The West, Globalisation and Pussy Riot

Portrayals of Russia and Eurasia's Enemies in the Work of Aleksandr G. Dugin

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Geopolitics in post-Soviet Russia has become not only a respected scientific field, but also a tool of practical policy and to a certain degree a new ideology, which in the 1990s helped to fill the normative vacuum that arose due to the collapse of communism. Aleksandr G. Dugin holds an exclusive position among modern Russian geopoliticians. He is the author of a wide range of geopolitical publications and is a publicly influential intellectual who has long been a figure among the elite of Russian politics. At the centre of Dugin's work stands the notion of a bipolar structure of the world, which is divided into competing blocs of "Atlantic" and "Eurasian" power, which contradict one another in a civilizational sense. In Dugin's perspective, Russia as the core of Eurasian space must stand up to the efforts of the Atlantic blocs, headed by the USA, which (through globalization and international conspiracy) is attempting to rule the entire world by forcing its culture upon it. This paper will focus not only on this conflictive relationship, but also on the general portrayal of Russia's civilizational enemies in Dugin's work. An independent section of the paper is devoted to the Pussy Riot "scandal" in 2012, which Dugin describes in great detail as proof of an international conspiracy aiming to humiliate Russia.

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After the collapse of the Soviet Union and in reaction to the transformation of the international environment, a wide array of theoretical approaches began to develop in Russia that attempted to comment on the role that Russia should play in this new power configuration. The collapse of communism as a grand ideology and truth that the state regime stood upon and protected itself with created an ideological vacuum in Russia. Russian politics and society after the fall of the Soviet Union (and actually just shortly before it) found itself in a state lacking a unifying concept or some sort of state or national idea or ideology that would hold society together. Naturally, this situation provided space for representatives of various streams – not only politicians, but publically influential intellectuals, scientists, etc. These were often individuals who largely built their status on Soviet times in order to provide interpretations of what Russia is and what it should be. These interpretations ranged from the glorification of the Soviet epoch, placed in contrast with the problems of post-Soviet Russia,[1] to the idea of Orthodoxy as a pillar of new Russian state ideology.[2] During this debate, which took place in the political, academic, and public spheres, geopolitics quickly began to take hold, marking a renaissance in this field in post-Soviet Russia.[3] Thus, geopolitics became a kind of linking block between various ideological streams of thought and theoretical principles held by individuals with often highly differing ideas. Over the course of the previous quarter-century, Russian politicians, academics, and publicly influential intellectuals have touted geopolitics and its principles on a daily basis. This hitherto unseen trend can mainly be seen in geopolitical notions that stem conceptually from Neo-Eurasianism, which is a certain reincarnation of the classic Eurasianism of the period between the world wars, but has now been modified for the needs of the present. The geopolitical argumentation that follows the logic of Neo-Eurasianism has been used by a whole score of influential political leaders in various phases of post-communist development – Russian President Vladimir V. Putin,[4] Chairman of the Communist Party Gennady A. Zyuganov,[5] or "liberal democrat" Vladimir V. Zhirinovsky. This not only dealt with specific politicians – after the first half of the 1990s, when Yevgeny Primakov was the minister of foreign affairs, state politics gradually reoriented toward neo-Eurasianism.[6]

The most significant author in the field of geopolitics and Neo-Eurasianism, however, is now Aleksandr G. Dugin – a man who is on one hand an occultist and megalomaniacal eccentric, convinced of his own intellectual exceptionality, and on the other a relatively acknowledged scholar, an advisor to a score of political representatives, and an original author of a wide range of geopolitical publications on the level of both theoretical academic discussion and practical political recommendations. These recommendations often take on the form of expanding the borders of the Russian Federation (mainly to certain regions of Eurasia). Primarily due to this fact, Dugin is commonly considered to be a prominent representative of contemporary Russian imperialistic thought,[7] an integral demand of which is the expansion of Russian territory and the creation/renewal of the Russian Empire. In Dugin's concept, Russia is to a certain degree the protector of all civilization, as it is the actor to whom the West's (or more specifically Atlantic forces') proverbial gauntlet has been thrown, thus entering into conflict with the West to preserve traditional values and traditional cultures around the world[8] that are endangered by an artificially orchestrated process of globalization.

The aim of this text is not to describe in full detail all the aspects of Dugin's complicated and syncretic intellectual development or his extensive (and often unrecognised) work that surely contains many concepts worth considering. In light of the limitations of this study, this is also not the ambition of the text presented below. His work is the subject of interest of a wide range of scholars and has been widely published in the international context, including in the Czech Republic. This article, however, focuses on one selected aspect of Dugin's work. Its goal, based on a brief outline of Dugin's geopolitical concepts, is to determine the elements Dugin considers to be existentially hostile to Russia or, more precisely, Eurasia, and to point out the ways in which these elements manifest themselves in the contemporary world. After a brief introduction summarizing Dugin's work, we will focus primarily on outlining the geopolitical structure of Dugin's vision of the world, what position Russia holds in the world, and the hostile powers that should be confronted. More general geopolitical deliberations will be illustrated using specific examples, including the case of Pussy Riot, which Dugin discusses to a great extent and actually sees as a global conspiracy controlled by the USA with the aim of weakening and subduing Russia.

Dugin's work and intellectual development – from the extreme right to geopolitics, Neo-Eurasianism, and the "fourth theory"

Aleksandr G. Dugin was born on 7 January 1962 in Moscow. In 1979, he began his studies at the Moscow Aviation Institute, from which he did not graduate – the reason (in his opinion) was his "ideological non-conformism" and "Anti-Soviet activity." He later finished his studies elsewhere. In the 1980s, Dugin began forming contacts with extreme right groups in Russia (with the blessing of the KGB) and Western Europe. His development in the 1980s was significantly affected by anti-Communist attitudes, his study of philosophy, and his ideological inspiration drawn from German conservative thought, classical German geopolitics, and also Nazism.[9] He later took up classical interwar Eurasianism,[10] which partially built on earlier streams of Russian geopolitical thought,[11] and added to it elements taken from the various streams and approaches above. This mainly included connections to the classical geopolitical narrative, from which he primarily draws his idea of the clash between the "continental" and "oceanic" world (also tellurocracy and thalassocracy – see below), an issue that we will return to, as it forms the backbone of Dugin's geopolitical work. His intellectual development has been complicated and often erratic throughout the 1980s and 1990s and into the present – he still commonly reformulates his opinions, an issue we will also deal with later in this article.

In 1993, Dugin began to work as an ideologist and one of the leaders of the anti-liberal and anti-American National Bolshevik Party (together with anarchist poet Eduard V. Limonov). He left the party due to ideological differences and also for competition for leadership and personal issues. In 1998, he began to work in a number of academic positions and also as an advisor to various political representatives. After 2001, he began gradually to build the International Eurasian Movement (established in 2003), that he called "radical traditionalism."[12] From 2008 to 2014, he worked as a professor at the Lomonosov Moscow State University.

Directly after leaving the radical opposition National Bolshevik Party, Dugin, the non-conformist, became an advisor to the highest political representatives in the country and a relatively acknowledged academic who lectured on his geopolitical vision at the Military Academy of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Russia. After Putin's rise to power as President of the Russian Federation, Dugin fully es-

tablished highly loyal relations to Russia's contemporary political representation. His sympathies toward Putin can be illustrated in a quote he made several years ago: "Adversaries to Putin and the course he has taken no longer exist, but if they do, they are psychologically ill individuals and should be subjected to supervision. Putin is all, Putin is absolute, Putin is essential."[13]

According to a number of observers, Dugin's contemporary influence has significantly fallen – for example, Paweł Rojek explains this as primarily due to Putin's deviation from imperial ideology[14] in terms of Russia's future course while inclining more toward insularism. This insularism is represented, for example, by Vladislav Y. Surkov and his concept of sovereign democracy.[15] Today, Surkov functions to a strong degree as one of the primary *polit-technologs* (political engineers) of the Russian regime and is blamed by Dugin for all the various failures of Russia and even Dugin's own, e.g. his ejection from Moscow University in 2014.[16] His certain loss of position and influence was accompanied by an even harsher critique of Putin, whom he began to accuse of making various concessions to hostile Atlanticism.[17] In addition to influence on and cooperation with political representatives, we should also mention Dugin's public or social influence. He situates himself in the role of a publically influential intellectual and is accepted by a large portion of the Russian population. Even more than with his books (which are often poorly coherent to the "average" reader), he reaches out to the public via articles and commentary in the press and magazines, on his website, or via his presence at various debates. He also produces many video commentaries available on YouTube and other channels. These videos, some of which serve as sources of information for this paper, often have a very high number of views.

Dugin's most widely known work is without a doubt his *Foundations of Geopolitics*,[18] which was first published in 1997. The book was created during Dugin's work at the Military Academy of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, where he began to lecture on geopolitics in 1992. The publication likely arose from these lectures, and was to a certain degree written under the influence of military leaders – due to this fact, many scholars assume that these military representatives had inspired Dugin, not vice versa.[19] His work is very extensive. In addition to shorter-length papers, interviews, and commentary on just about everything happening in Russia and the world, he has published a wide array of monographs primarily under his own publishing house

that oscillate between geopolitics, philosophy, occultism, and mysticism. Despite this peculiar combination, we cannot claim that Dugin's work is unsophisticated or that it lacks many original concepts. The connecting link in his work is the refusal of Western civilization and culture, the portrayal of the West as the enemy, and the construction of Dugin's own ideological justification for the exceptionality of Eurasia. In addition to the aforementioned *Foundations of Geopolitics*, we should also make mention of one of Dugin's newest books – *The Fourth Political Theory*. This fourth theory, which Dugin constructs using numerous references to the philosophy of Martin Heidegger, is meant to replace the failed ideology of the modern era – liberalism, communism, and fascism. Its foundation primarily involves the refusal of postmodernism, post-industrial society, and the political practice of liberalism and globalization,[20] which Dugin often cites as negative phenomena, an issue which we will return to later in the article.

General standpoints of Aleksandr G. Dugin's geopolitical vision

Aleksandr Dugin's geopolitical concept, in accordance with many other geopoliticians, who also construct binary geopolitical arrangements of the world (e.g. Halford J. Mackinder or Nicholas J. Spykeman), propagates a conflict scheme between two fundamentally antagonistic blocs. Dugin, however, attributes a differing connotation to this confrontation and, in his new concept, claims it should be a "final apocalyptic conflict" between strictly hierarchically organized Eurasian continental powers (which he identifies in the geographical context using Mackinder's "Heartland"[21] topology) and the liberally-democratic capitalist Atlantic oceanic powers, which have surrounded this Eurasian Heartland.[22] In this context, Dugin also applies the terms "thalassocracy" and "tellurocracy,"[23] which were coined by Carl Schmitt (although as ideas reach back much further[24]) and were linked by Dugin to Eurasian concepts.

The aim of his geopolitical theory (just as with many other similarly thinking authors) was to restore the status of superpower to Russia and its allies. The idea of neo-Eurasianism itself, however, was meant to foster the creation of a solid allied bloc and to protect Russia from the West.[25] This tellurocratic alliance should act as opposition against the thalassocratic powers led by the United States. Iran, Germany, and Japan will primarily stand at Russia's side, while Dugin places the Unit-

ed Kingdom, Turkey, and China among the followers of Atlanticism.[26] Dugin, however, has since amended this division and now sees China and Turkey as significant Eurasian allies of Russia, who (just as Russia) must protect their culture and traditions from the pressure of globalization. Dugin goes on to view Turkey as the ideal actor to help Russia integrate Central Asian space into a newly constructed Eurasian empire.[27] On a global level of the international system, this confrontation of thalassocratic and tellurocratic blocs can be seen in the form of confrontation between the Russian Federation and the USA. In keeping with his concept, Dugin perceives these two entities as existentially antagonistic representatives of two incompatible forms of civilizational organization. This stems from the differing characters of these oceanic and continental powers – while Russia as a land-based power has an identity based primarily on conservatism, collectivism, sacrifice, and expressing preference to idealism over materialism,[28] "American" Atlanticism stems primarily from individualism, liberalism, postmodern values, and materialistic consumption as markedly negative phenomena.[29]

The global historic mission of neo-Eurasianism is generally constructed by Dugin as an attractive alternative to the present process of globalization, the fundamental aspects of which are institutionalized by the USA.[30] Due to globalization, present-day Russia lacks an equal position in terms of the West,[31] a phenomenon that has long been central to Dugin's interests. This messianistic aspect in Dugin's work is identical to the Orthodox chiliastic concept of the Third Rome.[32] He is therefore technically not contemplating the restoration of Russia's superpower status (be it that of Imperial Russia or Soviet Russia) *sensu stricto*, but is referring to a new process of the genesis of an imperial entity *ab ovo*. We have already mentioned that in terms of contemporary Russia, Dugin is a typical proponent of imperialistic thought. In this context, he calls for the application of a supranational model in which the "national" exceptionalist concept of Russia will refer to a broader "Eurasian" ethnic substrate.[33] In doing so, Dugin thus conceptualizes his worldview in the geopolitical context of the extension of territory,[34] the genesis of an empire,[35] and the confrontation of topologically defined entities. It is fundamentally significant that Dugin refuses ethno-nationalism and xenophobia, which happens to apply to the majority of Neo-Eurasian schools of thought.[36] Thus, in his words, Eurasia represents a racial synthesis of "white" Indo-European Slavs

and "yellow" Turkic peoples – in this sense, Dugin follows the concepts of a number of authors endorsing classic interwar Eurasianism.[37]

An essential aspect of Dugin's thought is the return to "real and authentic" faith – to Russian Orthodoxy[38] or in some cases to Shiite Islam. On the contrary, Sunni Islam is presented (at least in Dugin's older texts) as a pro-Atlantic and subversive element, a reason Dugin selected Iran as the power that stands at Russia's side in its "historical-cosmic" mission. He later re-evaluated some of his attitudes on this matter and not only sees Turkey and other dominantly Sunni states now as key Eurasian allies of Russia,[39] he is also apologetic toward Russia's cooperation with the Syrian regime – according to Dugin, the conflict in Syria, which is the result of the Atlantic powers attempting to gain global supremacy, has the potential to grow into a global conflict and a Third World War.[40]

Specific aspects of Dugin's geopolitical theory – the West and its orchestrated globalization as the enemies of the Eurasian world and its allies

As we have stated above, a basic pillar of Dugin's geopolitical theory is the antagonistic tension between the Atlantic and Eurasian world. The term Atlanticism from a historical and geographical perspective very clearly represents the Western civilizational hemisphere, primarily the USA and its allies. The cultural context of Atlanticism is mainly formulated by media empires while the market system defines its sociological framework.[41] The oligarchically organized proponents of Atlanticism are perceived by Dugin as obsessive expansionists who are striving to non-critically apply this defined model to other geopolitical segments (via orchestrated globalization and conspiracy against other states and primarily against Russia – these states, however, must preserve their culture and the uniqueness of their values[42]). The goal of these efforts is to achieve a worldwide hegemony and create a unipolar world.[43] A means for reconfiguring the international power composition (in favour of Atlanticism) is the continual effort to weaken the relevance of state sovereignty, religious systems, cultural and economic traditions, any manifestations of "social justice" and all forms of spiritual, intellectual, and material diversity.[44] All of this is destroyed via liberalism and postmodernism, which are spread by globalization and are hostile to all that is traditional.[45]

Therefore, Eurasianism in a generalized form represents the opposition to the Western civilizational sector, to NATO, and to the pres-

sure of globalization. (Neo-)Eurasianists (i.e. according to Dugan the advocates of a "multipolar" organisational concept) promote the development of alternative national, ethnic, cultural, and socio-economic forms of organization[46] – again with the observation that accepting "Western" forms of organisation in "non-Western" societies (i.e. primarily in Russian/Eurasian societies) would be highly undesirable. Dugin constructs Eurasian identity as voluntaristic and therefore is not stably determined by only geographical and topological contexts.[47]

Multipolar[48] spatial differentiation of the global power arena proposed by Dugin is divided into four zones – the Euro-African zone, the Asian-Pacific zone, the Anglo-American zone, and the Eurasian continental zone. Each of these zones is then divided up into smaller areas.[49] This type of geopolitical organization (rather paradoxically in light of the context of the whole concept) is also meant to minimize the threat of global conflict, large-scale wars, and extreme forms of confrontation. In such a world, Russia would naturally hold a constructive position that would de facto correspond to the character of multivector diplomacy[50] – Dugin generally approves of the concept of multipolarity, which is integrated into the strategic documents of the Russian Federation.[51] The multipolar Eurasian model is an alternative to the unipolar globalized world led by thalassocratic powers led by the USA.[52] In Dugin's interpretation, globalization is understood as a one-dimensional and one-vector phenomenon that has a tendency to move toward the universalization of the Western view of the world. He claims that from an Atlanticist point of view, the world may be divided into several zones: firstly, the "Atlantic world" with its centre in America (Europe and the Pacific region form its periphery); secondly, Eurasia, and primarily Russia, in this context is even more peripheral, and does not represent an autonomous or in any way significant pole – Dugin refers to this space as a "black hole"; thirdly, Dugin dubs the final region as the Third World, which is made up of Latin America, Africa, and to a large degree Asia. This part of the world is not free and only serves this centre as a region for constant exploitation and occupation. The world from this point of view is thus a unipolar system with its centre located on the western coast of the Atlantic. This centre strives to subordinate the remaining regions of the world via the process of globalization.[53]

In Dugin's eyes, however, there is an alternative to this orchestrated globalization process. The Eurasian concept not only protects the an-

ti-Atlantic value system, but cultural diversity itself.[54] For Russia, the construction of a unique identity of a Eurasian power is a necessity, as without it the country would not be able to fulfil its historical mission – the protection of the world's cultural diversity. Without this identity, Russia would also not possess the capacity to defeat its Atlantic enemy.

Allies are imperative to Russia – in the Eurasian zone, there will be a number of powers with which Russia will create communication axes, giving rise to "Eurasian dialogue"[55] – this dialogue will then be the foundation for integrating this space.[56] Primarily, this deals with Iran. According to Dugin, the alliance between Moscow and Tehran is fundamental. The linked economic, military, and political potential of Russia and Iran will facilitate the integration of space, which in turn will lead to its greater autonomy from the "globalization centre."[57] Other important allies include states that according to Dugin must protect their culture from the pressure of globalization – e.g. India, Pakistan, or Turkey. As was mentioned above, Dugin claims that Turkey is a crucial Russian ally that will help the country integrate with Central Asia.[58] In the Asia-Pacific region, Japan will become a primary ally as it breaks away from the "Atlantic" world, thus weakening the thalassocratic bloc and helping to balance China's influence and its demographic and economic infiltration into the Siberian zones of Russia's Heartland. In more recent texts, however, Dugin now places China among Russia's allies and includes it as one of the states that will take part in Eurasian dialogue and will resist the unipolar global world under the rule of the USA.[59]

The Caucasus, which Dugin focuses on heavily in his writings, form an important part of Eurasia. He claims that an alliance between Moscow and Yerevan (together with the Moscow-Tehran axis) is a necessary prerequisite for subsequent Eurasian integration.[60] Contrary to Armenia, Azerbaijan remains de facto "neutral." Georgia, however, should be seen as the largest problem in the region. The builders of a new Georgian state have wholly ignored the disapproval of its various individual regions – primarily South Ossetia, Abkhazia, and Adjara – and by doing so have given rise to a strong potential for conflict. Georgia has no allies in the region, and thanks to this it has a tendency to form alliances with the USA and NATO, the goal of which is to balance the influence of the Russian Federation. Thus, Dugin sees Georgia as the greatest regional threat that could subsequently sabotage the idea of Eurasian

integration. In light of this conviction, Dugin had no qualms with the most recent Russian invasion into Georgia. He demonstrated this theatrically in one of his television appearances by repeatedly shouting "Tanks to Tbilisi" and emotional claims that a third worldwide conflict was about to break out.[61, 62] In one of his other television appearances, he legitimized the Russian invasion of Georgia by saying it was not an attempt to occupy the country, but an effort to protect the individuals who were dying in various areas of Georgia.[63] The primary reason for the Russia-Georgia conflict according to Dugin was that Abkhazia and South Ossetia are traditionally tellurocratic regions that are naturally pro-Russian and also refuse Georgia's Atlantic orientation.[64]

This tellurocratic alliance between the Eurasian continent and Japan must then be accompanied by the most important ally – Europe. Without Europe's support, Dugin claims there is no chance for the Atlantic world to succeed. Deepening the process of European integration is important to Dugin's interpretation, as it would result in freeing the continent from the binds of United States. In "a relatively short amount of time," Dugin predicts an outbreak of economic and consequently political conflict between the two sides of the Atlantic and a definitive split in Euro-Atlantic geopolitical unity.[65] In this context, Dugin speaks of a "Greater Europe," an integrated power pole that has emancipated itself from the United States.[66] As concerns Europe, Dugin sees Germany as an unambiguous power with which Russia must cooperate. The next such ally is France. Dugin elaborates on the alliance that in his view already exists between Moscow, Berlin, and Paris, as these three states created an "anti-American coalition" that opposed the American invasion to Iraq in 2003.[67] This invasion was supported by Great Britain, which according to Dugin has the strongest tendency of all the European nations toward Atlanticism and is the most loyal of America's allies. Thus, the recent referendum, in which the United Kingdom decided to leave the European Union, does not pose any sort of problem. The British simply "showed their true colours."

After mentioning the alliance between Russia and Germany, we should also make note of Dugin's view of the space that lies between the two countries. On the axis between Moscow and Berlin, a decision will be made on the fate of the buffer states that were created after WWI as a barrier dividing the two countries. In Dugin's (and others') conceptualization of Central (and Eastern) Europe, there is no such room for such states. A large number of intellectual and political repre-

sentatives, led by Putin, agree with Dugin on this matter. Putin himself declared in an interview that Central and Eastern Europe were always ruled by Russia and Germany,[68] which is the only natural state of power that can prevail in this region.

The countries of Central Europe in Dugin's concept do not have to be connected to the Eurasian bloc,[69] but at the same time may not remain independent and self-sufficient. Thus, they are left with no other option but to make a decision and subsequently solve this elementary geopolitical dilemma, i.e. whether to link with Eurasia/Russia or with Germany. The countries of Central Europe and the Baltics have already manifested their Western orientation by connecting to the zone of European integration. According to Dugin, this does not complicate the Russian situation, as Europe is in his vision a strong Russian ally. An important requirement for Dugin is to prevent the creation of a sphere in Central and Eastern Europe that would divide Germany and Russia and could potentially succumb to American influence – from Dugin's perspective, the Eurasian bloc cannot share a land border with the Atlantic world. As Russia is not able to gain control of all of Europe, it must take all steps in order to share a border in the West with the bloc led by Germany, which will be a strong ally to Eurasia in the fight against Atlanticism.[70] From this stems Dugin's critique of various Central European countries that supported the United States and Great Britain in the campaign against Iraq, while Germany and France were in opposition.[71] If the impacts of Atlanticism can be overcome in Central and Eastern Europe and these states lean toward cooperation with Germany, Dugin does not consider this situation to be problematic. A number of other states (primarily Ukraine and Belarus) have also found themselves outside the border of this bloc of states tied to Germany. These states will not have the opportunity to choose and will thus be left with one logical option – connecting with Russia. This is one aspect that will allow Russia to build a strong Eurasian entity.[72] In addition, Dugin sees the essence and identity of Ukraine and Belarus as unarguably Eurasian.[73] In this context, Dugin perceives the present conflict in Ukraine as a conflict that will decide on the success of uniting Eurasia and thus will also decide on the fate of Russia (and of the free world, which is capable of defending itself against globalization tendencies) as well.[74]

In conclusion to this section, it is necessary to place Dugin's teachings at least briefly into the context of various Russian approaches to

international relations and the place of Russia in the world. We may claim that Dugin's geopolitical visions, although they have a number of followers, also have a number of competing projects and visions, the authors of which come from various ideological streams of thought. We find authors that see Russia as a specific place that is different from the West, which is Russia's enemy, but their thought is more insularistic than imperialist – an example is the aforementioned Vladislav Surkov or world-renowned author (and also significant political thinker) Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn. His political thought, which although at first glance may have some periods corresponding to Dugin's ideas, stems from wholly different roots and is highly insularist.[75] Another competing stream of thought is Russian Atlanticism,[76] which had a number of followers primarily in the 1990s and sees Russia at least as an ally of the West if not a direct part of it. In this it sets apart Dugin's neo-Euroasian ideas from the insularist stream. A number of liberal visions also counter Dugin's ideas – an excellent example is Dmitri Trenin and his publication *The End of Eurasia*,[77] which is a liberal response to Dugin's conservative project.[78] Trenin assumes that the times when Moscow was the centre of a great empire are now ending. The era in which Russia could subjugate the formations of neighbouring states has ended, and thanks to the impact of globalization and Western politics a Eurasia conceived in such a way does not exist and Russia should thus withdraw from this region. Russia should not attempt to renew its empire[79] but should also not inherently make an enemy out of the West. The majority of liberal approaches in Russian thought concerning international relations, whether this is Atlanticism or the idea of a "liberal empire," stem from Westernist ideology.[80]

The West, Globalisation and Pussy Riot

The case of Pussy Riot as proof of a global conspiracy against Russia?

After presenting general images of the hostile elements portrayed in Dugin's work, we will now focus on one specific example which points to the way in which Dugin works with images of the enemy. One specific event of 2012 – the performance of the group Pussy Riot in Moscow's Cathedral of Christ the Saviour – will be used as an example. This event not only shows the connection between the state and the Orthodox Church in the era of Vladimir Putin's presidency and Kirill's patriarchy, it reveals the reproduction of discourse that legitimizes[81] this relationship and is important in the context of Dugin's political

stream of thought. The incident (just as any other important event) did not escape Dugin's attention, and thus we can discuss the ways in which Dugin perceived the event in terms of the global conspiracy against Russia.

This relatively brief incident was planned as a reaction to the political engagement of Patriarch Kirill, who called on Orthodox believers to support Putin in the presidential elections. During the event, a "punk prayer"[82] was performed, beginning with the lyrics translating roughly to *Virgin Mary, Mother of God, banish Putin*, however the translations and interpretations of the individual words of the song differ greatly.[83] Patriarch Kirill commented on the incident in the sense that such an action should not be underestimated and seen as an innocent joke – on the contrary, it was an action that should be strongly punished, a tone taken by a score of other pro-regime representatives. President Putin proclaimed the women should be punished in light of the Russian state's obligation to protect the feelings of believers.[84] This is quite startling in regard to the constitutionally declared secular character of the Russian Federation.[85]

Now let us have a look at how Dugin commented on the incident, the ways in which he legitimized the link between Church and state, and mainly the ways in which he interpreted the act as a security threat on the part of Russia's enemies aimed at undermining the very foundations of the Russian state. This should be put in the frame of Dugin's relationship to both actors, i.e. the Church and the state. His relationship toward political representatives was analysed above; however, his links to the Church are also important. In the past, the Church commonly criticized Dugin, and often rather harshly. For instance, criticism was focused on the fact that Dugin allegedly preferred Islam and various forms of occultism and his own interpretations of "true Orthodoxy" which undermined the authority of the Church. The Church formulated these stances in various documents. In regard to emphasizing the symphony of power (see above) and after Kirill was selected for the position of patriarch, the Church's official criticism toward Dugin weakened (although criticism from believers and experts on Orthodox dogma did not necessarily cease). Although Dugin's vision was different from canonical Orthodoxy, Dugin and Patriarch Kirill agree in many areas, for instance in many foreign-policy issues and their aversion to the West, liberalism, globalization,[86] etc. Dugin and church representatives also cooperate together on a whole array of projects.

Dugin labelled the Pussy Riot incident as an act of war meant to destabilize Russia, undermine its moral and psychological power, and force state sovereignty to submit to international powers. The goal of this act was to discredit Kirill's persona and also all the personas of the sacred institute of the Moscow Patriarchy. Dugin perceives the event as an unprecedented attack on the Russian-Byzantine ideal of the symphony of power, which Dugin defines as an elementary expression of the continuity of Russian history, a statement that Patriarch Kirill also agrees with. Putin's position is thus a logical expression of this symphony of power. According to Dugin, the symphony of power is a factor that outlasts history, connects the individual Russian empire and imperia since the foundation of the state to the present and helps to create a bond between society, the Church, and the state. In the case of the event in the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, Dugin claims it was not only an attack on the Russian Orthodox Church and its representatives or an attack on the Russian authoritative regime and its institutions or Putin's figure as such – the attack carried out by the female singers went much deeper. According to Dugin, Pussy Riot's goal was to damage the very foundations of Russian civilization[87] and the spiritual principles of Russian society, thus harming Russia in the clash with globalization led by the West. In regard to the efforts to harm the principle of the symphony of power as one of the pillars of Russian civilization, specific goals that the singers chose were selected – i.e. Patriarch Kirill and Vladimir Putin, who symbolize this symphony.

The whole incident is seen as a symptom of a return to the era of "Weimar Russia" – the era of Russia's instability and its social, economic, and power collapse in the first half of the 1990s.[88] Dugin places the case of Pussy Riot into the context of confrontation between "the spiritual tradition of Russia with thousands of years of tradition" and "the degenerate West," which has relativized and destroyed its own cultural and religious tradition primarily via liberalism and postmodernism. This also corresponds to Dugin's geopolitical vision of the world discussed in the previous chapters of this paper. We might add here that, after Kirill was elected to the office of Patriarch in 2008, Dugin stated that he expected Kirill to protect Orthodox values by fighting against the liberalism and postmodernism[89] promoted by the degenerate West.[90]

Thus, the case of Pussy Riot from Dugin's perspective should be approached in a highly responsible manner, as it is an attack on "Ortho-

dox eternity" and a manifestation of "Western infiltration," i.e. individuals that hate Russia and wish to conquer, humiliate, and destroy it.[91] The only method of defence in such a case is loyalty to President Putin, who represents the sacred Russian idea of Russia as the Third Rome.[92] The incident in the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour is a manifestation of global blackmail and proof of the ongoing duel with the West in which Russia must not lose. A part of this information war led by the West is an effort to portray Russia as undemocratic, corrupt, and simply bad. The West has destroyed its own traditions and religions and is now trying to apply the same in the rest of the world. In this respect, Dugin considers the Western threat of postmodernism to be very serious. It is a part of the West's and liberalism's fight against the regimes whose political, spiritual, or religious systems do not correspond to Western ideas of democracy or directly defy them. In this duel, Pussy Riot are a tool of the West – if this group hadn't existed, someone else would have played their role in the services of the West.[93]

If Russia were to lose in this clash with the West, the last remains of morality, spirituality, and order would disappear. Traditional values will be replaced by the destructive illusions of liberals and post-modernists. This defeat would not only impact Russia – as Russia is the key actor in the fight against the dominance of the Atlanticist powers at work to create a unipolar world via globalization – a Russian defeat would affect all the other countries that are in opposition to Atlanticism. If we summarize Dugin's perspective, we can claim that the group Pussy Riot in reality represents the "fifth column"[94] of the West, which is waging a war against Russia using all means possible.[95] This war is of a culturally and socially genocidal character and the key to identifying the enemy is his engagement in the release of Pussy Riot. In Dugin's words, these individuals are capable of using any means in the forthcoming conflict.[96] At the same time, we should mention that the way in which Dugin assessed Pussy Riot's performance and his placement of emphasis on the necessity to punish them and the connection with the fifth column of Western forces against Russia is in no way exceptional among pro-regime intellectuals.[97]

Conclusion

The world in Dugin's constructed image is a world of irreversible conflict of two differing and clearly antagonistic civilizations – the Eurasian civilization, which is of a land-based character, and the Atlantic

civilization, which is led by the thellurocratic United States. The reason for conflict is the attempt by Atlantic powers to create and forever maintain a unipolar world, i.e. force the rest of the world to submit to its cultural and political model. The primary tool for this subjugation is globalization. As the strongest Eurasian power, Russia has been given the role of confronting this attempt and entering into confrontation with the Atlantic world. Not only is Russia's fate at stake, but also the fate of other countries, which would fail along with Russia in its fated mission and would be left with no other choice but to submit completely to the Atlanticist model – a model hostile to their own values. Liberalism and postmodernism, products of the West, are the destroyers of all traditional values by attempting to infiltrate into non-Western space.

The West, Globalisation and Pussy Riot

The West (i.e. the United States) is attempting to humiliate, weaken, and destroy Russia. If Russia does not wish to fail, Dugin says it must be strong both internally and externally. The path to success and the defeat of the unipolar model of the world, which could be replaced by a multipolar structure in which powers maintain their own value systems, is the creation of a Eurasian bloc. In Dugin's concepts, this would mean integrating a large portion of the former USSR and other regions and subsequently surrounding this area with a number of allies, freeing Russia of any land border with the Atlantic powers. These are powers that are striving to prevent this Russian plan, and Dugin sees a number of countries in close proximity to Russia as the subversive agents of Atlanticism, which are helping to destabilize Eurasia – these are countries such as Georgia or other states of Central and Eastern Europe, which in 2003 supported the American plan for the invasion of Iraq. These "agents of Atlanticism" include not only neighbouring states; the "fifth column" of the West can take on other forms as well. This column can also include individuals who support influences in Russia and other Eurasian states that Dugin sees as foreign and hostile to Eurasian space. Thus, this fifth column is not only formed by the members of Pussy Riot, who Dugin claims are attempting to disrupt the very foundation of Russian civilization, but also by liberals and those who fight for human rights in Russia – a group of people who also happen to have supported the sentenced members of Pussy Riot. All such people in Dugin's eyes represent a threat to Russia (and in that case to the preservation of the cultural diversity of the whole world), as they are prepared to betray Russia and take the side of Atlanticism.

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Notes:

1 See Andrzej Nowak (2010), *Impérium a ti druzí. Rusko, Polsko a moderní dějiny východní Evropy*, Brno.

2 Maria Avanesova and Vladimír Naxera (2016b), 'Ruská pravoslavná církev a její vztahy se státem v době patriarchátu patriarchy Alexije II.,' *Politické vedy* 19(3): 8 –30.

3 Stefano Guzzini (2003), 'Self-fulfilling geopolitics? Or: the social production of foreign policy expertise in Europe,' *Danish Institute for International Studies Working Paper* 2003(23).

4 Kari Roberts (2017), 'Understanding Putin: The politics of identity and geopolitics in Russian foreign policy discourse,' *International Journal* 72(1), pp. 28–55.

5 Andrei P. Tsygankov (2016), *Russia's Foreign Policy. Change and Continuity in National Identity*, 4th Ed., Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, p. 240., or Andrei P. Tsygankov and Pavel A. Tsygankov (2010), 'National ideology and IR theory: Three incarnations of the 'Russian idea',' *European Journal of International Relations* 16(4), pp. 663–686.

6 Tsygankov (2016), compare with Jeffrey Mankoff (2012), *Russian foreign policy: The return of great power politics*, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, or James W. Warhola and Egemen B. Baczi (2013), 'The Return of President Putin and Russian–Turkish Relations: Where Are They Headed?,' *SAGE Open* July–September 2013, pp. 1–15.

7 For more details see Marcel H. Van Herpen (2014), *Putin's wars. The Rise of Russia's New Imperialism*, Lanham: Rowan & Littlefield.

8 Paweł Rojek (2015), *Rusko: prokletí impéria. Zrod ruského politického chování*, Brno: CDK, p. 89.

9 For greater detail, see e.g. Petr Kalinič and Vladimír Naxera (2011), 'Politická teorie a geopolitika Alexandra G. Dugina,' *Rexter* 9(1), pp. 31–54, or Bill Bowring (2013), *Law, Rights and Ideology in Russia: Landmarks in the Destiny of a Great Power*, New York: Routledge.

10 See Emil Voráček (2004), *Eurasijství* v *ruském politickém myšlení. Osudy jednoho* z *porevolučních ideových směrů ruské meziválečné generace*, Prague: Set Out.

11 See Bílek, Jaroslav (2014), 'Geopolitické koncepce a imperialismus v carském Rusku v 19. století,' *Historica* 5(1), pp. 1–15.
12 Thorsten Botz-Bonstain (2008), 'Philosophical conceptions of cultural space in Russia and Japan: comparing Nishida Kitaro and Semën Frank,' *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 26, p. 854.
13 Alexander G. Dugin (2007), '*Putin - vse, Putin absoljuten, Putin nezamenim*,' available at: <http://www.inosmi.ru/inrussia/20070926/236828.html> (accessed 10 September 2016).
14 Compare Roberts (2017).
15 For more on this concept see e.g. Magda Leichtová (2014), *Misunderstanding Russia: Russian Foreign Policy and the West*, Farnham: Asghate.
16 Rojek (2015), p. 98.
17 Alexander G. Dugin (2015b), *Last War of the World-Island. The Geopolitics of Contemporary Russia*, London: Arktos, pp. 131–133.
18 Alexander G. Dugin (1997), *Osnovy geopolitiki*, Moskva: Arktogaeia-tsentr.
19 Rojek (2015), p. 102.
20 Alexander G. Dugin (2012b), *The Fourth Political Theory*, London: Arktos, p. 21.
21 See *Halford J. Mackinder (1942), Democratic Ideals and Reality,* Washington, D.C.*: NDU Press.*
22 Sanjay Kumar Pandey (2007), 'Asia in the Debate on Russian Identity,' *International Studies* 44(4), pp. 317–337, comp. Peter J. S. Duncan (2005), 'Contemporary Russian Identity between East and West,' The Historical Journal 48(1), pp. 277–94.
23 Dugin (2015b), p. 10.
24 The difference between thalassocratic and tellurocratic powers, i.e. sea powers and land-based powers, was discussed in Ancient Greece by Thucydides. Classic examples of the time include Athens, which drew its power from trade and crafts, and Sparta, which lived off agriculture. These geographical and economic differences were reflected in politics and society – Athens gave rise to a democratic system with strong status of the individual including various individual freedoms, while Sparta was a collectivist oligarchy. Rojek (2016), p. 78.
25 Michael Emerson (2014), 'Toward a Greater Eurasia: Who, Why, What, and How?,' *Global Journal of Emerging Market Economies* 6(1), pp. 35–68.
26 Marlene Laruelle (2007), 'Aleksandr Dugin: A Russian Version of the European Radical Right?' *Kennan Institute Occasional Paper* 294, p. 7.
27 Alexander G. Dugin (2014), *Eurasian Mission. An introduction to Neo-Eurasianism*, London: Arktos, p. 50.
28 Dugin (2015b), pp. 7–8.
29 Dugin (2012b), p. 21.
30 Dugin (2015b), p. 10.
31 Jozef Švarný (2016), 'Neoeuraziánska geopolitická škola v podaní Alexandra Dugina a jej prejavy v zahraničnej politike Ruskej federácie,' in Jaroslav Ušiak, Dávid Kollár and Michaela Melková (eds.) *Bezpečnostné fórum 2016. Zborník vedeckých prác*, Banská Bystrica: Belianum, p. 231.
32 Petr Kupka, Martin Laryš and Josef Smolík (2009), *Krajní pravice ve vybraných zemích střední a východní Evropy: Slovensko, Polsko, Ukrajina, Bělorusko Rusko*, Brno: Mezinárodní politologický ústav, p. 189.
33 Laruelle (2007), p. 18.
34 '*Geopolitically, Russia is something more than the Russian federation in its*

current administrative borders.' Dugin (2015b), p. 11.

35 See Rojek (2015).

36 Martin Laryš (2008), 'Komparativní analýza nacionalismu a ideových zdrojů krajně pravicových subjektů v Rusku a na Ukrajině po rozpadu SSSR,' *Central European Political Studies Review* 10(2–3), pp. 255–277.

37 See Voráček (2004).

38 In regard to Orthodoxy, which will be discussed in the final chapter of the paper, we can mention here that Dugin has long supported the principle of the 'symphony of power', i.e. the alliance between spiritual and worldly power, an arrangement that should impact Russia's internal and external politics. The foundation of the Russian-Byzantine symphony of power lies in mutual cooperation, mutual support, and mutual responsibility without one side interfering in the powers of the other; from a historical perspective, however, it is clear that worldly power, reminiscent of caesaropapism, was always stronger.

39 Dugin (2014), p. 50.

40 Alexander G. Dugin (2015a), '*Aleksandr Dugin Will the Conflict in Syria Lead to World War III*,' available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=66eLVb_2Qjo> (accessed 28 Decenber 2016).

41 Alexander G. Dugin (2001), '*The Eurasianist Vision. Basic principles of the eurasist doctrinal platform*,' available at: <http://ww.evrazia.org/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=244> (accessed 10 Semptember 2011).

42 Dugin (2014).

43 Dugin (2015b), p. 10.

44 Laruelle (2007), p. 5.

45 Dugin (2012b).

46 Rojek (2015), p. 89.

47 Dugin (2001).

48 Despite this often accented multipolarity, Dugin's vision (in its initial and final system parameters) is strictly bipolar. The practical geopolitical steps via which this transitioning multipolar formation is bypassed are explained below.

49 Dugin (2001); Dugin (2014), p. 57.

50 Dugin (2014).

51 Švarný (2016), p. 232.

52 Dugin (2015b), p. 10.

53 Dugin (2014), p. 55.

54 Rojek (2015), p. 89.

55 Dugin (2014)

56 Integrating Eurasia is Dugin's natural goal and the reason he welcomes all practical political steps taken in that direction – e.g. completing the 'Eurasian Union' (or more precisely a Eurasian economic union). Dugin (2014), pp. 78–80.

57 Alexander G. Dugin (2004), '*The Eurasian Idea*,' available at: <http://evrazia.info/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=1884> (accessed 15 September 2011).

58 Dugin (2014), p. 50.

59 Dugin (2014).

60 Dugin (2014), p. 52.

61 Alexander G. Dugin (n.d.), '*3rd world war has begun*,' available at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BrIVvypEoSo> (accessed 15 September 2011).

62 We should reiterate here that Dugin sees a potential third world conflict in almost all events – as was already mentioned in the text, he refers to this again several years later in the context of Syria.
63 Alexander G. Dugin (n.d.), '*Georgia is a failed state*,' available at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CSSmiXgZhGE> (accessed 15 September 2011).
64 Dugin (2015b), p. 128.
65 Nowak (2010), pp. 101–102.
66 Dugin (2014), pp. 91–94.
67 Dugin (2015b), pp. 109–111.
68 Nowak (2010), p. 89.
69 Dugin does not view a number of post-communist states of Central Europe as a part of Eurasia – e.g. the eastern Polish border more or less corresponds to the western border of the Eurasian zone that Dugin proposes to integrate.
70 Rojek (2015), p. 90.
71 Dugin (2015b), pp. 109–111.
72 Nowak (2010), p. 101.
73 Dugin (2014), p. 53.
74 Švarný (2016), p. 232.
75 Rojek (2015), see also Michael Confino (1991), 'Solzhenitsyn, the West, and the New Russian Nationalism,' *Journal of Contemporary History* 26(3–4), pp. 611–636, or Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn (1990), *Rebuilding Russia*, New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux.
76 See Rojek (2015), Tsygankov (2016) etc.
77 Dmitri Trenin (2001), *The End of Eurasia: Russia on the Border between Geopolitics and Globalization*, Moscow: Carnegie Moscow Centre.
78 Tsygankov and Tsygankov (2010), p. 671, Emerson (2014), p. 40.
79 Dmitri Trenin (2011), *Post-Imperium*, Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.
80 Tsygankov and Tsygankov (2010), p. 671.
81 Compare Maria Avanesova and Vladimír Naxera (2016a), 'Proměny vztahů ruské pravoslavné církve a státu v době patriarchy Kirilla,' *Central European Political Studies Review* 18(1), pp. 64–100.
82 See Desmond Manderson (2016), 'Making a Point and Making a Noise: A Punk Prayer,' *Law, Culture and the Humanities* 12(1), pp. 17–28.
83 Martin C. Putna (2015), *Obrazy z kulturních dějin ruské religiozity*, Prague: Vyšehrad, p. 280.
84 Vladimir Putin (2012), '*Intervju RT*,' available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EmIOWrb51Yc> (accessed 19 November 2015).
85 After a five month trial in a Moscow court, which included a number of controversies and doubts on the court's independence (which is not surprising considering the authoritative character of the regime), the three female performers were found guilty of 'hooliganism motivated by religious hatred' (the women were also declared to have committed a 'criminal conspiracy aimed at coarsely harming public order') and sentenced to two years imprisonment in a penal colony. According to state prosecutor Alexey Nikiforov, the actions of the perpetrators proved their evident hatred and hostility toward religion and 'offended God'. See Petr Kalinič and Vladimír Naxera (2012), 'Pussy Riot aneb Svéráz ruských marginálů,' *Mezinárodní politika* 2012(10), pp. 31–34, comp. Andy Bennet and Steve Waksman (eds.)

(2015), *The SAGE Handbook of Popular Music*, London: SAGE.

86 For Kirill's opinions, see e.g. Avaneova and Naxera (2016); for Dugin's opinions on the topic, see above in the text.

87 See Mikhail Suslov (2016), *Digital Orthodoxy in the Post-Soviet World: The Russian Orthodox Church and Web 2.0*, New York: Columbia University Press.

88 Compare Nowak (2010).

89 Julia Taratuta and Pavel Korobov (2009), 'Novyj patriarch prinjal pervoje rešenije,' *Kommersant*, 29 January 2009, p. 6.

90 It is also interesting to mention that this is not only the Church's and Dugin's goal, but of a number of other political powers in Russia. A typical example is the Communist Party headed by Gennady Zyuganov, who (somewhat paradoxically) intensely cooperated with the Orthodox Church in various periods of Post-Soviet development, often with reference to the necessity to fight against Western values. Based on this, Zyuganov claimed in one of his books that the goals of communists and orthodox believers were *de facto* identical. One of the goals of this statement was to gain the Church's support during the presidential elections of 1996. See Avanesova and Naxera (2016b).

91 Dugin intensifies the image of this threat by, for example, claiming that Nadezhda Tolokonnikova is psychologically ill and has a serious psychiatric issue of perversion.

92 For more on this concept, see e.g. Rojek (2016), pp. 41–67.

93 Alexander G. Dugin (2012a), '*Aleksandr Dugin: Pussy Riot's Global Blackmail*,' available at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IxhxRyeX8tY> (accessed 19 November 2015).

94 See Irving Epstein (ed.) (2015), *The Whol World is Texting. Youth Protest in the Information Age*, Rotterdam, Boston and Taipei: Sense Publishers, p. 132.

95 The term 'fifth column' was used for the first time in the 1930s during the Spanish Civil War, when one of Franco's generals replied to a question on which of the four fascist columns marching on Madrid would take the city. He replied that it would be taken by a fifth column created by Franco's sympathizers directly in the city itself. Since then, the term has become fixed in political jargon as a label for a group carrying out activities against its own state and pushing the ideology and interests of the adversary. Ideas on the fifth column have a certain tradition in post-Soviet Russia. Western and pro-West advisors working hand in hand with Boris Yeltsin were even assessed in hindsight by some representatives as the fifth column of the West (the same label is often given to 'Atlantic' Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev), the aim of which is to weaken Russia and subject it to the West. There is also talk of fifth columns in Putin's contemporary Russia. Putin regularly intervenes against such actors, who fall into the category of threat and Western enemies of Russia – this includes deporting Western spiritual leaders in order to ensure 'spiritual security' shortly after Putin's election to the presidency or the fight against non-profit organizations financed by the West in later years. Examples of depictions of fifth columns can be found in the works of popular historian (and also pro-regime historian) Natalia Narochnitskaya. In her texts, she depicts Russia as as country constantly besieged by adversaries, mainly the West, who have wanted for ages to bring Russia to its knees. Various people inside Russian/Soviet (the author perceives both terms to be identical) borders are helping the West to do this.

These individuals, who can to a certain degree be considered members of the fifth colony, include Russia historians who have spoken negatively of Stalin's crimes, Ukrainian or Baltic politicians calling for the dissolution of the USSR or in certain respects criticizing Lenin, who was paid by the Germans and whom Narochnitskaya refuses to forgive for weakening the massive Russian Empire (until Stalin renewed it) through revolution and subsequent civil war. See Natalia Narochnitskaya (2006), *Rusko a jeho místo ve světě. Za co a s kým jsme bojovali*, Prague: Ottovo nakladatelství, or Vladimír Naxera (2017), 'Vztah Ruska k Západu a státům postsovětské Evropy v díle Dugina, Solženicyna a Naročnické,' *Mezinárodní vztahy* 52(3), pp. 90–111.

96 For more details see Dugin (2012a).

97 Sergey A. Markov has actively presented ideas similar to those of Dugin. Markov is the vice-rector of the Russian University of Economics. political scientist (and former KGB employee) with close ties to the Kremlin, former Duma deputy for the United Russia Party, and member of the 'Presidential Commission of the Russian Federation to Counter Attempts to Falsify History to the Detriment of Russia's Interests'. At present, Markov is an advisor to the government establishment. In his arguments, Markov comes close to Dugin's opinions in some aspects, especially on the issue of the threat to Russia by international conspiracy, in which the obligatory West is joined by 'incompliant' states of the so-called 'near-abroad'. Markov actively speaks out on behalf of 'Russian imperial greatness and integrity' and is relatively known for his critique of historians from the former Soviet republics that took a critical stance against Moscow's supremacy. He became 'famous' for his stance against historians of the Katyn massacre who in his words were 'deforming and revising' history. He also accused Ukrainian writers of history schoolbooks for untruthfully distorting the history of Ukraine-Russia affairs and claimed they were ideologically biased against Russia. The performance and provocation of Pussy Riot in the Cathedral in Markov's mind was not only an inconsiderate act and protest against the restoration of caesaropapism and clericalization of the state, but a part of a global conspiracy against Russia and the Orthodox Church. In accordance with this interpretation of the punk-rock performance, Markov assumes that President Putin has the obligation not only to punish the three unreasonable female singers, but to protect the Russian Federation against a dastardly conspiracy. If Pussy Riot's sentence was lifted (or was too lenient), Orthodox believers would have the justified fear that they could next time become the victims of an even worse blasphemy and profanation than those that took place in the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour – this act might not be necessarily led by a street-art group, but by NATO forces or 'terrorists from the Caucuses'. Here the same motif appears as with Dugin – the existence of a global anti-Russian conspiracy that relies on aid from the fifth column inside Russia which is made up of the minions of Russia's adversaries. The ladies from Pussy Riot are also a part of this group. See Kalinič and Naxera (2011). Despite these similarities, however, it should be mentioned that at present, after Dugin's situation has weakened, he now faces criticism from Markov, who proclaimed for example that Dugin is a brilliant philosopher but brilliance and madness often go hand in hand. Henry Meyer and Onur Ant (2017), 'The One Russian Linking Putin, Erdogan and Trump,' *Bloomberg*, available at: <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-02-03/who-is-alexander-dugin-the-man-linking-putin-erdogan-and-trump> (accessed 3 June 2017).