to scrutinize the likelihood of cooperation on connectivity between the EU, China and Russia in Central Asia, a question that so far remains largely unexplored in the academic literature. Based on data from official documents of the main actors concerned and insights from existing studies, the chapter identifies the common interests between the three sides, and highlights to what extent bilateral cooperation between them is possible in Central Asia. In doing so, the chapter explores the main opportunities while outlining the main bottlenecks, which mostly stem from the underlying geopolitical rivalry between these three actors, as well as their diverging beliefs and approaches to connectivity and development. In addition, by assessing the potential of cooperation on connectivity between the EU, China and Russia at the bilateral level, the chapter seeks to reveal the emerging trilateral dynamics between these three major actors, whilst fostering the logic of a multi-dimensional cost-benefit perspective.

Background

So far, hardly any attention has been paid in the academic literature to the question of possible cooperation on connectivity between the EU, China and Russia in Central Asia. While this is in part due to the continuing stalemate in the bilateral relations between the EU and Russia, this could also be explained by the lack of engagement between Western, Russian and Chinese scholarship, which each tend to operate in a vacuum.

Western scholarship is still very much influenced by the idea of Russia's intention to recreate a single political space in Eurasia based on Russian neo-imperial self-perception (Wallander, 2007; Aslund, 2008, 2012; Herpen, 2014). This is widely reflected in research of different aspects of a common – imperial – legacy of the post-Soviet space (Smith, 2016; Kappeler, 2014) or, in constructivist terms, by introducing the concept of geopolitical identity (Savarine, 2016). In turn, a considerable amount of Russian and - especially - Chinese scholarship remains closely aligned to the official positions of the Russian and Chinese authorities and therefore struggles to highlight fallacies and limitations of the Russian and

Chinese initiatives in Eurasia (e.g. Karaganov, 2017; Li and Wang, 2015; Huang, 2016). Under such conditions, it proves difficult for scholars to constructively envisage potential collaboration between the EU, China and Russia in Eurasia.

Securitization of the issue of political interactions provides scholars with a new dimension. The edited volume by Frappi & Pashayeva (2018) is one of the few academic attempts at unraveling the main driving forces and rationales for multilateral cooperation within the ‘Eurasian landmass’. The contributions in the book start from the idea that the classical concepts of normative power, regionalism, national identity need to be conceptualized more accurately in order to trace the emergence of a new world order with the autonomous role of regional contexts. Such an approach, further elaborated in recent scholarship (Diesen, 2017; Dutkiewicz & Sakwa, 2018), widens the scope of the analysis and thus, alongside the study of China’s emergence as a new actor in the field of integration modeling in Eurasia (Amighini, 2018; Calder, 2019), pivots the questioning to a more fundamental and global perspective.

MAIN FOCUS OF THE CHAPTER

Issues, Controversies, Problems

The section is structured as follows. It starts by assessing the scope for cooperation between the EU and Russia, followed by an assessment of possible synergies between Russia and China, and ends with an evaluation of potential cooperation between the EU and China.

Euro-Russian Cooperation in Central Asia: Science Fiction?

As diplomatic relations between the EU and Russia remain at an all-time low, the idea of possible cooperation on connectivity between the two parties in Central Asia may seem more appropriate for a science fiction novel rather than for actual diplomatic discussions. Nevertheless, there is scope for cooperation. Both the EU and Russia were left with no choice but to respond to China’s ambitious BRI. The EU and Russia share an interest in finding synergies with the BRI as a way to balance China’s fast-growing clout in Eurasia. This is now very tentatively pushing both actors towards each other when it comes to Central Asia and is opening up possibilities for cooperation on connectivity. Although formally the EU is reluctant for the time being to enter into closer cooperation with Russia, informally the EU maintains a dialogue with Russia over Central Asia (authors’ interviews with EU officials, Brussels, 29 August 2019).

Russia from its side remains very keen on establishing formal engagement between the EU and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU). In Russian official discourse, the idea of cooperation between the two institutions has a historical connotation, linking the vision of continental cooperation to De Gaulle’s “Europe from Atlantics to Urals” and Gorbachev’s “Common European House”. Putin’s proposal of “a harmonious economic community stretching from Lisbon to Vladivostok” (Putin, 2010) can be regarded as a follow-up of those two initiatives, although it is less security-focused and driven more by the principle of economic complementarity and infrastructural connectedness.

Despite the current crisis in political relations between Russia and the EU, Russian foreign policy is conceptualizing as a strategic goal the creation of common economic space “from the Atlantic to Pacific Ocean” by means of “harmonization and aligning interests of European and Eurasian integration processes”(Russian Federation, 2016). Russia tends to underline the similarity of the two institutions,

which it believes predetermines the possibilities of cooperation between them. At the official level, this emphasis is reinforced by constant references to the activities of the Eurasian Economic Commission and its key role in solving trade issues, and therefore the need to establish a dialogue between the two commissions on the supranational level. The EAEU itself and its officials are quite keen on promoting high-level dialogue between the two institutions (Valovaya, 2018), strengthened by the fact that the EU is the second (after the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) main trading partner of the Union.

The need to facilitate trade and economic cooperation with the EU is strongly supported by other members of the EAEU. While Belarus has advocated the notion of “integration of integrations” (Lukashenko, 2011), Kazakhstan is promoting framework initiatives that would mediate the current political crisis and contribute to the growing cooperation between EU and EAEU, and Armenia tends to stress its new role as a pilot project for connecting two integrations after signing the Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA) with the EU in 2017 (Bolgova, 2018; Lagutina, 2018). By concluding an Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with the EU, Kyrgyzstan is following in Kazakhstan’s footsteps in combining EAEU membership with a new partnership agreement with the EU (European Commission, 2019).

In addition, EU-associated countries have signaled a strong desire to push forward an alignment between both unions, including Moldova, which holds an observer status to the EAEU (Eurasian Commission, 2018) and Serbia, which is negotiating a free trade agreement (Nikishina, 2019). Russia sees these shifts as reflecting some changes in approaches to the “conflict of integrations” (Vinokurov et al., 2015) in the post-Soviet space. From this perspective, the shifting attitude may open up the possibility of interaction with countries from “competing” blocks and in particular creates opportunities for cautious interaction between the two organizations in the context of depoliticizing key areas of engagement.

However, for the time being, the EU is not willing to formally align itself with the EAEU. This is not only because of the conflict in Ukraine, but also because the EU has several concerns about the incomplete nature of the EAEU as a customs and economic union (Bossuyt, 2017; Van Elsuwege, 2017). In the meantime, interaction remains limited to ad-hoc dialogue between the European Commission and the Eurasian Economic Commission, mostly in the form of exchange of information on technical issues.

At the same time, there is a gradual move towards a two-track diplomacy, which is aimed at creating a dense working network that can be used in case the political situation improves. Studies are being conducted that seek to identify areas for eventual cooperation that can be of common interest to both sides. One of the focal issues is the potential for infrastructure connectivity at the continental level, including the pairing of transit infrastructure with Pan-European corridors No. 2 and No. 9, as well as with Eurasian corridors ‘East-West’ and ‘North-South’ (Preiguerman, 2018).

Considering the regulatory potential of the EAEU, the EAEU may to some extent be considered as helpful for the EU when dealing with the Central Asian states in order to enhance the region’s connectivity. It may even become a natural mediator. As the EAEU has been designed based on and is amalgamating the EU’s technical and normative structure, it may become an intermediary driver for the promotion of European regulatory standards and norms and a balancing instrument for the growing Chinese presence.

Russia’s hopes for EU-EAEU cooperation now feed into its latest conception of the Greater Eurasian Partnership (cf. next section). Amid lingering political tensions with the EU, Russian foreign policy remains loyal to the idea of continental cooperation while accentuating its inclusive character that would not necessarily imply any formal membership. Such an approach is based on the assumption that there is a lack of regional identity both in Eastern Europe and in Central Asia with a growing number of external influences that would further deteriorate any clear regional affiliation (Bogaturov, 2014).

Sino-Russian Cooperation: A Rhetorical Reality

Cooperation on connectivity in Central Asia may seem more likely when it comes to Russia and China. Many experts claim that the tensions between the West and Russia over Crimea and the conflict in Ukraine have pushed Russia towards the East, including towards China (see e.g. Paikin, 2019; Köstem, 2019).

The most active part of Russian official and expert discourse on co-alignment with the BRI dates back to 2015, when the ‘Europe from Lisbon to Vladivostok’ idea lost traction amid growing political tensions with the EU. Russian influential think tank ‘Valdai club’ experts have put forward the idea that 2015 witnessed a birth of the “Central Eurasian Moment”, which is the unique confluence of international political and economic circumstances that allows the renewed potential for cooperation and common development within the region (Valdai Club, 2015).

Strongly expertise-driven, Russia’s current policy of enhancing cooperation with China draws on two major intellectual dimensions. The first one is centered on the ‘alignment’ concept (*sopryazhenie*) of the EAEU and BRI integration projects and was officially announced in a joint declaration of the two heads of states on 8 May 2015. The second dimension is both more strategic and more pro-active from Russia’s part and has been conceptualized in the “Greater Eurasia” project, which was officially announced by Putin at the Saint-Petersburg Economic Forum in June 2016 (Putin, 2016a) and further developed in his Presidential Address in December 2016 (Putin, 2016b). While the two dimensions are complementary and consequential, they reflect key Russian goals in dealing with Chinese transcontinental initiatives.

In order to concretize the formal alignment of the EAEU to the BRI, so far, several steps have been taken, including the conclusion of an agreement on trade and economic cooperation (Eurasian Commission, 2018), the completion of a feasibility study and an agreement on the Eurasian economic partnership (Putin, 2018). These steps provide an important basis for the ‘Greater Eurasia’ project. For Russia, the alignment of the BRI with the EAEU fits within the so-called Greater Eurasian Partnership that it aspires to create and which includes the BRI as part of a network of integration initiatives that together would form a transcontinental economic cooperation space stretching from Europe to Asia (Paikin, 2019; Lukin, 2018). The conception of the Greater Eurasian Partnership is therefore based on a positive-sum logic favouring cooperation over competition and avoiding the ‘integration dilemma’ (Trotsky & Charap, 2013). Importantly, one of the goals is to promote the development of a Eurasian transportation corridor, which would enable integration via infrastructure and trade (Rolland, 2019).

While the Greater Eurasian Partnership is also designed to partly lock in the BRI in an attempt to counterbalance China’s fast-growing economic and political influence in Eurasia (Trenin, 2017), the BRI is viewed by Russian experts as an external impulse for the development of Eurasian economic integration. The development of the transit capacities and infrastructural connectivity of the EAEU countries are considered to be facilitated by cooperation with China (Kuzmina, 2018). Russia has presented its willingness to actively participate in BRI projects as part of its strategic partnership with China.

Importantly, however, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan have developed their own policy responses to the BRI, which do not necessarily link up to the alignment between the EAEU and the BRI. While formally accepting the idea of EAEU-BRI alignment, they prefer the bilateral track in their dealings with the BRI. The most notable example in this respect is Kazakhstan’s ‘NurlyZhol’ (Clear Path) national strategy. Kazakh interaction with the BRI reveals that the country has no intention to contribute to multilateral coordination within a triangular framework ‘national programs – EAEU – BRI’.

This example demonstrates that the challenge of alignment for Russia is two-fold: to hedge the imbalances with China and to synchronize the divergences within the EAEU. This pitfall may be further

exacerbated by the Chinese unpronounced attitude towards the EAEU itself (Wang & Wan, 2013; L. Li, 2016; Z. Li, 2016). For many Chinese scholars and politicians, the EAEU is a rather artificial and unnatural format. Many in China are skeptical even about the very title of the Union, considering it as a Moscow's desire to monopolize the idea of Eurasian integration. From a Chinese perspective, the integration is only possible on a serious economic basis. Therefore, there is the perception that since the CIS and EAEU in Central Asia have relied primarily on a historical and cultural basis for cooperation, Russia has failed to truly gain a foothold in the region, leaving room for China to step in and expand its influence there (Wang & Wan, 2013). Some Chinese researchers (see e.g. Li L., 2016; Li Z., 2016) have even argued that the EAEU challenges Chinese interests in the short term; as the member states will go to zero duties in their mutual trade, this will strengthen their competitive advantages and bolster their negotiating position towards China, for example, in the energy sector.

In terms of practical implementation of the alignment and cooperation on the ground, progress remains limited (Kassenova, 2018). This limited progress seems to suggest that the alignment remains mostly rhetorical. Also outside of the EAEU framework, progress on implementing the political commitment to cooperate seems very limited. This is to a large extent because Russia lacks the financial means to invest in large infrastructure projects. Given that there has been hardly any progress on joint implementation by China and Russia of infrastructure projects in Russia itself, it remains unlikely that Russia will be able to co-finance projects with China in Central Asia.

Concrete cooperation on connectivity between Russia and China seems most feasible in the framework of multilateral institutions, such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), and through co-financing of projects financed by development banks, such as the New Development Bank (NDB), Eurasian Development Bank (EDB) and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). However, also in this regard, progress has been very limited. Memorandums of Understanding are being signed between all these banks (Silk Road Fund, 2015; Eurasian Development Bank [EDB], 2018), but concrete projects are not yet being implemented. The situation here is aggravated by the growing asymmetries of financial capacities. The Eurasian Development Bank projects account for US \$3,545 billion in six countries (EDB, 2019) while the Chinese "Silk Road Fund" established in 2014 to back up the BRI is reported to finance the projects for more than US \$ 50 billion (Silk Road Fund, 2019).

If such co-financed infrastructure projects materialize in Central Asia, then Russia is very likely to prioritise projects that are part of the Eurasian Land Bridge, as this corridor transits through Russia (Makocki and Popescu, 2016). Projects that are part of the China-Central Asia corridor, which circumvents Russia, are less likely to receive Russia's support. The projected system of Central Asian transport infrastructure diminishes considerably Russia's continental transit influence.

The institutional build-up of the Greater Eurasia idea is mainly seen in the SCO framework that is considered to be a natural dialogue platform for such a broad initiative (Karaganov, 2017). The membership of India and Pakistan finalized in 2018 parallels the geographical scope of the idea and puts the SCO beyond the regional borders of Eurasia. At the SCO summit in Tashkent in June 2016, Putin suggested that the SCO countries that are not members of the EAEU (namely Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan), but want to accelerate the construction of transport infrastructure, join the Russian-Chinese cooperation, thus promoting a stronger coordination between EAEU and SCO. This proposal emphasizes the Russian desire to lead the process of establishing a wide common economic space and to synchronize the list of multilateral projects.

The Greater Eurasia Partnership initiative may be seen as an attempt to deal with Russia's doubts about the potential and prospective results of the EAEU-BRI alignment (Gabuev & Zuenko, 2018). The

narrative used in the initiative mirrors the previous one, that of “*united Europe built at several sites at once*” (Lavrov, 2008). While the focus of Greater Eurasia is more to the East geographically, the locutionary destinee remains the same. Russian foreign policy envisages to create a multilateral system of viable economic partnerships with China as a best card in order to establish more solid and convincing grounds for new formats of interactions with the EU (Suslov, 2016). In this very context, Russia underlines the inclusive character of the initiative, welcoming European countries that would be tempted by new trade opportunities (Shuvalov, 2016).

Sino-European Cooperation: Only a Matter of Time?

Possible cooperation on connectivity between the EU and China in Central Asia currently seems to have the strongest basis. Both sides have already repeatedly mentioned that they want to establish synergies between them to jointly advance connectivity in Central Asia. So far, there has not been any cooperation between them on the ground in Central Asia, but there are several signs that it might only be a matter of time before this will happen.

A first concrete sign that the EU and China may cooperate on connectivity in Central Asia has come from the EU-China Connectivity Platform, which was established in 2015. The overall goal of the Platform is to strengthen synergies between the BRI and the EU’s connectivity initiatives. One of the specific objectives of the Platform is to support the implementation of infrastructure development in the relevant countries and regions situated along the corridors between China and Europe.

There has already been concrete progress in this regard. A long list of pilot projects (European Commission, 2018a) has been established, and an expert group consisting of representatives of the European Investment Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and China Development Bank (CDB) has been created to work on the financing arrangements for these pilot projects (European Commission, 2018b) While the focus has so far been on infrastructure development in European countries and China, Central Asia has come up as another region where this cooperation may materialize. This is now also formally recognized in the new EU Strategy for Central Asia (European Commission and HRVP, 2019).

Initially, there were strong concerns that cooperation would be difficult to achieve due to the EU’s and China’s diverging understanding of connectivity, and of development more generally, which, moreover, they pursue by means of entirely different methods. When it comes to development cooperation, the EU prioritizes inclusive and sustainable development. The EU believes that development can only be durable if it accompanied with enhancements in governance. In contrast, China focuses mostly on enabling economic growth through the improvement of infrastructure. Unlike the EU, it does not seek to directly improve governance issues, because it adheres to the principle of non-interference and the primacy of the national sovereignty of states (Bossuyt, 2019).

Today, it seems that both sides are increasingly finding a common language by linking their cooperation commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the UN’s 2030 agenda. This creates the impression that China is slowly converging towards the understanding that the EU has of connectivity and of international development. For instance, China no longer wants to focus solely on economic development, but it is now also ready to implement projects that are aimed at boosting social development and environmental protection.

As the EU has outlined in its European Consensus on Development, it wants to engage more closely with China as part of a new partnership towards achieving the SDGs (European Union, 2017). This

Connecting Eurasia

commitment has been confirmed at the highest political levels, including at the 20th EU-China Summit in July 2018, where the EU and China agreed to “promote mutual understanding and share experience on international development cooperation through enhanced exchanges, and make joint efforts to implement the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda” (Joint Statement of the 20th EU-China Summit, 2018). In their Joint Statement at the end of the summit, the two sides stressed that their cooperation on connectivity should improve not only the economic but also the social, fiscal, financial and environmental sustainability of Europe-Asia connectivity. They also agreed that such cooperation should abide by the shared principles of market rules, transparency, open procurement and a level-playing field for all investors, and comply with established international norms and standards. This point is a crucial condition for the EU to agree to cooperate with China on connectivity, as is clearly outlined in the EU’s Connectivity strategy, which was presented in September 2018 (European Commission and HRVP, 2018).

According to this strategy, the EU will promote an approach to connectivity that is sustainable, comprehensive, and rules-based. This European approach is based on high standards of social and environmental protection and is inspired by the EU’s internal market, enabling countries to achieve higher levels of quality of life while guaranteeing respect for individual rights.

At the ASEM Summit meeting in Brussels in October 2018, the EU and China further agreed to aim towards creating additional synergies between China’s BRI and the EU’s connectivity strategy (European Commission, 2018d).

At the practical level, it still remains to be seen which form cooperation between the EU and China in Central Asia will take. One option that may be possible in the short-term is cooperation in the form of ‘blending’, whereby the EU may provide a grant to complement a loan extended by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), which may then be topped up by a loan from the China-dominated AIIB. The EBRD is already co-financing loans with the AIIB for projects in Central Asia, namely a \$55 million road construction project in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, which is part of a bigger project to enhance connections to Uzbekistan (EBRD, 2016), and a road project in Almaty, Kazakhstan, which is also co-funded by the World Bank.

Since the EU often cooperates with the EBRD in Central Asia and considers the AIIB as a reliable partner that follows international norms, it is only small step before this type of joint financing schemes could materialise. In November 2018, a first step in this direction was already taken, as the European Development Commissioner Neven Mimica spoke to the President of the EBRD and the President of the AIIB about the potential to join forces on shared priorities (European Commission, 2018c).

In the longer term, direct cooperation between the EU and China’s development banks, such as the China Development Bank and the Silk Road Fund, may also be possible. This is now already happening in Europe under the China-EU Co-investment Fund Programme, which was established by the European Investment Fund and Silk Road Fund with the aim of developing synergies between the BRI and the Juncker Plan. In the mid-term, such direct cooperation between the EU and China’s development banks may become possible in Central Asia. However, this will only be upon the difficult conditions that China will address the EU’s strong concerns over the debt trap that comes with China’s involvement in Central Asia and that for any projects implemented jointly China will abide by market-based principles and international norms of sustainability, openness and transparency.

SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

For the timing being, the prospect of trilateral cooperation on connectivity in Central Asia between Russia, China and the EU seems compromised by the underlying geopolitical rivalry between the three actors, as well as by their diverging beliefs and approaches to connectivity and development. Nevertheless, as the chapter has shown, as a result of China's ambitious goal of connecting China overland with Europe, the EU and Russia - as indispensable stakeholders for this continental connection to successfully materialize - have been developing policy responses to China's initiative that reveal an unexpected willingness to cooperate. Indeed, their common interest in advancing connectivity along the transport corridors between China and Europe that pass through Russia has led to both sides showing a tentative willingness to cooperate. Nevertheless, beyond a possible alignment between the EU and the EAEU, it remains to be seen how this willingness will translate into concrete measures. Such measures may become more concrete as the gradual move towards a two-track diplomacy further develops.

In turn, the likelihood of cooperation between Russia and China and between the EU and China is gradually increasing. China and Russia have already formally aligned themselves by linking the EAEU to the BRI. While some steps have already been taken to move beyond the stage of declaration, progress in terms of concrete implementation of project remains limited and is likely to remain restrained by Russia's lack of financial means to invest in large-scale infrastructure. A lot depends also on Russia's perception of China's expanding inroads into Eurasia. While Russia is faced with little choice but to accept China's rise across the region, it can try to balance it by further fostering the institutional build-up of the Greater Eurasia Partnership.

Meanwhile, several opportunities for cooperation are emerging for the EU and China, as they have found a common language in the SDGs. By linking its cooperation commitment to the SDGs, China is converging towards the understanding that the EU has of connectivity and of international development, which has made the EU feel more comfortable about the possibility of cooperating with China on connectivity. Still, there remain several hurdles to cooperation due to the very different nature of China's and the EU's implementation methods and approaches. Therefore, in the short term, only indirect cooperation, namely in the form of co-financing between the EBRD and the AIIB seems likely. In the mid-term, direct cooperation between the EU and China's development banks, such as the China Development Bank and the Silk Road Fund, may become possible provided that China can address the EU's concerns over the Central Asian countries' Chinese debts.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

The new political and economic context of cooperation in Eurasia is being and will continue to be determined by China's initiatives and by Russian attempts to accommodate this growing Chinese presence with its traditional security, economic and humanitarian interests in Central Asia. This context contributes to a new setting for EU foreign policy towards the region, as well as towards all the key players involved. This new context is increasingly challenging the sharply contrasted picture - widely-spread in the academic literature and Western political discourse - of the EU as a soft normative player as opposed to the Russian coercive hard power.

The BRI and its continental scope, aiming at reaching the western shores of Europe, creates a new conceptual puzzle for the multilateral interactions in Eurasia, in general, and in Central Asia, in particular.

What would be the further grounds for interaction and cooperation between the key players? How will the mutual perceptions influence the practical policies? What would be the new forms of co-existence of these normatively divergent powers (Hauff, 2019)?

Counter-intuitively, recent analyses of EU foreign policy towards the post-Soviet space underline the geopolitical rationale behind the EU's norm promotion (European Council on Foreign Affairs, 2018; Cadier, 2019; Nitoiu & Sus, 2019). This approach, while still contestable, seems to have more explanatory value to understand the interests and logic of multilateral interactions in the region. If all the parties involved are analyzed through the same framework of 'principled pragmatism' that was introduced in the EU's Global Strategy (European Union, 2016), it gives a clearer and more straightforward matrix to evaluate their shared, divergent or antagonistic interests.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has examined the potential for cooperation on connectivity in Central Asia between the EU, Russia and China. It has identified the common interests between the three sides, and highlighted to what extent bilateral cooperation between them is possible in Central Asia. While the chapter found that several opportunities for cooperation exist, there are still serious bottlenecks, which stem mostly from the underlying geopolitical rivalry between these three actors, as well as their diverging beliefs and approaches to connectivity and development.

While it is clear that cooperation on connectivity between the EU and Russia in Central Asia is not likely to happen in the short term due to the ongoing tensions between them, their common interest in advancing connectivity along the transport corridors between China and Europe that pass through Russia has led to both sides showing a tentative willingness to cooperate. This might eventually provide the basis for - what the EU labels - 'selective engagement' on connectivity in Central Asia.

Possible cooperation between Russia and China on connectivity in Central Asia has already been formalized through the alignment of the BRI with the EAEU, which would link up to Russia's idea of the Greater Eurasia Partnership. However, there have been concerns that China is just paying lip service to Russia and that it might just continue to operate separately with the Central Asian states outside of these frameworks. Moreover, concrete cooperation on connectivity on the ground might be compromised by Russia's lack of resources to invest in large-scale infrastructure projects.

In turn, the EU and China have been making surprising progress in terms of paving the way for possible cooperation on connectivity. It may just be a matter of time before indirect cooperation, namely in the form of co-financing with the AIIB of infrastructure projects in Central Asia becomes a reality. In the mid-term, direct cooperation between the EU and China's development banks, such as the China Development Bank and the Silk Road Fund, might be possible provided that the two actors can converge more towards each other at the level of implementation methods and approaches to development.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB): A multilateral development bank with a mission to improve social and economic outcomes in Asia. By investing in sustainable infrastructure and other productive sectors in Asia and beyond, the AIIB aims to better connect people, services and markets in Eurasia.

Belt and Road Initiative (BRI): The Chinese infrastructure mega-project, which aims at connectivity with Europe among others to increase trade and investment flows between the Asia Pacific Region (APR) and Europe.

Connectivity: The central concept of the EU new strategy for connecting Europe and Asia, aiming at facilitating mutual trade, diversifying trade and travel routes, creating interconnected energy networks and advancing people-to-people communication.

Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU): An international organization for regional economic integration that has international legal personality and is established by the Treaty on the Eurasian Economic Union (2014).

European Union (EU): The first and still the most advanced regional integration project. Launched in the aftermath of the WWII the EU aimed at providing security, peace and stability in Europe by promoting the economic cooperation between the states and creating a shared norms and values environment.


Greater Eurasian Partnership: The current Eurasian strategy of Russia, aimed at the formation of a complex, multi-level system of multilateral cooperation with the participation of the EAEU, ASEAN, APEC and SCO countries.

Silk Road Economic Belt (SREB): An integral part of the Belt and Road Initiative aiming at the construction of new highways and high-speed railways infrastructure.

Chapter 14

“External Contour” of Eurasian Integration: Cooperation Between the EAEU and the ASEAN

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ABSTRACT

The Eurasian Economic Union is interested in development of cooperation with external actors. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations is considered as a prospect partner. ASEAN states play a significant role in economy and international relations in the Asia-Pacific region. The ASEAN is seen as one of the key institutions in Asia-Pacific integration. Moscow keeps stable and friendly relations with many states of Southeast Asia and the ASEAN. It lays a solid foundation for development of a dialogue in Eurasian format. The EAEU signed with Vietnam a free trade agreement in 2015 and it is negotiating on similar treaties with some other states of the ASEAN. The Association expressed readiness to consider the issue of a comprehensive free trade zone between the EAEU and the ASEAN. In November 2018 the Eurasian Economic Commission and the ASEAN Secretariat adopted a memorandum of understanding. The dialogue in Eurasian format can accelerate cooperation between states of the EAEU and Southeast Asia and create more benevolent conditions for alignment of the EAEU and the ASEAN.

INTRODUCTION

In the framework of chapter the author is going to define key directions of current interaction between the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and prospects of their further cooperation. Southeast Asia is one of the most intensively developing regions and the ASEAN plays the significant role as both regional and global actor. The ASEAN is trying to broaden interaction with actors beyond Southeast Asia. The EAEU is also interested in the development of

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integrating ties with “external” actors (including Asia-Pacific states). Russia traditionally keeps friendly relations with many Southeast Asian countries and has the status of dialogue partner of the ASEAN. These circumstances can be a foundation for development of relations between the EAEU and the ASEAN.

Main focus will be made on interaction with the Association on the whole. Cooperation between the EAEU and separate states of Southeast Asia will be reviewed first of all from the angle of its impact on development of a partnership with the ASEAN. To achieve this aim the author set the following tasks: define main elements of Eurasian integration in the context of development of contemporary regionalism; underline reasons for cooperation of the EAEU and the ASEAN; define evolution of the dialogue with the ASEAN in Eurasian format; find the role of cooperation with Vietnam and some other states of Southeast Asia in EAEU-ASEAN interaction; characterize the current EAEU-ASEAN interaction and its meaning for Eurasian integration; propose a forecast on future trends of cooperation between the EAEU and the ASEAN.

The chapter consists of a background, main part, solutions and recommendations, future research directions, and conclusion. At the main part the author analyzed the following issues: EAEU-Vietnam free trade zone (history of its establishment and its role for EAEU-ASEAN interaction), the first steps for cooperation between the EAEU and the ASEAN (evolution of negotiations with the ASEAN for problems of participation in Eurasian integration until the Memorandum of understanding between the EAEU and the ASEAN, signed in November 2018), the current trends of interaction between the EAEU and the ASEAN after the signing of the Memorandum of understanding, the role of cooperation with the ASEAN for the Greater Eurasian Partnership, the factor of China for the EAEU-ASEAN interaction.

BACKGROUND

Eurasian integration is now one of key directions in Russian foreign policy. The idea of Eurasian integration was proposed by the President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbaev in 1994 yet. Interaction in Eurasian format must strengthen and develop historical ties between states of post-Soviet space. Eurasian integration processes had passed several periods and were embodied in the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), having functioned since the beginning of 2015. Great role for development of Eurasian integration is played not only by deepening of cooperation inside the EAEU, but also by enlargement of ties with external actors, including states of the Asia-Pacific region (APR). The idea of connectivity between integration processes in the post-Soviet space and the APR has been declared both politicians and experts for a long time ago. For example, the President of Russia Vladimir Putin at the APEC summit in Vladivostok in 2012 told on the possibility of participation of the Customs Union (the predecessor of the EAEU) in economic integration in the Asia-Pacific region. (Vladimir Putin prinyal uchastie v rabote Delovogo sammita ATEES, 2012) Thai researcher Paradorn Rangsimaporn stressed in 2006 yet the linkage between Eurasian ideas and interaction with the Asia-Pacific region in Russian public discourse. (Rangsimaporn, 2006, 385)

The role of the Asia-Pacific region in the foreign policy of Russia has been constantly increasing and it is connected as with rise of influence of the APR in world policy and economy, so with the initiative of “the Pivot to the East” in Russian foreign strategy. In the 1990s Russia was developing cooperation with China, Japan and South Korea in regional format. But, unfortunately, crisis in Russian economy and difficult situation in the Russian Far East were serious obstacles for full-scale cooperation with the Asia-Pacific states. Many Soviet positions in the Asia-Pacific were lost. Also the Kremlin in that period

“External Contour” of Eurasian Integration

had more urgent goals in its foreign strategy and lacked clear vision for relations of Russia with the Asia-Pacific. New impulse for Russian policy in the APR was given by the Foreign Minister (and later – Prime Minister) Evgeniy Primakov, who supported idea of diversified foreign policy of Russia and the multipolar world order. Under the Putin administration Russia has been launched new epoch in relations with the Asia-Pacific region, founded on new economic opportunities and more active diplomacy. As an essential element of Russian policy in the APR has being considered the connection between relations with Asia-Pacific states and development of the Russian Far East and Siberia. This policy was often referred as “the Pivot to the East”. Rising contradictions between Russia and the West (especially after 2014) have been converting the Asia-Pacific (and, first of all, China) in alternative direction for Russian foreign policy. So far the Asia-Pacific region has both political and economic significance for Russia. If to talk about development of Eurasian integration, approaching of states of the EAEU and the APR might be assessed as an example of formation of a “mega-region”. “Mega-regions” are often considered as one of trends in contemporary international relations. (Novikov, 2018, 85) For example, Russian scholars Aleksei Voskresenskii, Ekaterina Koldunova and Anna Kireeva pointed that by the beginning of the XXI century “Eurasia and the Asia-Pacific region have become the area of competing macro/mega-regional and transregional projects”. (Voskresenskii, Koldunova & Kireeva, 2017, 49) From the point of view of Russian researchers (for example – Maria Lagutina and Natalia Vasil’eva), a “global region” with the center in the EAEU might be defined as “Neo-Eurasian space”. (Vasil’eva & Lagutina, 2012, 27) In the opinion of Russian scholar Anna Garmash, contemporary regional integration is also marked by development of transregional ties and methods of transregionalism can be applied to research of EAEU-ASEAN interaction. (Garmash, 2017, 147-148) These trends correspond with a vector of development of Asia-Pacific states, enlarging their interaction with neighboring regions. That situation gives experts a reason to talk about creation of the region of the Greater East Asia. (Voskresenskii, 2012, 43) A concept of “mega-region” is also de-facto promoted by the United States with the aim of keeping its interests in the Asia-Pacific region. In this case the US politicians and experts are vigorously supporting an idea of “the Indo-Pacific region”. (Leksyutina, 2019, 24)

For connection of Eurasian and Asia-Pacific integrations the special role might be played by the ASEAN. The ASEAN states are demonstrating high rates of economic development. The ASEAN not only unites majority of states of Southeast Asia, but also takes special place in Asia-Pacific integration. Many regional structures and institutions are working in the framework of the ASEAN and so we can talk even on an “ASEAN-centric” model of integration in the APR. (Koldunova, 2017, 59-60) Development of dialogue between the EAEU and the ASEAN might be facilitated by the experience of Russia-ASEAN cooperation. Russia got a status of dialogue partner of the ASEAN in 1996 yet. Russia and the ASEAN held joint summits in 2005, 2010, 2016 and 2018. Russia takes part in work of many institutions, functioning under the ASEAN’s support (ASEAN Regional Forum, East Asia Summit, etc.). Russia and the ASEAN keep similar views on many international problems (including the idea of multipolar world), and Russia traditionally refrains from interference in domestic affairs of states of Southeast Asia. In the circumstances of escalation of contradictions between the US and China and reluctant involvement of Southeast Asia in these disputes, the ASEAN tries to deepen cooperation with Russia which is often perceived as “the third power” in the region. However, in the opinion of some Russian experts, the partnership of Moscow and Beijing is complicating the image of Russia in many states of Southeast Asia that are concerned by the rise of influence of China. (Lokshin, Kobelev & Mazyrin, 2019, 268) Other Russian scholars point at geopolitical preconditions of cooperation with the ASEAN in Eurasian format. For instance, Yaroslav Lisovolik suggests that interaction between the

EAEU and the ASEAN might be viewed as an example of “continental-oceanic” coalition. (Lisovolik, 2017, 51) If to talk about ASEAN interests in Eurasian integration, by the words of Russian experts Evgeniy Kanaev and Alexander Korolev, “Greater Eurasia” can give the ASEAN opportunity to “enter the multipolar world”, escaping “the unipolar revenge”. (Kanaev & Korolev, 2018, 741) The problem of EAEU-ASEAN cooperation was researched also in special works of other Russian scholars. Anton Tsvetov made deep analysis of EAEU-ASEAN relations in the context of trends of Russia’s foreign policy. (Tsvetov, 2017) Boris Kheifets researched prospects of creation of the EAEU-ASEAN free trade zone (Kheifets, 2018) Foreign scholars pay not so much attention to EAEU-ASEAN interaction, considering it, for instance, mostly in the context of general issues of Eurasian integration. (Li, 2016) It can be surmised that Russian researchers try to explore possible prospects of EAEU-ASEAN cooperation and foreign authors, in turn, are not demonstrating interest for this topic because of absence of definite results of EAEU-ASEAN interaction.

MAIN FOCUS OF THE CHAPTER

The ASEAN plays important role for Eurasian integration. However, development of cooperation of the EAEU with the Association and separate states of Southeast Asia meets with some obstacles (resulted as from nature of relations between EAEU countries and Southeast Asia, so from institutional functioning of the EAEU and the ASEAN). First of all, the level of economic cooperation between EAEU states and Southeast Asia is relatively small (and significant share of it belongs to Russia-ASEAN economic ties). Herewith, the level of political and economic cooperation of Russia with separate ASEAN states is varied. EAEU and ASEAN states have no common borders. The EAEU is an international organization with clear institutional structure in the form of an economic union, and the ASEAN is working under principles of consensus and compromise. But for last years the Eurasian Economic Union and the ASEAN have making progress in their relations. In the chapter we consider evolution of EAEU-ASEAN interaction, their role in Eurasian integration and also prospects for their further cooperation.

EAEU-VIETNAM FREE TRADE ZONE

The first steps for cooperation with the ASEAN in the framework of Eurasian integration were made yet before the official establishment of the EAEU. It was the issue of creation of free trade zones between the Customs Union and some states of Southeast Asia. Negotiations were finished successfully only with Vietnam. The first proposals of such agreements were made in 2009. Official negotiations with Vietnam were launched in March 2013. In May 2015 the EAEU and Vietnam signed a free trade agreement, entered into force in October 2016. This document strengthened positions of the Eurasian Economic Union as an international political and economic actor and let Russia institutionally unite Eurasian and Pacific directions of its policy. (Mazyrin, 2015, 78)

This agreement with Vietnam has been achieved mostly because of high level of political dialogue between Moscow and Hanoi. The interaction between Russia and Vietnam was based in many ways on the partnership between the USSR and Communist Vietnam in the period of the Cold War. Moscow supported Vietnamese Communists in their conflict with France and the US, and also Vietnam was an area of competition between Communist great powers – the Soviet Union and China. After the Second

“External Contour” of Eurasian Integration

Indochina war (1955-1975) Vietnam became the main partner of the USSR in the Asia-Pacific region. Vietnam was a strategic stronghold of the USSR against the US and China in Southeast Asia, and the Soviet Union and Vietnam had been developing many joint economic projects. In the conditions of international half-isolation of Vietnam, Moscow played prevailing role as an economic partner of Hanoi. After the collapse of the USSR the alliance of Moscow and Hanoi was also dissolved. But, however, Russia and Vietnam have kept interaction in some spheres (for instance, in energy fields and arms sales) and friendly political dialogue. Since the beginning of the 1990s Hanoi has been conducting diversified foreign policy and so far it was interested in constructive relations with Russia as with one of centers of world policy and old partner of Vietnam. New format of cooperation was, however, only a shadow of the alliance between Moscow and Hanoi in the Cold War and carried de-ideological and much more pragmatic character. Since the 2000s the interaction between Russia and Vietnam has been expanding. In 2001 Moscow and Vietnam signed the declaration on strategic partnership, and in 2012 two states raised the level of their relations to “comprehensive strategic partnership”. (Sovmestnoe zayavlenie ob ukreplenii otnoshenii vseob’emyushchego strategicheskogo partnerstva...) Vietnam is still the only ASEAN state, having a status of a strategic partner of Russia. Also Vietnam is conducting the policy of establishment of free trade zones with different states and international organizations. By the conclusion of agreement with the EAEU Vietnam has already signed 15 similar treaties. (Mazyrin, 2016, 76) These initiatives are correlating with Vietnam’s course for diversification of its foreign policy and integration into global economy. (Mazyrin, 2015, 79) The level of trade of Russia and Vietnam was relatively low (for instance, in 2014 Russian-Vietnamese trade turnover was about \$ 3.7 billion in comparison with \$ 58.5 billion of trade turnover of Vietnam with China and 34.9 — with the United States) (V’etnam. Vneshnyaya torgovlya i investitsii), and, besides, trade with Russia is more than 90% of economic cooperation between Vietnam and the EAEU. (EAEU i ASEAN: Otkryvaya novye gorizonty sotrudnichestva..., 2017, 54) However, strong political ties between Moscow and Hanoi helped to conclude the free trade agreement. At the same time, the agreement had “compromise” character. The sides tried to protect the most vulnerable spheres of export and import. EAEU officials considered this free trade zone mostly as a “test” for other similar agreements. (Tsvetov, 2015) According to Russian experts, the EAEU-Vietnam free trade zone has more political meaning, than economic, and its real results might be achieved in 10-15 years. (Mazyrin, 2015, 81) However, experts and politicians positively estimated the prospects of free trade agreement between the EAEU and Vietnam. For instance, in the opinion of Russian researchers, volume of Russian-Vietnamese trade might raise to \$ 10 billion by 2020. (Mazyrin, 2015, 77) Vietnamese officials even forecasted the increase of mutual trade turnover to \$ 20 billion. (Tovarooborot mezhdu V’etnamom i Rossiei v yanvare-iyule vyros na 28%, 2016) These results have to be reached yet, but in 2017 the level of the trade between the EAEU and Vietnam was increased for more than 35% and amounted \$ 5.7 billion. In 2018 the volume of Russian-Vietnamese trade exceeded \$ 6 billion. (Torgovlya mezhdu Rossiei i V’etnamom v 2018 g., 2019) As Russian experts suggested, the EAEU-Vietnam free trade zone could boost mutual trade and increase the share of high-technological goods in export from the Eurasian Economic Union. (Mazyrin, 2015, 77) However, the share of export of high-technology production from Russia has not increased in 2018 in comparison with previous year (Torgovlya mezhdu Rossiei i V’etnamom v 2017 g. (2018). At the same time markets of the EAEU might be challenged by flow of Vietnamese productions. Even now import from Vietnam exceeds export from Russia.

Preliminary results of the EAEU-Vietnam free trade agreement seem to be positive, but it is hardly possible to talk on a breakthrough in EAEU-Vietnam trade.

THE EAEU AND THE ASEAN: THE FIRST STEPS TO COOPERATION

In July 2014 the chairman of the Eurasian Economic Commission (EAEC) Board Viktor Khristenko had negotiations with the Secretary General of the ASEAN Le Luong Minh about economic cooperation between the EAEU and the ASEAN. The sides marked positive experience of negotiations between the Customs Union and Vietnam on a free trade zone. (Sostoyalas' vstrecha Predsedatelya Kollegii EEK Viktora Khristenko..., 2014) In September 2014 the Eurasian Economic Commission proposed the ASEAN to sign a Memorandum of understanding. During his visit to Myanmar Andrey Slepnev, the member of the EAEC Board for trade, discussed with the Secretary General of the ASEAN possible variants of cooperation and granted the project of a Memorandum. The project contained issues of exchange of information in sphere of integration processes, technical and customs regulations, sanitary measures. (Evraziiskaya ekonomicheskaya komissiya mozhet nachat' ofitsial'noe sotrudnichestvo..., 2014)

The establishment of the free trade zone with Vietnam is often perceived as an important step for development of cooperation between the EAEU and the ASEAN on the whole. (Aleksey Likhachev: V'etnam mozhet stat' torgovo-investitsionnym mostom..., 2015) It is also necessary to point that Vietnam traditionally has been a “connecting link” in cooperation between Russia and the ASEAN. (Kobelev, 2016, 420) Tigran Sarkisian, a chairman of the EAEC Board, called the treaty with Vietnam a “window of opportunities” for development of interaction between the EAEU and the ASEAN. (Interv'yu Predsedatelya Kollegii EEK Tigrana Sarkisyana..., 2016)

A free trade zone between the EAEU and the ASEAN is seen as a possible sphere of interaction. The idea of such zone was announced, for example, in the joint declaration, adopted at the Russia-ASEAN summit in Sochi in May 2016: “Russia put forward a proposal to launch a joint feasibility study of a comprehensive free trade area between ASEAN and EAEU. ASEAN will consider this initiative”. (Sochi Declaration of the ASEAN-Russian Federation Commemorative Summit...) Issues of interaction between the EAEU and the ASEAN were mentioned in the “Comprehensive plan of action to promote cooperation...” between Russia and the ASEAN. (Comprehensive plan of action...) Tat'yana Valovaya, the member of the EAEC Board for integration and macroeconomics, presented the Eurasian Economic Union before the President of Russia and heads of ASEAN states at this summit. T. Valovaya told about common aims of the EAEU and the ASEAN and supported the idea of closer cooperation. (Ministr EEK Tat'yana Valovaya prezentovala EAES..., 2016) The problem of preparation for an EAEU-ASEAN free trade zone has been discussing also at other events – for instance, at the Russia-ASEAN senior officials meeting in March 2017. (ASEAN, Russia discuss ways to further strengthen partnership, 2017)

But these documents and statements are still only declarations of intentions, but not a plan of definite measures. Simultaneously, this free trade zone may meet with some serious obstacles. Firstly, the ASEAN still has no experience of conclusion of a free trade agreement with an international organization. Negotiations between the ASEAN and the European Union were failed, because of difficulties in settling of conditions of a free trade zone with the ASEAN, those member-states kept different positions on this project. (Tsvetov, 2017) The agreement on establishment of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) has been signed only recently after a long elaboration. It may arouse additional difficulties with decision-making at the ASEAN. Coordination inside the ASEAN traditionally goes through long procedure in order to settle interests of many countries. The EAEU and the ASEAN have different institutional structures. (Dave, 2016) The EAEU is a regional economic organization, created on the base of a customs union. The ASEAN is officially aimed at a broader circle of tasks. The EAEU has the Eurasian Economic Commission (EAEC) – a supranational executive organ, and the ASEAN

“External Contour” of Eurasian Integration

Secretariat is a structure of coordinating character. The level of trade cooperation of Russia and other member-states of the EAEU with Southeast Asia is still relatively low. For instance, the share of the EAEU in general export and import of the ASEAN was estimated in 2015 as 0.5 and 1% respectively. (EAES i ASEAN: Otkryvaya novye gorizonty sotrudnichestva..., 2017, 54) As other trend we can mention the increase of shares of energy products in Russian export to ASEAN countries and high-technology goods in ASEAN export to Russia. Other obstacles might be called lack of information in Southeast Asia about the EAEU and Eurasian integration. By the words of Russian expert and journalist Mikhail Korostikov, even leaders of states of Southeast Asia have very vague vision of these issues and consider Eurasian integration first of all as an element of relations with Russia. (Korostikov, 2018) In these circumstances it is interesting to make selective analysis of some English-speaking media resources of Southeast Asia.

In Vietnam's media problems of Eurasian integration are mostly considered from the point of the free trade agreement between the EAEU and Vietnam. The EAEU-Vietnam free trade zone is mentioned in publications, dedicated to its influence on Vietnamese economy (Vietnam-Russia economic, trade relations thrive, 2019) or in reports about summits of Russian and Vietnamese officials, where this issue was a part of joint declarations or negotiations. (Party leader to visit Russia from Wednesday, 2018) Questions of EAEU-ASEAN interaction or the role of Vietnam in this cooperation are not considered.

Publications in Thai media mostly observed the Memorandum of understanding between the EAEU and Thailand. (Arunmas, 2018) The EAEU was also mentioned in the article, dedicated to the ASEAN working group, discussing policy of the Association in the sphere of free trade agreements. (Arunmas, 2019) In the article of the columnist and expert Kavi Chongkittavorn, development of relations of the ASEAN with Russia (and, as a result – with the EAEU) and the European Union is considered as an element of the multi-vector policy of the Association. (Chongkittavorn, 2018)

Malaysian newspaper “The New Straits Times” published articles on the Russia-ASEAN summit in Sochi and quoted the opinion of the Prime Minister of Malaysia Najib Razak about the necessity to establish a free trade zone between the EAEU and the ASEAN. (Summit significant..., 2016)

Indonesian media sources usually mention the EAEU in the context of Russian-Indonesian relations (As Russia Faces Colder Relations With West..., 2018) or Russia-ASEAN interaction. (ASEAN, a strategic partner for Russia, 2018)

Singapore's media seems to pay definitely more attention to Eurasian integration. Singaporean newspaper “The Straits Times” published articles about the Memorandum of understanding between the EAEU and Singapore, (Lim, 2016a) and about an expected EAEU-Singapore free trade agreement. (Good progress on trade deal with EAEU, 2019) Key benefits of future free trade agreement are considered new opportunities for Singapore to invest in economy of EAEU countries and get an access to natural resources. Issues of EAEU-ASEAN cooperation were mentioned in publications, dedicated to the signing of the memorandum of understanding between the EAEC and the ASEAN (Seow, 2018), and the Russia-ASEAN summit in Sochi. (Lim, 2016)

“ASEAN Briefing”, an information and analytical portal on investment and trade in ASEAN states published three articles, dedicated specially to EAEU-ASEAN interaction. Authors of these publications positively evaluated cooperation of the EAEU with separate states of the ASEAN and with the Association on the whole (including prospects of a free trade zone between the EAEU and the ASEAN). (Devonshire-Ellis, 2019)

Informational cover of Eurasian integration and EAEU-ASEAN integration carries in Southeast Asia mostly fragmental character. Issues of Eurasian integration are considered through the prism of relations

with Russia and touch events, happening on a territory of any ASEAN state or linked with activities of leaders of states of Southeast Asia.

At the same time, however, Russian society and establishment perceive the situation in the Southeast Asia not very well too. (Lokshin, Kobelev & Mazyrin, 2019, 268) Also, in the opinion of some Russian scholars, the EAEU is still internally instable organization and states of the ASEAN do not completely trust to Eurasian Economic Union. (Lokshin, Kobelev & Mazyrin, 2019, 265) What is more, states of the EAEU and the ASEAN have no land borders and lay in long distances from each other. So, as things are, an establishment of an EAEU-ASEAN free trade zone seems to be real only in long-term perspective. For instance, Chinese scholar Li Xing wrote that a free trade zone with the ASEAN might be created only by 2040. (Li, 2016, 15) Preliminary variant of cooperation between the EAEU and the ASEAN might be a non-preferential economic agreement. Russian scholar Boris Kheifets proposed an idea of multilateral agreement on investments between the EAEU and the ASEAN. This agreement might be the first step to more comprehensive treaty on economic cooperation between the EAEU and the Association. (Kheifets, 2018, 117) In the opinion of other experts, the base for a comprehensive free trade zone must be a network of free trade agreements between the EAEU and separate states of the ASEAN. (EAES i ASEAN: Otkryvaya novye gorizonty sotrudnichestva..., 2017, 75) But such agreement, as it was mentioned earlier, exists so far only with Vietnam. However, negotiations with other states of Southeast Asia are being continued and some countries (Cambodia, Thailand and Singapore) signed with the EAEU memorandums of understanding. Moreover, for the last time was emerging the trend for strengthening cooperation of the ASEAN with Russia and the EAEU. In August 2017 Russia opened its permanent mission to the ASEAN (in Jakarta). In March 2018 Alexander Ivanov, the Ambassador of Russia to the ASEAN, took part on the meeting of the ASEAN-Russia Joint Cooperation Committee, where it was declared on the finalization of a draft of a Memorandum of understanding between the EAEU and the ASEAN. (ASEAN, Russia review progress of cooperation, 2018)

In May 2018 in the framework of the Saint Petersburg International Economic Forum there was the first business dialogue in the EAEU-ASEAN format. The organizers of this event were the Eurasian Economic Commission, the Russia-ASEAN Business Council, the Roscongress Foundation and the Russia-Singapore Business Council. In the words of the moderator of this dialogue, Tat'yana Valovaya, “the event confirmed enormous interest of business in states of the EAEU and the ASEAN for cooperation”. (PMEF-2018: sostoyalsya pervyi biznes-dialog..., 2018)

In November 2018 at the Russia-ASEAN summit in Singapore the sides made a joint statement on strategic partnership. Issues of cooperation between the EAEU and the ASEAN were also mentioned in this document. Russia and the ASEAN agreed “to explore the possibility of mutually beneficial cooperation between ASEAN and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU)”. (Joint Statement of the 3rd ASEAN-Russian Federation Summit on Strategic Partnership, 2018) In the framework of this summit the Eurasian Economic Commission and the ASEAN Secretariat signed a Memorandum of understanding. The EAEC and the ASEAN declared on intention to cooperate in spheres of customs regulations, facilitation of trade procedures, sanitary control, e-commerce, investments, etc. (EAES i ASEAN uglublyayut torgovo-ekonomicheskoe i investitsionnoe sotrudnichestvo, 2018) As the chairman of the EAEC Board Tigran Sarkisian said, this memorandum had to play “important role not only for establishment of constant dialogue between the EAEC and the ASEAN Secretariat, but also for creation of trustful atmosphere for support of bilateral tracks of the EAEU with separate states of the Association and interaction of business circles of our countries”. (Mezhdru EEK i sekretariatom ASEAN budet ustanovlen postoyannyi dialog, 2018) After that the sides began to work at a program for cooperation for 2019-2020.

“External Contour” of Eurasian Integration

Unfortunately plans to sign a free trade agreement between the EAEU and Singapore at the Russia-ASEAN summit in November 2018 have not been realized. At the negotiations in Singapore the sides settled some important issues (for instance, a future framework agreement between the EAEU and Singapore), but a conclusion of a free trade agreement was forecasted for 2019. (Peregovory po soglasheniyu o ZST mezhdru EAES i Singapurom..., 2018) The Deputy Prime Minister of Singapore Tharman Shanmugaratham, during his participation at the Gaidar Forum in Moscow in January 2019, said the EAEU was making “good progress on concluding the EAEU-Singapore Free Trade Agreement (FTA) by the middle of the year”. (Good progress on trade deal with EAEU, 2019) Key advantages of a free trade zone between the EAEU and Singapore might be new opportunities for Singaporean investments in Russia and other states of the Eurasian Economic Union. (Kheifets, 2018, 116) For fruitful cooperation with the ASEAN the EAEU needs in addition to trade exchanges mutual investments and technological cooperation. (Kanaev & Korolev, 2018, 746) What is more, a free trade zone between the EAEU and Singapore will have “image” significance for EAEU-ASEAN relations, because it will demonstrate the ability of the Eurasian Economic Union to successfully cooperate “not only with politically close Vietnam”. (Kanaev & Korolev, 2018, 745) Sergey Pronin, an executive director of the Russia-Singapore Business Council, defined Singapore as a “window for export for all EAEU companies during their foreign economic activities with ASEAN countries”. (Singapore is a point of access to APR...) Singapore might be considered as a political “bridge” from the EAEU to the ASEAN. For instance, in February 2017 at the session of the joint working group of the EAEC and the government of Singapore, Tat’yana Valovaya and Singaporean officials discussed issues of assistance to the dialogue in the EAEU-ASEAN format. (Tat’yana Valovaya..., 2017)

Along with Vietnam, Singapore seems to become a key partner for the development of EAEU-ASEAN connectivity. Although the EAEU and the ASEAN did not sign a free trade agreement or other formal treaty, they created a base for further dialogue and cooperation – first of all, an instrument of interaction between the Eurasian Economic Commission and the ASEAN Secretariat.

AFTER THE MEMORANDUM

In February 2019 Tat’yana Valovaya visited the ASEAN Secretariat. The sides discussed the implementation of the Memorandum of understanding between the EAEC and the ASEAN. Representatives of the ASEAN Secretariat and ASEAN business were invited to the Saint Petersburg International Economic Forum and the Eastern Economic Forum in Vladivostok in 2019. The sides also agreed the Program of cooperation between the EAEU and the ASEAN for 2019-2020. (About visit of Member of the Board of the Eurasian Economic Commission..., 2019) In the focus of the program there were consultations and exchange of opinions for simplification of trade procedures, technical regulation, development of digital economy. (Obsuzhdeny programmy sotrudnichestva EEK i ASEAN na 2019-2020, 2019)

A business dialogue between the EAEU and the ASEAN was held at the Saint Petersburg International Economic Forum on June, 8 2019. This session was organized with participation of the Russia-ASEAN Business Council. Tat’yana Valovaya was a moderator of the event. In the business dialogue took part entrepreneurs, diplomats and experts from states of the EAEU and the ASEAN. As T. Valovaya said, “the EAEU and the ASEAN are on the rise of their relations”. Representatives of business communities told about their achievements and plans for further cooperation between states of the EAEU and Southeast Asia. Participants of the dialogue underlined, for instance, the role of EAEU-Vietnam free

trade agreement for the rise of trade turnover and conclusion of new contracts. Important and prospect tasks of cooperation were expected to be rise of investments, diversification of trade and simplification of trade procedures. Serious attention was paid to field of high technologies. The co-founder and CEO of Singaporean company “vCargo Cloud” Desmond Tay underlined the role of the EAEC for development of cooperation with states of the EAEU. On a meeting of the working group, created in the framework of the Memorandum of understanding between the EAEU and Singapore, “vCargo Cloud” (working in the sphere of e-logistics) set contacts with a partner from Russia (the Russia-Singapore Business Council) and later expanded its business in the EAEU on the whole. The significance of digital platforms for dialogue between the EAEU and the ASEAN (and also with Singapore, Cambodia and Thailand) was also marked by T. Valovaya. (EAES i ASEAN razvivayut biznes-dialog, 2019)

On June 4 2019 the EAEC sets round table discussion, dedicated to digital transport corridors of the EAEU (including the direction to markets of the ASEAN). The event was organized with a support from the Russia-Singapore Business Council. Desmond Tay also took part in the discussion. As it was marked, “the integration of payment services will expand opportunities for interaction of the EAEU companies with the ASEAN countries”. (EAEU and ASEAN Digital Logistics, 2019)

On June 6, 2019 Sergey Pronin and Desmond Tay attended the session “Strategy for the Future of the Eurasian Economic Union”, devoted to “the influence of the latest trends, such as the digital transformation of the economy and the formation of a high-tech and innovative Eurasian space, on the prospects for further development of the EAEU”. The event was visited by the chairman of the EAEU Business Council Viktor Khristenko and Koh Poh Koon, the senior Minister of State from Singapore. (Participation of Sergey Pronin and Desmod Tay...)

The Russia-Singapore Business Council declared about intentions to promote Russian technologies and Russian companies in Southeast Asia through the use of digital platforms RSTrade and CamelONE (operated by the Russia-Singapore Business Council and “vCargo Cloud” respectively). In prospect, it let establish “full automation of trade flows between the EAEU and ASEAN”. (Interview of Sergey Pronin and Desmond Tay to RBC TV Channel) The Russia-Singapore Business Council participates also in other events, organized with support from the EAEC – for example, at the Second Eurasian digital forum, held in April 2019 in Minsk (RSTrade and CamelOne integration solution...) and in the conference “Digital Industry of Industrial Russia”, set in May 2019 in Innopolis in Tatarstan. (Russia-Singapore Business Council takes part in CIPR-2019)

The role of the Russia-Singapore Business Council seems to be a positive example of EAEU-ASEAN interaction. It may be explained by interests of Singaporean partners for EAEU markets and relevance of promoted projects. Simplification of trade and investments between the EAEU and the ASEAN (including the use of digital technologies) is considered as an important element in current EAEU-ASEAN agenda. Also it is necessary to point at the close connection of the Russia-Singapore Business Council with EAEU and Russian state structures (the Russia-Singapore Business Council was founded in 2009 on the initiative of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Russia). However, these joint Russia-Singapore projects have necessary conditions to engage IT-companies from EAEU and ASEAN countries.

As we can see, interaction between the EAEU and the ASEAN is being realized by the EAEC and the ASEAN Secretariat with close connection with Russia-ASEAN joint structures and business communities. It creates multi-level system of cooperation. The development of EAEU-ASEAN dialogue creates conditions for enlargement of cooperation between business communities of the EAEU and the ASEAN. Anna Garmash emphasizes the role of new platforms for dialogue and participation of both government and non-government institutions for successful development of EAEU-ASEAN cooperation. (Garmash,

“External Contour” of Eurasian Integration

2017, 154) But, however, we can now talk only about “preliminary” period of EAEU-ASEAN integration. Business cooperation carries mostly “spot” nature – it is concentrated only in selected spheres and realized with direct and indirect support of state structures. Nevertheless, such cooperation is forming environment (for instance through simplification of trade and development of electronic logistics) for further cooperation in other fields.

Although the prospects of an EAEU-ASEAN free trade zone seem to be indefinite. The EAEU and the ASEAN have not had an experience of conclusion of such agreement. The level of economic cooperation between the EAEU and the ASEAN is not significant. Moreover, the sides did not begin negotiations for this issue and seem to have no certain vision of this future free trade area. But the dialogue in Eurasian format can provide development of cooperation between EAEU and ASEAN countries and has already brought the first results. Increase of trade turnover and investments between the EAEU and ASEAN will set benevolent environment for further negotiations on preferential and non-preferential agreements. Also dialogue in Eurasian dimension with the ASEAN can accelerate interest in states of Southeast Asia for the cooperation with the EAEU and pave the way for successful negotiations on free trade zones with separate ASEAN countries. At the moment interaction between the EAEU and the ASEAN carries mostly “instrumental” function – it creates conditions for strengthening ties between the Eurasian Economic Union and separate states of Southeast Asia. But comprehensive and successful partnership with ASEAN countries (or, at least, with majority of them) is an essential prerequisite for a full-scale partnership between the Eurasian Economic Union and the ASEAN. For instance, as it was mentioned before, the presentation of the first results of EAEU-Vietnam free trade agreement was included into the agenda of the EAEU-ASEAN business dialogue in Saint Petersburg in 2019.

THE GREATER EURASIAN PARTNERSHIP: THE ROLE OF THE ASEAN

Also it is necessary to note the ASEAN is an important partner in the framework of the initiative of the Greater Eurasian Partnership. The idea of economic partnership between states of the EAEU, the ASEAN and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) was declared by Vladimir Putin at the end of 2015. (Poslanie Prezidenta Federal'nomu Sobraniyu, 2015) The term of “Greater Eurasian Partnership” was firstly used in the President’s speech at the Saint Petersburg International Economic Forum in June 2016. Also this initiative is often referred as “Eurasian Economic Partnership” (Tsvetov, 2017) and “Greater Eurasia”. (Karaganov, 2016) The principles of the Greater Eurasian Partnership were mentioned in the Concept of Russia’s foreign policy, adopted in 2016: “Russia is committed to establishing a common, open and non-discriminatory economic partnership and joint development space for ASEAN, SCO and EAEU members with a view to ensuring that integration processes in Asia-Pacific and Eurasia are complementary”. (Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation ...) This initiative still has no strict regulations and clear circle of participants, but it is open for dialogue with many partners. Russia, as an initiator of this idea and a power, occupying central position in geopolitical space of Eurasia, is presumed to play key role in the Partnership. The Greater Eurasian Partnership reflects many trends of contemporary multilateral interaction and might be considered as a practical embodiment of idea of “neo-Eurasian space”. The ASEAN has demonstrated benevolent reaction that was reflected in the Declaration, adopted at the summit in Sochi in 2016. In the framework of the Greater Eurasian Partnership the ASEAN has a foundation for cooperation with the SCO too. In 2005 yet two organizations signed a Memorandum of understanding. Four dialogue partners of the ASEAN (Russia, China, India

and Pakistan) now are members of the SCO. For the last years the ASEAN and the SCO have intensified their contacts. (Kanaev & Korolev, 2018, 742) The ASEAN is interested in cooperation in security sphere and it may impact on other fields of interaction in the dimension of “Greater Eurasia”. (Kanaev & Korolev, 2018, 748)

A factor of the Greater Eurasian Partnership became a part of a dialogue with the ASEAN. For instance, on the 16th ASEAN-Russia Senior Officials’ Meeting (ARSOM) at the level of deputy foreign ministers on February 19-20, 2019 there was an exchange of views for the interaction between the EAEU, the SCO and the ASEAN in the framework of the Greater Eurasian Partnership. (On the 16th ASEAN-Russia Senior Officials’ Meeting..., 2019)

On the meeting of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia Sergey Lavrov with ambassadors of the ASEAN states on April 19, 2019, the sides emphasized importance of cooperation in the format of the Greater Eurasian Partnership. (On the Meeting of the Minister of Foreign Affairs..., 2019) At the EAEU-ASEAN business dialogue at the Saint Petersburg International Economic Forum in 2019 Ambassador-at-Large Kirill Barskiy told about the concept of “Greater Eurasia” and accented the role of EAEU-ASEAN cooperation. (EAES i ASEAN razvivayut biznes-dialog, 2019)

So we can assert that nowadays the Greater Eurasian Partnership is becoming more and more essential factor in EAEU-ASEAN dialogue. However, real steps for further inclusion of the ASEAN in the Greater Eurasian Partnership will be depend on development of interaction of the EAEU with the ASEAN and separate Southeast Asian states. Nowadays the Greater Eurasian Partnership is mostly an initiative and even a declaration of intentions. Transformation of the Greater Eurasian Partnership into a formalized international actor is possible through real results of cooperation of the EAEU with other potential partners (including the ASEAN).

CHINA’S FACTOR

A factor of rapprochement of the EAEU and the ASEAN might be China. Beijing has already signed the Agreement for economic cooperation with the EAEU in the framework of the initiative of the Silk Road Economic Belt (SREB). The ASEAN and China are going to develop cooperation in the framework of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership that might be “a bridge” from the ASEAN to the states of the EAEU. Russian researcher Dmitrii Novikov, however, considers that possible joining of the EAEU to the RCEP as a serious challenge for Russian interests. In the case of inclusion of the EAEU into the RCEP the leading role will be played by China and integration in Eurasia will be in significant degree “China-centric”. Besides, the EAEU and the ASEAN have no free trade agreement and so that is an obstacle for joining to the RCEP. (Novikov, 2018, 90) But, in any way, these considerations have speculative character, because we need to wait results of work of the RCEP and there have not been even negotiations for joining the EAEU to RCEP. In the opinion of some Russian scholars (for instance, Anton Tsvetov), the involvement of the ASEAN in Eurasian project might be viewed as attempts of Moscow to balance the rise of China’s influence in Eurasia. Russia tries to diversify its “Eastern” policy, both promoting the initiative of the Greater Eurasian Partnership and developing of cooperation with broader circle of Asia-Pacific states, including ASEAN countries. (Tsvetov, 2017)

However, other researchers look at the EAEU-ASEAN-China “triangle” more optimistically. China might be also a logistical “bridge” between Southeast Asia and the post-Soviet space, linking two regions in the framework of the Silk Road Economic Belt. (Li, 2016, 16-17) On the other hand, interaction of

“External Contour” of Eurasian Integration

China with states of the EAEU and Southeast Asia in the infrastructure sphere might create “the trans-Eurasian connectivity arc”. (Kanaev & Korolev, 2018, 747) As it was noted by the expert from “ASEAN Briefing”, infrastructure of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) “impacts positively” upon both the EAEU and the ASEAN. (Devonshire-Ellis, 2019) And nowadays we can talk about the first practical results of that idea. At the Saint Petersburg International Economic Forum in 2019 the Russia-Singapore Business Council and company “vCargo Cloud” held negotiations with Chinese company EPINDUO – “the largest platform for the sale of Russian goods in China”. It was noted that cooperation of EPINDUO “with the Russia-Singapore Business Council and “vCargo Cloud” might become a new stage in the development of digital cross-border trade on the EAEU-China-ASEAN route”. (Russia-Singapore Business Council and vCargo Cloud hold talks with EPINDUO)

The role of China for EAEU-ASEAN relations seems to be contradictory. China is definitely more essential partner for Russia and the EAEU, than the ASEAN. Projects of cooperation in the framework of EAEU-ASEAN-China “triangle” are still only ideas or prepositions without real results or even discussions. Development of interaction between the EAEU and China may stimulate EAEU-ASEAN cooperation (because of strengthening of international status of the EAEU), but, on the other hand, this influence will carry indirect character and affect only in distant prospect.

SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

For more effective use of opportunities, granted by EAEU-ASEAN interaction, it seems to be necessary to enlarge collaboration between national and supranational institutions, business community and public associations. Simultaneously it might be recommended to develop exchange of information on EAEU and ASEAN countries, their business environment and conditions, Eurasian and ASEAN’s integration. As a positive example we can name the Russia-Singapore Business Council, working in close coordination with the EAEC and promoting ideas of cooperation with Singapore both in bilateral and multilateral formats.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

One of perspective directions for research appears to be further analysis of the role of the ASEAN in the Greater Eurasian Partnership (including the interaction with China in the format of the Belt and Road Initiative or on bilateral base). The ASEAN has not only economic, but also political significance for Russia in the framework of the Greater Eurasian Partnership. The ASEAN, in turn, considers Russia as an alternative partner under conditions of rising struggle of Washington and Beijing for regional influence.

EAEU-ASEAN interaction might be assessed as a model of relations between two regional organizations and also from the point of the influence of inter-state relations and relations in format “state-organization” upon cooperation of supranational institutions. As a good example for such exploration it seems to be Singapore – one of leading actors in providing of EAEU-ASEAN cooperation.

CONCLUSION

The Eurasian Economic Union and the ASEAN have serious reasons for cooperation. Interaction of the EAEU and the ASEAN is developing through several initiatives. On one hand, it is direct dialogue between the EAEU and the ASEAN. On the other hand, it is cooperation with separate states of the Association. Also we can mention attempts of Russia to involve the ASEAN into the Greater Eurasian Partnership. EAEU-ASEAN interaction is closely connected with the partnership between Russia and the ASEAN.

Interaction of the EAEU and the ASEAN at the moment has no formal structure. The sides signed the Memorandum of understanding, but an initiative of EAEU-ASEAN free trade zone was announced only in the form of declaration of intentions. In some degree it responds to the spirit of the Association which collaborates with its members and external partners on principles of compromise and consensus (in the framework of so-called “ASEAN way”). (Acharya, 1997, 328-329) EAEU-ASEAN cooperation is creating conditions for development of ties between EAEU and ASEAN states. Eurasian dimension is becoming an essential element of interaction between EAEU countries and Southeast Asia.

Russia, the EAEU and the ASEAN have some serious political motives for dialogue. As for economic interaction, the situation seems to be more complicated. The level of economic cooperation between the EAEU and the ASEAN is relatively low. The EAEU, in turn, as it was demonstrated in the case with the free trade agreement with Vietnam, is quite carefully approaching to an establishment of free trade zones with “external partners”, trying to protect its markets. It creates additional obstacles for further integration. However, at the moment we can talk about new trend in EAEU-ASEAN interaction. Singapore, for instance, actively supports collaboration with the EAEU, observing the Eurasian region as a perspective area for its investments. Singapore can be a “bridge” between the EAEU and the ASEAN and give an impulse for new joint innovative projects (including the IT-sphere).

Success of further cooperation between the EAEU and the ASEAN will depend on results of relations of the EAEU with separate states of the ASEAN. In turn, the EAEU-ASEAN dialogue will assist to negotiations on free trade zones with separate states of Southeast Asia and economic cooperation in other formats. In the near future key factors, influencing on interaction between the EAEU and the ASEAN, seem to be achievements of the EAEU-Vietnam free trade zone, signing of new free trade agreements (first of all, with Singapore) and development of the partnership between Russia and the ASEAN.

The phenomenon of the EAEU-ASEAN cooperation is expressed not so much in establishment of certain joint structures and format of interaction, as in assistance to connectivity between states of the EAEU and Southeast Asia (including Eurasian dimension of cooperation). Eurasian dialogue with the ASEAN was launched mostly as a political initiative. Russia is often perceived in the Asia-Pacific region as a rather political, than economic figure, and the EAEU – as a pure Russian integration project. However EAEU-ASEAN interaction has certain potential to convert political “resource” of Russia and the EAEU into the first steps of real economic integration of post-Soviet space with Southeast Asia

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

ASEAN Dialogue Partners: States, cooperating with the ASEAN and sharing mission and vision of the Association. Cooperation is based on joint decisions and joint planning and implementation of cooperation activities. Cooperation is more focused on larger programs of mutual benefit, which have impact on the development of Southeast Asia and the dialogue relations.

ASEAN Secretariat: A unit in the framework of the ASEAN. It coordinates works of the ASEAN organs and assists to implementation of ASEAN projects and activities.

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN): A regional inter-government organization, uniting ten states of Southeast Asia, which promotes inter-government cooperation and facilitates economic, political, security, military, educational, and socio-cultural integration among its members and other countries.

Eurasian Economic Commission (EAEC): The permanent regulatory body of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) that aims to ensure the functioning and development of the EAEU.

Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU): An international organization for regional economic integration on the Post-Soviet space. It has international legal personality. The EAEU entered into force since the beginning of 2015 and consists of Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Russia.

Greater Eurasian Partnership: The Eurasian initiative of Russia, aimed at the formation of a complex, multi-level system of multilateral cooperation with the participation of the EAEU, the ASEAN and the SCO countries.

Indo-Pacific Region: A concept of the expanded Asia-Pacific region with inclusion of the area of the Indian Ocean. This concept is promoted by the United States under conditions of rise of contradictions with China.

One Belt, One Road (OBOR), or ‘Belt and Road’ Initiative (BRI): The Chinese infrastructure mega-project, aimed at connectivity with Europe and followed by investments from China.

Pivot to the East (or ‘Povorot na Vostok’): A concept of Russian government and complex of measures, having been realized in the 2000-2010s and oriented for the enlargement of cooperation with the Asia-Pacific region and development of Eastern territories of Russia.

Chapter 15

Eurasian Economic Union and Iran: From Negotiation Process to the Operation of the Free Trade Zone

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ABSTRACT

The EAEU and Iran signed an Interim agreement on the creation of Free Trade Zone in May 2018. This agreement is opening a new stage in the development of relations at the bilateral and multilateral levels. The document was concluded for three years and provides for the reduction or cancellation of import customs duties on a broad list of goods. This chapter analyzes the negotiation process for the creation of Free Trade Zone, as well as promising areas of cooperation between the EAEU and Iran. The Eurasian Economic Union is interested in developing a special relationship with Iran not only in trade but also in the development of the infrastructure of the International North-South Transport Corridor. The chapter also provides an analysis of the Anzali Free Trade Zone as one of the most successful and rapidly developing economic zones of Iran and an important link in the development of the International North-South Transport Corridor.

INTRODUCTION

The current stage of the development of regional integration groups are characterized by the process of searching for effective formats of interaction and adaptation to new challenges of the world economic system. Since 2014, it has updated the process of creating a new integration association in the format of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU). May 29 of this year was five years since the signing of the basic document for the development of Eurasian integration - the Treaty on the Eurasian Economic Union. In addition, 2019 must pass under the sign of the 25th anniversary of the idea of Eurasian economic

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integration, since it was first heard in a speech by President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev at Moscow State University on March 29, 1994.

The Treaty on the Eurasian Economic Union along with the creation of the Eurasian Economic Union, the new impetus was given to the topic of economic integration in the post-Soviet space. In the past five years, the rules and institutions to regulate EAEU activity were being formed; integration has been gaining momentum and gradually extending to external partners. In 2015–2016 international cooperation of the EAEU significantly increased. At present, the aggregate economic opportunities of the EAEU Member States create broad prospects for strengthening their influence on the development of the world economy. In addition to the successful work on the conclusion of the Free Trade Zone (FTZ) agreement with Vietnam, decisions were made to start negotiations on the conclusion of FTZ agreements with Egypt, Israel, India, Singapore, Serbia, and with Iran.

Iran is the important economic and strategic partner for the Eurasian Economic Union as whole and for each member of the EAEU separately. But Armenia has a special interest, because it is in economic and transport isolation, and the development of economic ties with Iran helps Armenia overcome this isolation.

The priority areas of cooperation between EAUE and Iran include: attracting Iranian investments; development of transport corridors in the direction of India, Pakistan, Iraq and the formation of the Eurasian transport space “North-South”; cooperation in the energy sector; an increase in the volume of trade in industrial and agricultural goods; intensification of cooperation in the humanitarian sphere and tourism.

On August 21, 2015, on the basis of an initiative by Armenia and Iran, the Council of the Eurasian Economic Commission decided to establish a joint research group to study the creation of a Free Trade Zone (FTZ).

The basis of the Free Trade Zone is the abolition of customs duties, which, in fact, should stimulate the growth of trade, but in the case of Iran, it is necessary to discuss non-tariff restrictions on mutual trade. In particular it is important to conduct parallel negotiations on the development of transport and logistics infrastructure, which affects the pricing of goods, as well as the use of national currencies in mutual settlements, which reduces the financial costs of converting into dollars and euros. Ultimately, it should be the new stage of interaction between the IRI and the EAEU, not only an increase in commodity turnover should occur, but also a diversification of all areas of economic cooperation.

The purpose of this chapter is to identify the economic feasibility and political significance of the conclusion of the trade agreement between the EAEU and Iran.

The analysis is based mainly on analytical materials of Eurasian Economic Commission, Eurasian Economic Union, Eurasian Development Bank and Russian International Affairs Council and national resources mainly. The comprehensive study on the development of cooperation between the EAEU and Iran has not been written, but some aspects are considered by such Russian, Iranian, Armenian and Kazakh authors as E. Vinokurov, D. Trenin, N. Kozhanov, V. Lepekhin, E. Kuz'mina, M. Lagutina, M. Lapenko, N. Dunamalyan, A. Gussarova, R. Dragneva, S. Kashkumbayev et al.

This chapter consists of three parts. The first part is devoted to analyzing of the interest of the EAEU and IRI in the creating special formats of interaction, mechanisms and priorities of international activity of the Eurasian economic union. The second part considers negotiation's process for the creation FTZ and the current agenda of the relations between Iran and EAEU. The third part considers the role of Iran in the implementation of the project of the international transport corridor “North-South” and special economic zones.

Background

Formation of the EAEU-Iran Free Trade Zone is not only feasible, it is a promising project according to most researchers. Sanctions of USA and EU have entailed ill ramifications in the economy of Iran, and Iranian export income has tumbled (Iran Exports). Thus Iran needs new partners and new economic project (Dunamalyan Norair, 2019).

Iran holds a potential to export goods to a new market. New markets will help Iranian factories and Iranian private sector to recover their financial position. At a short term Iran will hold the potential to export goods such as food products, fruits, dry fruits, construction materials, and also electronic and mechanical equipment to Eurasian Economic Union (Eurasian Economic Union - a good opportunity for Iran...).

Close ties between the Iranian and Russia and China within the framework of the EAEU and the SCO would transform Iran into a real economic leader of the Middle East and Eurasia. It is Interesting for Iran that the EAEU has an integrated single market of 183 million people and a gross domestic product of over \$4 trillion (Eurasian Economic Integration, 2018).

Western economic sanctions forcing and Russia also to seek new and actually sovereign and reliable allies, partners. Iran recorded a non-oil trade surplus of \$1.69 billion in the last fiscal year (March 2018-19). The country's overall non-oil foreign trade during the 12 months stood at \$86.92 billion (Iran Registers \$1.7b...).

A draft agreement between Iran and EAEU was signed in Yerevan, Armenia, on July 5, 2017 after more than a year of negotiations for levying preferential export tariffs on 350 Iranian industrial products in return for 180 commodities from EAEU.

Temporary agreement between Iran and EAEU on the formation of a free trade zone was signed in Astana, Kazakhstan, on May 17, 2018. The main possible advantage is reduction in import duties and establishment of a transparent trade environment. Iranian export to the member states of Eurasian Economic Union, namely Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Russia, will either be fully exempt from customs duty or enjoy a duty cut of up to 80% (Interim Agreement signed between the EAEU and Iran...).

The agreement as it stands will only last for a three-year period as a test case for developing further relations. The agreement will either be extended as is or followed by greater liberalization.

MAIN FOCUS OF THE CHAPTER

Mutual interests of Iran and the Eurasian Economic Union

Iran and the EAEU negotiated for 18 months for creating the free trade zone, during which Iran's Minister of Communications and Information Technology Mahmoud Vaezi and Minister for Trade of the Eurasian Economic Commission Veronika Nikishina examined different dimensions of the agreement.

The agreement with Iran, signed on May 17, 2018, came about in a different geopolitical context from first agreement of FTZ with Vietnam. The imposition of Western sanctions and developments in the Syrian Civil War gave a new impetus for cooperation, including a boost for sectoral relations and bilateral deals to promote customs facilitation, transit, and currency transfers.

Iran is an important economic and strategic partner for the Eurasian Economic Union as a whole, and each member of the EAEU individually. Priority areas of cooperation can be identified as:

- 1) Attracting Iranian investments;
- 2) The development of transport corridors in the direction of India, Pakistan, Iraq and the creation of the Eurasian transport space “North-South”;
- 3) Cooperation in the energy sector;
- 4) Increase trade in industrial and agricultural goods;
- 4) Intensification of cooperation in the humanitarian sphere and tourism.

Significant role in the development of special relations of the EAEU countries and Iran plays Kazakhstan. In the face of deteriorating macroeconomic Nur-Sultan is interested in finding new trading partners and foreign investors, and through the active position of Kazakhstan in the Iranian stream to intensify the whole process of interaction with Eurasian economic union (Kuzmina E., 2016).

Roadmap for the development of trade and also economic and investment cooperation between the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Islamic Republic of Iran was signed in during the visit of the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran Hassan Rouhani to Kazakhstan in September 2014. The trade turnover between Kazakhstan and Iran ranges to \$1-1.5 billion annually, however, the parties have repeatedly expressed their support for opportunity to bring it to at least \$ 3 billion (Kazakhstan i Iran...). Revitalization economic cooperation was supposed to the beginning of the full-fledged work launched in 2014 by railroad from Zhanaozen to Gyzylgaya- Bereket - Etrek - Gorgan.

The Russian Federation also puts serious efforts to enhance cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran. In 2018, trade between Russia and Iran amounted to \$ 1,75 billion, in 2017 it was \$1,7 billion, in 2016 - \$ 2 billion, in 2015 – \$ 1,3 billion (Tovarooborot Rossii s Iranom).

In particular, Moscow is also interested in development of the North-South transport corridor, energy investment cooperation in the expansion and diversification of mutual trade. Russian auto industry, aviation industry and shipbuilders are ready for to implement joint projects with Iran, for example AvtoVAZ, GAZ and KAMAZ are already negotiating to organize an assembly in Iran production. Oil company “LUKOIL” and Russian giant “Rosatom” are also preparing for active cooperation with Tehran.

In turn, the policy of the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Hassan Rouhani, is aimed at developing comprehensive cooperation between Iran and Russia on a mutually beneficial basis. In the same time the bilateral economic dialogue in recent years has been developing in waves, which was partly due to US sanctions in the banking sector, which prevented the disclosure of export and import potential in relations between the two countries (Rouhani).

Another trend in the economic interaction of Russia and Iran is the dominance of state cooperation companies and the lack of involvement of private business in designated process. The lack of bilateral knowledge of the cultural and business environment, the specifics of tax policy and business administration in both countries also obstruct the development of business contacts (Vakhshiheh, 2019).

Armenia also occupies an important position, having a direct border with Iran and experience in trade cooperation. There are a number of joint economic projects in the field of energy and transport infrastructure. The economic and political ties between Armenia and Iran have a long history. Among the EAEU countries, Armenia ranks third in terms of trade with Iran, after Russia and Kazakhstan, but Iran traditionally plays an important role in the formation of Armenia’s foreign trade - about 4-5% of the total foreign trade.

Eurasian Economic Union and Iran

Despite this, Armenia's export to Iran is still unstable (mutual trade 2015 – \$136 million, 2016 – \$114 million, 2017 - \$109 million, 2018 - \$154 million) (Statistical Committee of the Republic of Armenia). The problem of the low export of Armenian goods to Iran is connected depend on the size of the Armenia's economies and on the procedural difficulties of certification of goods and high duties.

As for relations between Iran and Belarus, Iran and Kyrgyzstan, they are developed at a low level but have the potential for development.

The competitive advantages of the IRI for the integration group of the EAEU are the availability of financial resources, capacious domestic market, geographical proximity (maritime boundary and the possibility of direct road and railway), the possibility of reintegration South Caucasus and the withdrawal of Armenia from transport isolation. In addition, in virtue of to cooperation with Iran, the Eurasian Economic Union gets the opportunity to create the Eurasian transport corridor "North-South" and getting the shortest path to the Gulf countries and Southeast Asia, as well as China.

In April 2015, the meeting of the former chairman of the EEC Board Viktor Khristenko was held at the Eurasian Economic Commission with Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Russia Mehdi Sanai, during which was discussed not only bilateral cooperation with the Russian Federation, but also the format of further cooperation between the EAEU and Iran for the long term. During the meeting, Viktor Khristenko said that Iran is an important partner of all member countries of the Union, and the development of cooperation between EAEU and Iran are relevant to the overall work to strengthen the economic stability of the region (Khristenko Viktor).

The parties agreed to hold a number of expert high level meetings including negotiation about the possibility of creating a FTZ. In Iranian Media reports referring to Mehdi Sanai reported that that Iran intends in a short time to join the Eurasian Economic Union.

Now Eurasian Economic Union regulates the most of the external economic activity of the countries participating in this bloc. One of the forms of interaction with external partners it is the creation of a Free trade zone, such the format is already being implemented with Vietnam (in 2015) and is being discussed with Israel, Egypt and India. Free trade zone is the classic mechanism for building mutually beneficial relations with foreign trade partners. Such form was suggested for agenda of cooperation with Iran.

Negotiation Process and Agreement Between EAEU and Iran

Informal consultations and bilateral negotiations on the creation of the Zone the Free trade of the EAEU with Iran were carried out within activities of the Eurasian Economic Commission since the summer 2015. On the agenda of this issue put forward by Armenia, the only EAEU member state with a land the border with Iran, and most of all interested in solving this issue. The President and the Government of Armenia considered that the FTA with Iran will fill with trade and economic specifics and industrial policy, will contribute deepening and expanding economic ties, energy co-operation and the creation of new jobs. Moreover, for the republic, the inclusion of Iran in the process of Eurasian economic integration is of strategic importance in ensuring political, economic and energy security (Dunamalyan Norair, 2019).

On August 21, 2015, on the basis of an initiative by Armenia and Iran, the Council of the Eurasian Economic Commission decided to establish a joint research group to study the creation of an FTA.

The task of the created structure is to give concrete proposals on the conclusion of trade and economic relations between Iran and the EAEU countries to a new level, to offer the format of the agreement, which would allow to fully realizing the potential of joint economic development. For this, it was

necessary to analyze in detail the structure of the economies, the peculiarities of doing business, mutual trade, the tax system, etc.

The work of the research group was a preparatory stage for the negotiations on the creation of a Free trade area. Following the results of their work, the group presented detailed report on the advisability of signing the contraction the FTA, which should have guided the presidents of the EAEU countries in making this decision. The work of the commission was complex and multifaceted (Eurasian Economic Union begins...).

The basis of the Free Trade Zone is the abolition of customs duties, which, in fact, should stimulate growth trade, however, in the case of Iran, it was necessary to discuss non-tariff restrictions on mutual trade. In addition, it was necessary to conduct parallel negotiations on the development of the transport and logistics infrastructure, which influences the pricing of goods, as well as on the using of national currencies in settlements, which reduces financial costs when converting to dollars and euro. Ultimately, in virtue of to the new stage of interaction between the IRI and the EAEU, not only an increase in commodity turnover should occur, but also a diversification of all areas of economic cooperation.

In May 2016, a joint research group of Eurasian Economic Council met with Iran on the prospects for concluding an FTA agreement.

A draft agreement between Iran and EAEU was signed in Yerevan, Armenia, on July 5, 2017 after more than a year of negotiations for levying preferential export tariffs on 350 Iranian industrial products in return for 180 commodities from EAEU.

Interim Agreement was signed by the EAEU and Iran on May 17, 2018 at the Astana Economic Forum. The document provides two stages of the creation of an FTZ: the first stage is the preferential agreement of a temporary nature (temporary agreement) for a three-year period; the second stage implies the signing of a full-format agreement on the FTA between the EAEU and Iran, if both parties will decide that the preferential trade is effective.

The objectives of the Agreement are the following:

- (a) to liberalise and facilitate trade in goods between the Parties through, *inter alia*, reduction or elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers;
- (b) to create a base for formation of a free trade area in which in accordance with international rules, standards and practices¹ duties and other restrictive regulations on commerce shall be eliminated in respect of substantially all the trade between the Parties;
- (c) to support economic and trade cooperation between the Parties;
- (d) to establish a framework to enhance closer cooperation in the fields agreed in this Agreement and facilitate communications between the Parties.

In order to realize these aims the Parties shall establish a business dialogue, aimed at fostering cooperation between the business communities of the Parties and conducted between representatives of such business communities of the Parties. The Parties hereby establish the Committee on Trade in Goods.

Articles of the Agreement consider Anti-Dumping and Countervailing Measures, Sanitary and Phytosanitary measures, Rules of origin, Preferential tariff treatment and another.

The implementation of this agreement should certainly enhance mutual trade. According to experts, the total export volume of the EAEU states may grow by 73% in the long term. However, Tigran Sargsyan, Chairman of the EEC Board, noted that the total trade turnover between the parties in the future could increase to 150%.

Eurasian Economic Union and Iran

Russian Energy Minister Aleksandr Novak has said that Iran could become the sixth full member in the future. Today's Iran-EAEU free trade agreement will function as a test to determine the viability of long-term Iranian membership of the trading bloc. Novak stated,

“The move to enter into a temporary agreement making for a free trade zone to be set up between Iran and the Eurasian Economic Union, which is currently at an advanced stage, will obviously trigger further development of our bilateral trade and expansion of investment cooperation” (Iran Signs Free Trade Agreement).

Opening the Iranian market is an important advantage for all EAEU countries. But one of their problems may be competition between the EAEU members for the Iranian market, so it is important to come to an agreement.

Good example of the decision this issue becomes the trade of wheat.

The Ministries of Agriculture of Russia, Kazakhstan and Iran concluded a tripartite memorandum of understanding on trade in wheat. The arrangement on signing the memorandum has become one of the results of negotiations under the Interim Agreement leading to the formation of a free trade area between the Eurasian Economic Union and Iran. The signing ceremony that took place on February 12, 2019 in Moscow was attended by the Member of the Board – Minister in charge of trade of the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC) Veronika Nikishina.

Veronika Nikishina expressed her hope that the memorandum signed between Russia, Kazakhstan – the key suppliers of wheat to the global market – and Iran would be the first step on the way to revive full-value chains for supplies of high quality wheat from the EAEU to the market of Iran and the entire region.

The FTZ with Iran will serve as a great incentive for the development of the transport and logistics infrastructure of both parties, which has a number of problems that impede trade.

In connection with the creation of an FTZ, a new point of trade and economic attraction will be created, which, first of all, should have a positive effect on the development of the international North-South transport corridor. The sea route implies the development of a corridor through the Caspian Sea, which directly connects Iran and Russia. On the land route, development can be made towards the organization of railway transit through Azerbaijan.

The economic situation of Iran became complicated last period. After the declaration of European countries about the executing of trade with Iran, the only escape way is EAEU for Iran. Actually, the integration of IRI to the EAEU is not a new topic. Iran has already thought about it for several years. But, starting of the second wave of USA sanctions and executing of trade with Iran accelerated this issue. Iran tries that they are not separated from the world, omit the economic crisis. It is a true factor that integration to the EEU is directly related to this.

FTA with Iran will serve as a great incentive for the development of transport and logistics infrastructure of both parties.

Transport and Logistics Infrastructure in the Relations of Iran and EAEU

The successful implementation of the cooperation project between Iran and the EAEU largely depends on the development of the transport system, in this case mainly from Corridor “North-South”.

International Transport Corridor “North-South” (International North-South Transport Corridor - IN-STC) - this is a common definition for 7200 km sea, road and railway route connecting northern Europe and India (Southeast Asia) through the Persian Gulf. It is the shortest multimodal transport route on this one direction. The estimated bandwidth of the corridor - from 20 to 30 million tons of cargo per year. Transit time may be reduced to 25-30 days compared with 40-60 days, which in currently, cargoes are on the route of the Suez Canal.

North-South transit corridor is the shortest multimodal transportation road linked Indian ocean and Persian Gulf via Iran and Russia to the Northern Europe. The estimated capacity of the corridor is about 20-30 mln. dollar goods per year. And it reduce the time and cost by about 30 to 40 percent (Iran’s top officials..). Russia has invested about \$1.2 bln. dollars, India has also huge invested into this project. But the major problem is the calculating this project. As we mentioned the question is the linking a railroad between Astara and Resht in North Iran.

The corridor gives an opportunity to Iran to transport the goods from India west coast to Iran Bender Abbas and one other port to Central Asia states and Russia. This is the best chance for Iran to use this project to export more goods with low transit fee to get more economical and political benefits to this project.

By opinion of Gulf State Analytics expert Omid Shokri “The corridor gives an opportunity to Iran to transport the goods from India west coast to Iran Bender Abbas and one other port to Central Asia states and Russia. This is the best chance for Iran to use this project to export more goods with low transit fee to get more economical and political benefits to this project” (Iran’s top officials..).

An important issue is the economic viability of this international transport route in the face of fierce competition of international projects in Eurasia - this is the Chinese initiative “Belt and Road Initiative” and the American initiative of the New Silk Road and the multimodal transport and transit corridor project Lapis Lazuli / Lazurit (Afghanistan -Turkmenistan-Azerbaijan-Georgia-Turkey).

The answer to this issue is the complex content of the North-South ITC, a combination of two main approaches to the ITC: the functional and the process. It should be not just a transport corridor, but also a multifunctional economic zone, created conditions for the functioning of the transport corridor. One of the options for improving competitiveness and profitability, maximizing the potential is the creation of special economic zones along the route of the ITC. Consider as an example the created free economic zone (hereinafter referred to as the FEZ) of Enzeli in Iran.

Iran, located at the junction of the Middle East regions, the South Caucasus and Central Asia, at the intersection of strategic trade routes between Europe and Asia, occupies a favorable geopolitical position. The decisive factor in influencing Iran’s economic and financial policy has long been and is now once again unilateral sanctions by the US and its allies on the country’s fuel and energy and financial sectors, forcing Iran’s leadership not only to pay particular attention to the monetary and financial situation of the country, but also look for new ways adaptation of production structures, financial organizations and the economy as a whole to the impact of sanctions restrictions.

The creation of free and special economic zones is one of the most important directions of the economic policy of the Iranian leadership, including on overcoming the sanctions regime. At present, there are seven free (“Qeshm”, “Kish”, “Chabahar”, “Enzeli”, “Aras”, “Arvand” and “Maku”) and 16 special economic zones (SEZ) in Iran.

There are no restrictions on currency operations in the FEZ, and enterprises registered there are exempted from paying all taxes for 15 years. Free economic zones are extremely attractive for foreign capital. On the territory of the FEZ it is possible to register companies with fully foreign capital, which have the right of an independent legal entity and the possibility of creating branches in the main territory of Iran.

A special place among the free economic zones of Iran occupies the Enzeli free economic zone. This is due to the fact that this FEZ should become the main center of Iran's trade with the countries of the Caspian region. The territory of the FEZ "Enzeli" includes the territory of the port, through which a significant amount of imports of goods from Russia pass. Several Russian and Russian-Iranian joint ventures are residents of this free economic zone.

In order to increase traffic and passenger traffic with northern neighbors, the Iranian authorities decided to create a developed railway structure Qazvin-Resht-Anzeli-Astara along the North-South corridor to connect the railways of Iran, Azerbaijan and Russia. A trilateral agreement on road construction was signed in 2005 (Policy Framework...).

The length of the Qazvin-Rasht- Anzali -Astara railway on the Iranian section should be 375 kilometers. Within the framework of the project, 82 bridges with a total length of 17 kilometers and 53 tunnels with a total length of 22 kilometers should be built. According to the long-term plans, this path will harmoniously join the structure of the Azerbaijani and Russian railways (Policy Framework...). After the implementation of the project, Russia and Iran will be connected by rail with European countries, which will significantly reduce the delivery and cost of goods sent to the Asian and South-Eastern regions, in particular to India and the Indochinese Peninsula, and the need to send cargo through the now restless Suez channel or even around Africa.

At the same time, without waiting for the final implementation route "North-South", Azerbaijan Railways joined the fight for the transit of goods, initiating a temporary route for freight forwarders. A scheme has been developed whereby cargoes from India, Iran and other countries are transported to the Iranian Rasht by rail, and from there they are delivered to Azerbaijan by road. Since 2016, this temporary route has proved not only its viability, but also its considerable effectiveness. Thousands of tons of cargo were delivered by this route from Iran to Russia (Trans-Eurasian Land Transport Corridors).

Implementation of the project is not easy, mainly due to the lack of financial resources, as well as the tightening of the US sanctions regime against Iran. And, nevertheless, it is gradually approaching its full completion. Timing is of great importance for the development of the North-South ITC.

The timing of the start of operation of the new railway line Resht - Astara (Iran) - Astara (Azerbaijan) is of great importance for the development of the North-South ITC. On 27 March, 2018 in the presence of high-ranking representatives of Iran and Azerbaijan, the opening ceremony of the terminal for handling grain cargo and the first phase of the Astara-Astara railway section took place.

For the full launch of the North-South corridor to the Iranian side it remains only to complete the Rasht-Qazvin section of the route (164 kilometer). Iranian side explains delay in project implementation by lack of financial resources. Similarly, another missing link is the standard railway line 167 kilometers of ruts connecting Astara and Rasht, an Iranian Caspian city on the border with Azerbaijan. But, taking into account the strategic importance for the Azerbaijani side of the North-South project, Azerbaijan took upon itself a part of the expenses - about \$ 500 million (Iran Foreign Policy).

In addition to land and air routes for trade with northern neighbors, in the province of Gilan created several seaports. The main one is the cargo port of Anzali. It has a modern infrastructure capable of meeting the needs of foreign businessmen. The port of Anzali has 10 specialized berths for unloading and loading cargo up to 6 million tons per year. Its area is 95 hectares and it is able to serve vessels with

a displacement of up to 6000 tons (Anzali Free Zone). The port has large grain elevator. Ferries and ships go from it to Astrakhan, Makhachkala, Olya, Baku, Turkmenbashi and other coastal cities of the Caspian Sea.

Anzeli free zone consists of three main blocks:

Block 1. The Golshansky District and the trade area of 2091 hectares of land, including agricultural land with low population density and residential areas, access to beautiful beaches and recreational and tourist facilities.

Block 2. Industrial Park Hasanroad and related area of approximately 946 hectares, which includes industrial park, and national park areas.

Block 3 Anzeli Harbor area of hectares, which was provided for loading and unloading ship cargo (Anzali Free Zone).

The effectiveness of the activity of the Anzali FEZ is important both for the internal socio-economic situation in the IRI, but also capable of creating additional opportunities for the formation of a special economic zone in the framework of the North-South ITC. The Iranian experience is already being analyzed and used by the Russian side.

Experience of the Iranian Free Economic Zone “Anzali” used when creating a special economic zone “Lotos”. The Lotos SEZ was established in 2014 in the Astrakhan Region (Narimanovskiy District), on the banks of the Volga River, and is still the only Russian SEZ in the Caspian Sea, providing residents with substantial tax breaks and a free customs zone regime. The cooperation agreement was signed by the leadership of Anzali and Lotos on October 26, 2017 in the framework of the fourth meeting of the working group on cooperation in the field of industry of the Permanent Russian-Iranian Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation (Anzali Free Zone).

Russia and Iran are generally interested in stepping up economic cooperation, including through additional capabilities of the North-South ITC.

At the same time, China is actively working in this area. For example, November 11, 2018 during a trip of the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Managing Director of the Anzali FEZ Dr. Reza Masrouf to China, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the Anzali Free Economic Zone and the Association China’s economic cooperation and investment (Anzali Free Zone). The document was signed by both parties in order to strengthen bilateral relations and trade relations, bilateral trade and bilateral economic cooperation between Iran and China, expanding direct investment and financing. Iranian projects by Chinese companies, as well as the expansion of ties, the promotion of investment and the development of a new China-Kazakhstan-Iran corridor (Anzali Free Zone).

Thus, the competition of international transport corridors and their economic filling with special economic zones are increasing, therefore, Russia, Azerbaijan and India, as the main locomotives of ITC North-South, need to take into account the intense competition from China and not to miss the time and opportunity. This study needs to be continued, because the signed agreement on a free trade zone between the EAEU and Iran is temporary. It is important to evaluate all the advantages and disadvantages of this project, in order to objectively assess the need for such a format of interaction in the long term.

SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Iran is under sanctions faced because of this many problems. Iran is searching some way in order to overcome sanctions. Due to sanctions Iran has a very hard problem to find fine financial companies or fine financial institutions maybe which are interested in the project of cooperation with EAEU. The EAEU's business is also interested in developing relations with Iran but needs certain guarantees.

In order for the project of cooperation between Iran and the Eurasian Economic Union will be successful it is necessary to take a number of measures:

- to develop arrangements to overcome the sanctions regime against Iran and Russia, especially in the financial sphere;
- EAEU's countries to closely coordinate their actions with regard to Iran, to prevent internal competition for the Iranian market;
- to step up efforts to form an international transport corridor North-South and all related logistics;
- to use the Free economic zone systems more efficiently.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

This study needs to be continued, because the signed agreement on a free trade zone between the EAEU and Iran is temporary. It is important to evaluate all the advantages and disadvantages of this project, in order to objectively assess the need for such a format of interaction in the long term.

It is necessary to do an analysis of import and exports, assess changes in legislation, the advantages and disadvantages of the Free Trade Zone for Iran and for all members of Eurasian Economic Union.

CONCLUSION

The agreement on the FTA of the EAEU and Iran has been ratified and will officially enter into force from the beginning of November 2019. This is the first time since the victory of the Islamic revolution that Iran has been actively participating in the regional economic agreement.

This Agreement leading to formation of a free trade area between the EAEU and its Member States, of the one part, and the Islamic Republic of Iran, of the other part could become a first step towards further trade and economic integration between the EAEU and its member states and Iran.

Thus, at this moment, a unique situation has been created around the return of Iran to big politics and the world economy, which forms the prerequisites for significant intensification of regional cooperation within the framework of the existing integration blocs.

In general, largely due to the expansion of cooperation with Iran, the Eurasian Economic Union can increase its influence in the global economic environment, as well as significantly improve its regional attractiveness in the Middle East. In addition, this will give the EAEU a certain dynamics in the context of current and upcoming negotiation processes with partner integration projects of the EU, the USA and China.

Main issues are dependence from dollars in trade and completion between members of EAEU. Russia and Iran, trapped in the regular sanctions list of Washington as allies of Syria, will try to remove dollar from the trade.

The second problem is competition between the EAEU countries for the Iranian market. Each member of the EAEU has very long and deep relations with Iran. But one issue of integration between Iran and EAEU become competition between member's countries for Iranian market, especially between Russia and Kazakhstan.

Both Russia and Kazakhstan, as drivers of Eurasian integration, should take into account that the process of interaction between Iran and the Eurasian Economic Union as a whole should be comprehensive and coordinated, meeting the interests of all the countries participating in the union. The process of creating a free trade zone and the format of relations "EAEU + Iran" will not be easy and fast, since so far Tehran has a policy of protectionism towards its producers and will gradually carry out trade liberalization in accordance with the WTO criteria.

That is why Moscow and Nur-Sultan need to unite their efforts, building economic policy in the Middle and Near East areas not on a bilateral basis, but within the framework of a Eurasian integration association. This will allow overcoming the existing competition and achieving the synergy effect of the available opportunities. Moreover, it should be borne in mind that Tehran will undoubtedly use the competition of the two centers to reduce its own costs by encouraging competition between the participants of the EAEU. Another procedural approach is worth considering. For Iran, as a foreign economic partner, there is slowness in the implementation and execution of decisions made, the change of emphasis in previously reached agreements. For example, more than 70 different agreements were signed with both Russia and Kazakhstan at this stage, but most of them remained at the initial or zero stages of implementation.

This positive example should be used in other areas of cooperation with Iran.

And of course, it is very important to develop not only trade between the EAEU and Iran, but also extensive economic cooperation, and in particular, to pursue a coordinated transport policy in order to gain competitive advantages.

The first three years of operation of the Free Trade Zone will determine whether it will be temporary or permanent.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Common Customs Tariff of the Eurasian Economic Union (CCT EAEU): A set of rates of customs duties applied to the goods imported from third countries into the customs territory of the Union, as classified in accordance with the Single Commodity Nomenclature of Foreign Economic Activity of the Eurasian Economic Union.

Common Economic Space: The space consisting of the territories of the Member States implementing similar/comparable and uniform economy regulation mechanisms based on market principles and the application of harmonized or unified legal norms, and having a common infrastructure.

Digital Platform of the EAEU: A digital platform that implements access of interested parties to digital assets of the EAEU, state and certified private digital services within the digital space of the EAEU, which ensures operation of industry digital platforms, integration with digital platforms of other countries and integration entities, built on the basis of a unified architecture (model) of the EAEU.

Eurasian Economic Commission (EAEC): The permanent regulatory body of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), which aimed to ensure the functioning and development of the EAEU, and developing proposals for the further development of integration.

Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU): International organization of regional economic integration with international legal personality, established by the Treaty on the Eurasian Economic Union.

Free Economic Zone (FEZ): Specially allocated territory with preferential customs, tax and currency regimes, which encourages the inflow of foreign investment, joint business activities and development of export potential.

Free-trade zone (FTZ): A form of international economic integration, according to which trade restrictions between member countries of the integration association are abolished and customs duties and quotas are reduced or canceled. In this case, each of the members maintains its own trade regime in relation to third countries.

Internal market of the EAEU: The economic space with free movement of goods, labour, services and capital.

International agreements of an Union with a Third Party: International treaties concluded with third states, their integration associations, and international organizations.

One Belt, One Road (OBOR), or 'Belt and Road' Initiative (BRI): The Chinese infrastructure mega-project which aimed at connectivity with Europe via Central Asia to increase trade between the Asia Pacific Region (APR) and Europe.

The International North–South Transport Corridor (INSTC): A 7,200-km-long multi-mode network of ship, rail, and road route for moving freight between India, Iran, Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Russia, Central Asia and Europe.

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Index

“North-South” Project 166, 173
 “Small State” Strategy 173
 “Smart power” 145, 150
 “soft power” 128, 135-139, 141-150
 2018 Armenian “Velvet Revolution” 173

A

Armenia 14, 40, 46, 67-68, 74, 77-78, 84, 87, 90, 93, 97, 104, 110, 116-117, 119, 124, 128, 134, 140, 152-173, 185, 216, 218, 230, 237, 244, 246, 271, 274-278, 286, 288
 ASEAN Dialogue Partners 271
 ASEAN Secretariat 251, 256, 258-260, 265, 267, 271
 Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) 239, 249
 Asia-Pacific region 30, 36, 86, 143, 220, 251-253, 255, 264, 271-272
 Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) 42, 163, 251, 271

B

Belarus 9, 13, 23, 36-40, 44-46, 50, 64-68, 71-72, 74, 77-79, 82, 84-86, 93-94, 96-97, 100, 104-105, 110, 113, 115-117, 119, 124-125, 134, 164, 167, 173-192, 200-201, 207, 212, 216, 237, 271, 275, 277
 Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) 163, 210, 215, 232, 234, 249-250, 263, 280

C

Central Asia 15, 25, 27-29, 36, 46, 48, 57, 67, 72, 85, 90, 115, 124, 196, 200, 202, 207, 216, 222, 228-231, 234-246, 249, 280, 287-288

China 1, 3, 10, 22, 25-27, 29, 36, 40, 42-43, 65-66, 72-73, 83, 88-89, 93, 97, 109, 137, 161, 194, 202, 210-211, 213-219, 221-222, 227, 229-231, 234-236, 238-249, 252-255, 261-263, 267, 271-272, 275, 277, 282-283
 civil society 10, 117-124, 127-134, 137-138, 140, 158-159, 169
 Classical Eurasianism 1
 Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) 7, 46, 58-59, 64, 66, 93, 152, 196-197
 Common Customs Tariff of the Eurasian Economic Union (CCT EAEU) 287
 Common Economic Space 26, 37-38, 48, 50, 65, 67, 71, 74, 78-79, 94, 96-97, 113, 116, 183, 191, 196, 199-200, 210, 217, 221, 224, 236, 239, 287
 common market 29, 44, 70, 94, 96-97, 101, 105-106, 112-114, 116, 120, 162, 166, 172, 200, 212
 Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) 16, 22, 26, 33, 36, 39, 57, 76, 78, 81-82, 93, 124, 135, 138-139, 148, 150, 155, 171, 197, 237
 comparative regionalism 16, 20, 32, 34, 78
 complementarity 21, 59, 152, 154-155, 173, 236
 Complementarity Policy 173
 connectivity 15, 36, 64, 210, 232, 234-243, 245, 247, 249-250, 252, 259, 263-264, 272, 288
 Constructivism 19-20, 37-38, 43, 48, 50
 cooperation 2, 7-11, 14-16, 21-22, 24, 26-33, 36-40, 42-51, 54-59, 61, 63-68, 72, 74, 76-79, 81-88, 90-94, 97, 99-101, 103-105, 108, 110-111, 113, 117, 120, 123-124, 128, 135, 138-142, 145-146, 148, 150, 152-155, 157, 160-164, 166, 173, 178-182, 188, 193, 195-197, 199-202, 204-205, 208-222, 224-232, 234-243, 245-246, 249-266, 268, 270-279, 282-284
 Cultural Diplomacy 144, 150

Index

Customs Union 23-25, 37-38, 40, 42, 44, 48-49, 51, 53-54, 65, 71, 79, 82, 85-87, 93, 96, 113-114, 153-155, 157, 169, 173, 175, 179, 183, 185, 189, 192, 200, 212, 252, 254, 256

D

Digital Platform of the EAEU 231, 287
digital space of the EAEU 231, 287
domestic policy 153, 157, 163-164, 168, 196

E

EAEU Common Customs Tariff 191
EAEU Common Economic Space 94, 116, 191
EAEU Common Economic Space, International Economic Integration 94
EAEU Customs Union 192
English School 37-38, 43, 47-50, 56-57, 60-64, 68-70
Eurasia 1-14, 16-18, 21-22, 24, 26-35, 37-38, 42-43, 45, 51-53, 57, 64-67, 70-71, 73-74, 79-80, 82-84, 86-87, 89, 91-92, 119, 125-126, 129, 131-135, 160-161, 163-164, 166, 169-171, 173, 186, 190, 193-196, 198-199, 202, 204-205, 207, 209-211, 213-215, 218, 220-222, 224-228, 230-231, 234-236, 238-240, 242-244, 246-249, 253-254, 261-262, 265-266, 275, 280, 284, 286-287
Eurasian Economic Commission (EAEC) 15, 134, 173, 231, 256, 271, 288
Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC) 44, 93, 96, 129, 161, 279
Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC) 7, 18, 36, 39, 65, 96, 154, 196, 200
Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) 1, 6, 14-18, 25, 29, 33, 36-38, 44-46, 50-53, 56, 64-65, 68, 71, 74, 76-79, 87-88, 90, 92-94, 113-119, 127, 131-135, 137, 142, 152, 155, 165-167, 169, 172, 174-175, 183-185, 188, 190-191, 193, 195, 197, 200-201, 207, 209-213, 215, 218-221, 224, 226-231, 234, 236, 244, 247-248, 250-252, 254-256, 258-261, 264-265, 267-268, 271, 273-279, 283-285, 287-288
Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Greater Eurasian Partnership Greater Eurasia 209
Eurasian idea 1-4, 6-8, 11, 13, 28, 52, 117, 126, 193-204, 206

Eurasian integration 1-3, 8, 10, 13-14, 16-18, 23, 31-35, 38-41, 50-51, 53, 60, 64-66, 73-74, 76-89, 95-96, 110-111, 115, 117-119, 123-132, 135, 137-139, 143, 152-155, 157, 160-162, 164-169, 171, 174-175, 183-187, 189, 193-200, 202-203, 206-207, 210-212, 220-221, 228, 230-231, 236, 239, 244, 251-254, 257, 271, 273, 284-285, 287
Eurasian Union (EAU) 4, 7-9, 13, 26, 29, 33, 41, 44, 46, 50-53, 64, 73, 83, 91, 119, 126, 132-133, 135, 167, 170, 189, 193-197, 199, 201-202, 205-206, 208, 211, 248, 267, 270, 285-286
Eurasianism 1-14, 18, 24-25, 28-29, 33, 42, 52, 73, 89, 91, 119-120, 125-126, 130-133, 152, 164, 193-199, 201-205, 207-208, 268
European Union (EU) 9, 20, 24, 27, 35, 37, 43, 45, 51, 59-60, 70, 89, 112-113, 126, 130, 136, 145, 154, 159, 166, 169, 172, 174-176, 179-180, 185, 187-188, 191, 200, 210, 220-221, 224, 234, 240, 243-244, 246, 248, 250, 256-257

F

foreign policy 2, 8-9, 12-13, 33, 44-45, 48-50, 54, 58-59, 63, 68, 72, 76, 80, 83, 85, 90, 96-98, 109, 123, 130-131, 135-142, 144, 146-147, 150, 152, 154, 157-158, 160, 162, 164-165, 167-168, 170-171, 173, 175, 181, 186, 188, 194, 196-198, 201-202, 204-205, 231, 236-237, 240, 242-243, 246-249, 252-255, 261, 266-267, 271, 281, 286-287
Free Economic Zone (FEZ) 288
Free Economic Zone Enzeli 273
free trade agreement 24, 228, 237, 251, 254-257, 259, 261-262, 264, 268, 270, 279, 285-286
Free-Trade Zone (FTZ) 231, 288

G

global security 56, 59-60, 71, 74
globalization 14, 18-19, 56, 72, 74, 78, 89-90, 136, 138, 172, 213
Greater Eurasia 1-2, 10-11, 16-17, 29, 42, 51, 65, 119, 132, 160-161, 164, 166, 169, 173, 186, 209-211, 213-214, 220-222, 224-226, 238-240, 242-244, 246-247, 249, 254, 261-262, 266
Greater Eurasian Partnership 3, 15, 30-31, 36, 97, 173, 209-211, 215, 221-222, 225-226, 232, 237-238, 250-252, 261-264, 266-268, 270-271

H

Hegemonic Stability Theory 37-38, 43, 45-46, 48-50

hegemony 6, 28, 42-43, 45-46, 48, 50, 52-54, 62, 71, 207, 231, 244

I

Indo-Pacific Region 253, 267, 271
 integration 1-3, 5, 7-11, 13-44, 46-54, 56-57, 59-60, 64-74, 76-98, 100-101, 103, 105-106, 108-120, 123-135, 137-139, 143, 145, 147, 152-158, 160-176, 179-180, 183-190, 193-222, 226-228, 230-232, 236-239, 244-257, 260-264, 269-271, 273-275, 277, 279, 283-285, 287-288
 integration policy 21, 116, 155, 167-168
 Internal market of the EAEU 288
 International agreements of an Union with a Third Party 288
 International Economic Integration 94, 114, 116, 231, 288
 International Transport Corridor “North-South” (International North-South Transport Corridor - INSTC) 280
 interregional cooperation 27, 56, 74, 210
 Iran 6, 10, 26, 87-89, 93, 161-163, 166, 169, 210-211, 213, 216, 219-220, 222, 227-228, 230, 273-288

L

Liberalism 37-38, 42-43, 47-50

M

Memorandum of understanding 215, 248, 251-252, 256-261, 264, 279, 282, 286

N

negative integration 94, 108, 116
 Neo-Classic Realism 37-38, 42-43, 48, 50
 neo-Eurasianism 1-8, 11, 18, 24, 44, 125, 195
 Neo-Functionalism 19, 37-38, 43, 48-50
 Neo-Gramscianism 43, 48
 Neo-Realism 19, 37-38, 43, 45, 48-50
 NGO 130-132, 134, 144, 147
 non-governmental organizations 117, 119, 123-124, 128-130, 133, 141, 143-144, 149

O

One Belt, One Road (OBOR), or ‘Belt and Road’ Initiative (BRI) 15, 36, 272, 288

P

path-dependence 174-179, 181, 184-187, 192
 Pivot to the East (or ‘Povorot na Vostok’) 246, 251-253, 265, 272
 positive integration 94, 108, 111, 116
 post-Soviet integration 3, 18, 37, 40, 46-47, 49, 66, 77, 80, 84, 204, 228
 post-Soviet space 1-3, 6-8, 10-11, 13, 16-17, 22, 24-32, 34, 39, 42-43, 45-46, 48, 50, 53, 56-57, 64-68, 70, 72, 74, 76, 79, 81, 84, 88-90, 117-119, 125, 127, 130, 137-138, 140-142, 146, 152, 160-161, 164, 174, 180, 184, 195, 197, 200-202, 211, 235, 237, 243, 252, 262, 264, 271, 274
 post-Soviet states 8-9, 39-40, 57, 67, 78, 81, 85, 91, 126, 184, 200
 pragmatic Eurasianism 1-4, 7, 9-11, 14, 18, 29, 52, 73, 126, 204-205, 207
 protectionism 54, 59, 98, 284
 Public Diplomacy (people’s diplomacy) 119, 123-124, 129-130, 132, 137-141, 144-147, 149-150

R

region 2-4, 9, 15, 17, 19-22, 24-25, 27-31, 36-43, 45-47, 49-50, 52, 54-55, 57-60, 63-65, 67, 70, 74, 76-77, 82, 84-90, 93, 98, 109, 115, 124, 126, 131, 135-137, 142-143, 145, 147, 149, 155, 160-161, 164-165, 167, 173-175, 184, 194-204, 207, 209-210, 214-215, 217, 220, 225-226, 237-240, 242-243, 246, 249, 251-253, 255, 264, 267, 269, 271-272, 277, 279, 281-282, 284, 288
 regional integration 3, 17, 19-20, 22, 26-27, 29-30, 33, 38-39, 48-49, 53-54, 56, 59-60, 64, 68, 74, 77-79, 92, 113, 117, 196, 200, 202, 206, 209, 215-216, 246, 250, 253, 273
 regional security 25, 57, 60, 63-64, 69-70, 74, 78, 91, 93, 202, 217, 221, 224
 regional security complex 25, 57, 60, 63-64, 69-70, 74
 regionalism 3, 9-10, 16-35, 38-40, 43, 47, 51, 53, 55, 59, 78, 84, 90-92, 95, 98, 109, 111-112, 161, 163, 169, 171, 210-211, 213, 227-228, 230-231, 236, 252
 regionalization 40, 55, 78, 90, 209, 213, 270
 RIAC 124, 127-128, 132, 134, 227, 231
 Rossotrudnichestvo is a Federal Agency for the Affairs of the Commonwealth of Independent States 150

Index

Russia 1-9, 11-16, 22-31, 33-53, 56-58, 64-68, 70, 72-74, 76-77, 79, 81-93, 96-98, 100, 104-105, 110, 114-119, 123-127, 131-132, 134-135, 137-149, 154-158, 162, 164, 167-190, 192, 194, 196, 198, 200-202, 205-207, 209-212, 215-216, 220-222, 227-232, 234-240, 242-244, 246-265, 267-273, 275-277, 279-284, 286-288

Russian Federation 2, 6, 12, 14, 17, 24-28, 31-32, 36, 39-40, 44, 71, 76-81, 85, 88, 93, 115, 117, 123-124, 128-131, 134-135, 137-142, 144-148, 155, 162, 189, 213, 221, 236, 243, 248, 261, 265-266, 268-269, 276-277

Russian foreign policy 13, 33, 54, 76, 83, 85, 90, 98, 123, 139, 142, 188, 236-237, 240, 247-248, 252-253

Russian World (the Russkiy Mir Foundation) 150

Russo-Armenian relations 152

S

Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) 7, 16, 26, 32, 42, 59, 85, 93, 164, 173, 196, 209-211, 213-216, 221, 224, 226-231, 261

Silk Road Economic Belt (SREB) 15, 36, 202, 210, 214, 219, 222, 226, 229-230, 232, 235, 247, 250, 262, 287

Singapore 10, 163, 213, 219-221, 244, 257-260, 263-264, 267-269, 274

single economic space 24, 44, 65, 79, 93, 126-127, 212, 221

soft power 54, 128, 135-139, 141-150

Southeast Asia 89, 210, 251-255, 257-264, 267, 271, 277, 280

Soviet legacy 1, 27-28, 174, 176, 186, 206

T

the CSTO 25-26, 66, 152, 154, 163-164, 168, 173

The Eurasian Development Bank(EDB) 134

the Eurasian Economic Union 1, 6, 15-18, 25, 29, 36-38, 44-46, 51-53, 56, 65, 68, 71, 74, 77-79, 87, 93, 113-115, 117-118, 127, 131-132, 134-135, 137, 142, 152, 155, 165, 167, 172, 174-175, 183-185, 188, 190-191, 195, 197, 200-201, 210-212, 215, 218-219, 221, 226-231, 236, 244, 247-248, 250-252, 254-256, 258-261, 264-265, 267-268, 271, 273-277, 279, 283-285, 287-288

The International North–South Transport Corridor (INSTC) 288

the post-Soviet space 1-3, 6-8, 10, 13, 16-17, 22, 24-32, 34, 39, 42-43, 45-46, 48, 50, 53, 56-57, 64-68, 70, 72, 76, 79, 81, 84, 88, 90, 117-119, 125, 127, 130, 137-138, 140-142, 146, 152, 160, 164, 174, 180, 184, 195, 197, 200-202, 211, 235, 237, 243, 252, 262, 271, 274

think tanks 120, 127-128, 133

V

Vietnam 10, 14, 26, 65, 87, 89, 163, 211, 219, 221, 228, 251-252, 254-259, 264, 267, 269-270, 274-275, 277

W

World Values Survey 122, 133-134