


FOUNDATION AND EVOLUTION OF EURASIAN IDEOLOGY

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Preeti D. Das
Faculty
Centre for Russian and
Central Asian Studies
School of International Studies
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi
ketyusha@gmail.com

Abstract: Most of the political debates of the late twentieth and early twenty-first century focused on an identity crisis of Russia. This crisis was not a direct result of volatility in the post-Soviet space. Most recent identity debates relate to intellectual writings around the 1920s that invoked initial thoughts about Russian national identity owing to the national crisis and the Civil War of 1918-1921. The main dispute around the Russian identity debate was that between Slavophiles and the Westerners; Russia and Europe; the West and the East. The belongingness became the fundamental issues of the Eurasianists. As per this belief, the Russian civilization did not belong exclusively to European or to Asian categories.

The Eurasian movement of the 1920s acquired a distinct connotation post-collapse of Soviet Union. Though neo-Eurasianism equally popularized the idea of Russian cultural closeness to Asia instead of Western Europe, however, this did not reduce the social tensions. Massive inter-ethnic conflicts erupted in the late 1980s and early 1990s linked to ethno-social and cultural factors. Nature of these conflicts was erratic and had the potential of destabilizing the foundational existence of Eurasian identity. In the above context, the theory of ethnogenesis and concepts such as ethnos and super-ethnos that were promoted by Lev Gumilev became a convenient alternative perspective for the study of ethnicity as well as keeping the nation united. This article focuses on the basic understanding of the theory of "Ethnogenesis" and its relevance in the current Russian identity debate.

Keywords: Eurasia, Eurasian ideology, Culture, Ethnicity, Gumilev, Ethnogenesis

Introduction: USSR during early 1980

The popularity of Lev Gumilev in the late Soviet period among Russian intellectuals, once again, prompted debates around the relevance of Eurasianism in the social, cultural and political life of Russia. Re-emergence of

Eurasianism at the juncture of the transition of Russian Society during the late Soviet and post-Soviet period when the country was experiencing a severe economic, political, and identity crisis, was of significance. Lev Gumilev emerged as the cult figure during this period. The Glasnost and Perestroika policies, not only opened debates on the overall re-evaluation of the existing socio-political system but also exposed the hollowness that had prevailed under the Soviet regime. Therefore, along with the publication of earlier banned literature in large numbers, the rehabilitation process of previously repressed or prohibited scholarly articles, books, ideas, cultural norms and beliefs began. At the same time, “Western institutional structure and democratic norms” under Gorbachev and his national reform policies constituted a major setback for Russian nationalists. The apprehension remains, whether the popularity of Gumilev was a reaction to the “conciliation with the West” policy of Gorbachev, or, an attempt to regain the lost status of superpower? Another concern is why Gumilev? Why do Russian nationalists heavily bank on the concept of ‘ethnogenesis’ introduced by Gumilev? Other founding members of Eurasian ideology who observed that the Eastern Slavic people were culturally closer to the East, rather than the West, such as Nicholas Roerich, N. Trubetskoi, L. Karsavin, P. Savitski, N. Alekseev, had gained prominence against secessionist tendencies. It is interesting to observe that the opening up of Soviet space and transition period of Russian society witnessed a number of inter-ethnic conflicts. Post-Soviet national and civic identity developed their own specific, contradictory trends. The combination of two main vectors of historical development characterized the nature of ethno-social dynamics of the 1990s by “differentiation and integration” (Pavochka 2011: 4). So, from one standpoint, political elite and intellectuals took steps to keep Russia united, while on the other, the tendencies developing towards self-identification that were not only limited to ethnicity or religion but also a territory.

Much similar to the earlier reaction of Russian intellectuals to the Russian revolution of 1917, the modern Russian nationalists rejected the “common European home” policy of Gorbachev that came with the unwanted impact of a far-reaching integration into the West. Harking back to the origin of Eurasianist’s ideology that had emerged in the 1920s was to protect Russia from “European capitalism and its materialistic values”. Similarly, the ‘formation of loose conservative nationalist tendencies’, among some people in the later Soviet period led to them openly expressing their views to preserve the political and territorial integrity of Soviet Russia. Precisely, at this moment Gumilev’s thought gained prominence and could be freely accessed by scholars after perestroika, though written much before the avalanche of publications. A fact worth mentioning is the initial concern of Eurasianist discourse on the “future of Russia” and that the unique position of Russia was East oriented and not towards the West. This remains the focal point of Russian nationalists as well. On the line of Soviet policy, the vision of “New Russia” emphasized on “special role of Russia” in re-establishing its unique role of keeping the region united. Therefore, often the popularity of Gumilev’s legacy was thought to be widespread among the national patriotic segments when the public consciousness embraced chauvinistic and isolationist sentiments (Korenyako 2006:22; Glazyev; Yanov 2013). Many supporters of Gumilev and his ideology now consider him a bridge between the “Silver age culture as well as the darkest chapters of the Soviet passage” of the twentieth century (Mamaladze 1992: 7 in Bassin 2016; 212; Yanov 2013). This article is an attempt to understand the basics of the theory of ethnogenesis and the reasons for its popularity, and how concepts such as ‘ethnos’, ‘super-ethnos’, ‘passionarnost’ contribute in constructing Eurasian ideology.

Foundation of Eurasianism and Eurasia

As mentioned earlier Eurasianism emerged as a reaction of socio-political ideology in Soviet Russia of the 1920s, though, the expansion of Russian religious philosophy and writings of Russian writers of the mid 19th century laid the founding stones of Eurasian ideology (Laruelle 2008: 2; Donskikh 2007: 38). It is essential to identify certain key concepts to understand the origin of Eurasianism that provides a backdrop to understand Gumilev and his popularity. Eurasian ideology was a continuation of issues raised by Slavophiles. An initial version of a local culture, as propagated by Danilovskiy, led to concern regarding the role of Russia as a link between Europe and Asia. The first edited volume "Exodus to East" systematized the main principles of this movement. In Exodus to East, authors such as Suvchinskiy, Florovskiy, Trubetskoi and Savitskiy were main contributors who marked the beginning of the Eurasianist's approach (Savitskiy 1921).

Introductory remark on the foundation of Eurasian identity calls for a geographic understanding of the Eurasian region. One of the founding members of Eurasian ideology, George Vernadskiy, considered the Eurasian region as a platform that geographically provides a base for the development of Russian people. Besides that, the key element in understanding Vernadskiy's concept of "European Russia" is that it did not refer to 'ethnic Russians'. As per Vernadskiy, at no point in its historical development, the concept of "European Russia" corresponded to actual spread of "ethnic Russians" or "Russian *Plemena*". Vernadskiy specified that geographical uniqueness of Russia was such that it assigned Russia to take the lead role in assimilating the people of Eurasia.

"Eurasia represents that allocated geographical area separated by natural borders, which, through spontaneous historical processes, assigned Russian people to rule" (G. Vernadskiy 2008: 7).

Similarly, Aleksandr Dugin raised his 'all-inclusive' arguments in April 2001 at a Congress of Eurasian society: "never in the history of our country, we ever had mono-ethnic state... Russians are not ethnic and rational community having a monopoly of statehood. We exist thanks to the active participation of many nationalities (Narod) including Turks in building State together. Particularly this approach is the base of Eurasianism" (Dugin 2001). Hence, the Eurasian region, as defined by Vernadskiy, "as a system of great - plains such as Eastern European; Western Siberian etc." is based on geographical and political continuity (Vernadskiy 2008: 8; Titov 2005: 187). Eurasianist's writings elaborated the geographical division of Eurasia in detail. For example, Savitskiy, who refuted the traditional understanding of European and Asian division of Eurasia, defined it as "middle Continent as a special geographical and historical world" and endorsed the horizontal division of Eurasia (Vernadskiy 2008: 8).

"The main zones are divided into long strips along the latitudes - the tundra along the Arctic Ocean, the forest zone, the steppe, and the deserts. The geographic basis of Russian history lies in the interaction between the forest and the steppe." (Vernadskiy 6-8)

Another exclusive term emphasized by Eurasianist ideology intertwined with the geographical space of Eurasia was the concept of "mestorazvitie". This referred to the belief that the large socio-political units could be created only within a specific geographical framework such as the

Scythians, the Huns, the Mongolian and the Russian. Consequently, 'Eurasia' was considered to be a unique *mestorazvitie* that broke the traditional understanding of Russia as being part of either Europe or Asia.

In an attempt to stipulate the geographical space of Eurasia, a radical approach of Eurasianists was linked to profound Russian identity. In 1933 at Warsaw, P. N. Savitskiy called Eurasianism an ideological movement and emphasized that since the very beginning, Russia has been influenced by various cultures - Byzantine culture, nomadic culture, and European culture spread over different historical periods (Savitskiy 1921). Ultimately, as per Savitskiy, Eurasia had generated its own unique culture, which was distinct from any one of them.

Significance of these concepts emerged with the end of the Soviet system when the paradigm shift changed the fundamental parameters of social reality. The thought to overcome stereotyped ideologies, clichés, and overall social activities grew stronger and dominated the discourse. In the search for a new "national ideology", Eurasia replaced Marxism-Leninism as a primary geopolitical ideology. The shift in the ideology led to the formation of a new Eurasian Economic Union in post-Soviet space (Bassin, Suslov 2016: 14, 71). Sergei Glazyev, A. Dugin, A. Panarin and other strong supporters of "Russia as a Eurasian empire" and an influential political advisor, played a prominent role in popularizing the concept of Eurasia. (Yanov 2013; Barbashin and Thoburn 2014 in Bassin and Suslov 2016: 14). Glazyev, an unofficial head of Izborskiy club, claimed that Gumilev is "one of the biggest Russian thinkers and founder of "integration of Eurasian space" (Yanov 2013). It was Gumilev who "ascertained the natural and historical conditions of the birth of Eurasian Super-ethnos" (Laruelle 2008: 50). Based on the theory of ethnogenesis, Dugin develops his Neo-Eurasian doctrine in which the preservation of the traditional culture of each civilization becomes the focal point. However, his 'doctrine does not stress culture or cultural identity as prominently as ideology' (Shekhovtsov A. 2009: 697-716). He considers the superiority of ethnic community as overstated, and promotes a concept of 'Eurasian Empire' built on the principles of Eurasian Federalism (Dugin 1999: 591-601; Shlapentokh 2007: 215-236; Shekhovtsov 2009: 697-716). As recapitulated by Dugin, the Eurasian project has already entered a new phase where the need for giving it a political dimension is underway, such as the creation of Eurasian Parliament. Highlighting the basic principles for integration of Eurasian people, Dugin identifies several layers of this integration while the first remains the economic level that carries forward the economic cooperation of custom unions and Eurasian Economic Union and others. Nonetheless, based on the experience of the European Union as a purely economic union, Dugin, stresses upon the need for ideology and the value system as the base of Eurasian integration (Dugin: 2012).

Gumilev: Theory of Ethnogenesis

In the period between 1960-1973, Gazette of Leningrad University, Reports of Geographical Society of USSR, and Nature magazines published a series of articles written by Gumilev titled "Ethnogenesis and Ethno-sphere". His concepts ethnos and ethnogenesis attracted severe criticism from various scholars, which were also published by the Nature magazine. The criticism came from his contemporaries like B.I. Kuznetsov, V.N. Kurenoy, O.A. Drozdov, B.N. Semevsky, Y.V. Bromley, Y.K. Efremova, M.I. Artamonov and V.I. Kozlov. This critical discussion revolved

around the difference between natural and social interpretations of ethnos (Pavochka 2011: 11). However, his post-Soviet popularity is partly due to his image as a victim of the totalitarian system and partly due to absence of a single domestic theory on ethnology (Korenyako 2006: 22; Pavochka 2011: 203). Gumilev's works could not get published until the late 1980s, as it was perceived as a challenge to the official Marxist-Leninist ideology (Korenyako 2006: 22). Although his works dealt with historiography and ethnography, his popularity is more often associated with the concept of Eurasianism. Gumilev's historiography considered providing continuity to the traditions introduced by Eurasian ideology. The main aspects, which he elaborated in greater detail, included the geographical nature of Eurasia and its history, such as Russia's relation with Eurasian nomads. He claimed Russian superiority over Romano-Germanic people and reproduced the old Slavophilic thesis about the degradation of Europe (Radovskiy; Pavochka 2011: 16). Overall, he tried to apply his theory of ethnogenesis to Russian history in support of Eurasian views. Although most scholars consider his theory as a unique intellectual paradigm, distinct from Eurasianism, his self-proclaimed "strong affinity" with Eurasianist's ideas describes his closeness with Eurasianists.

Although in the 1920s Eurasian' approach immensely contributed to Russian historical identity, it was less fruitful during the 1930s. Gumilev's theory of ethnogenesis supplemented this debate by providing a unique formula of Russian identity, which is being publicized now. The development of Eurasian ideology is seen beginning from Danilovskiy's writings, which provided a scientific base for the Slavophil ideology. It highlighted the significance of local culture. Leontiev, who rejected the Slavic identity as an essential element of distinct Russian identity, further emphasized this concept. Later Eurasianists came up with convincing arguments on the positive influence of Mongols on Russian society and culture, followed by Gumilev's interpretation of Russian history. Therefore, from Slavophil, Gumilev's theory of ethnogenesis was a step ahead in carrying forward the intellectual tradition (Vodichev 2007: 38).

Gumilev's theory of 'ethnogenesis' begins with the key to understanding that the "special place of human being was their ability to adapt to various environments". The "motivation of the deeds of individual" is crucial for ethnogenesis as it "composes the ethnic stereotypes of behaviour" (Gumilev 1990: 204). He explains the conditions that led to the initiation of the process of ethnogenesis based on man's need. The needs are divided into two categories "need of needs" and "need of growth", where the first ensures mere self-preservation, and the second "is the motives of another kind" (Gumilev 1990: 204). Gumilev argues that the second category develops with the "phases of ethnogenesis"; and is further sub-categorized based on its level of *passionarnosti*. The natural landscape has a substantial role in an ethnic group, regulated by "economic and emotional relationship" (Gumilev 1989: 58).

Therefore, the central argument of the theory is a contrast between the natural and the product of conscious human effort. Based on Vernadskiy's idea of 'biosphere', dealing with the relationship between humankind and nature, Gumilev talks about "inseparability of human nature". The same applies to ethnic history, which is inseparable from the natural world. 'Biosphere' consists of living and non-living matter and these are intermittently connected and separated from each other depending upon their genesis and structure. Similarly, 'natural phenomena' were contrasted with the 'products of human activity' (Vernadskiy - Nauchnaya Misl;

Gumilev - Ethnos kak Yavleniye - 39-56; Titov 2005: 47). In this whole process, the behavioural stereotypes are crucial as people adapt to the new environment not by physical characteristics but by changing behavioural stereotypes. Hence, ethnicity, for Gumilev, is more of a biological phenomenon rather than social and is attached to the natural landscape. Applicability of this theory in understanding Russian History throws fresh light on pre-existing interpretations of the same and Russian identity. However, Gumilev's critics observed that to justify his ultimate goal of proving "Great Russians as super-ethnos" he "turned everything upside down" (Yanov 2013).

Understanding Ethnos

The nature of ethnicity (ethnos) is central to understanding the theory of ethnogenesis. Ethnic units or 'ethnos' is one of the most fundamental categories of human society. As per him, it is a *"form of existence of species Homo Sapiens is a collective of individuals opposing themselves to all other collectives. It is more or less stable, although it arises and disappears in historical times, which constitutes the problem of ethnogenesis"* (Gumilev 1990:56). On that account rather than viewing humanity as a whole, it was "perceived as divided into ethnoses". All human beings are an essential part of 'ethnos' and all ethnos share a similar organizational structure and go through the evolutionary process known as ethnogenesis. Ethnos is a process rather than a state and at the same time each ethnos is unique in itself, each having specific ethnic individuality, and each categorically maintaining the difference "sometimes of language, customs and system of ideology" (Gumilev 1990:56).

The change occurs based on the unique internal structures of each ethnos, which change with change in their environment, to meet their needs. This specific process of the behaviour change came to be known as "ethnogenesis" or ethnic generation. Consequently, any radical environmental transformation increases the possibility of the emergence of a new ethnos having distinct behavioural stereotypes. This behavioural stereotype might even differ from one generation to the other within the same ethnos. Hence the correlation of 'law of nature' and 'behavioural stereotype' is a key element in the study of ethnos, which makes it complex in nature, since it is constantly changing. Based on these principles, two types of ethnos have been identified – static and dynamic. Primarily, if the new generation tries to emulate behavioural stereotypes of previous generations they are considered to be 'static', while dynamic types are those who are different from their predecessors. Though there is no value difference between these stages, there is a difference in attitude among them. 'Dynamic' ethnos considers 'static' as inferior and at the same time, 'static' ethnos considers dynamic stage as a waste of energy.

Apart from static and dynamic ethnoses, "an essential element of the theory of ethnogenesis" attached to dynamic ethnos is 'passionarnost' - "a form of energy that affects human behaviour and human psychology" this energy overpowers the self-preservation instincts (Bassin 2016: 44; Titov 2005: 58). Considering Gumilev's theory stood against the official ideology, it is interesting to note that his theory had been considerably influenced by the socio-cultural and political situation of Soviet culture during the 1930s. The Soviet concepts of the "new Soviet person" and "Druzhba Narodov" were a key influence. Identical to "creative determinism" of the new Soviet man, *passionarniy* energy provided vision into the "nature of productive forces and their

correlation to the dynamics of social growth". Another reason for apparent Soviet influence on Gumilev's *passionarnost* is linked to Bolshevik's emphasis on "the ability for single-minded super-efforts," such as those found in the works of Lunacharskiy and Maxim Gorky. The three levels of Gumilev's *Passionarniy* energy were as follows - the first included those whose impulse towards an ideal was stronger than their self-preservation instincts. The second level included those with varying degrees of either physical or intellectual ability: the third level could have "morally bad or virtuous, had either creative or destructive tendencies".

Hence, there may be the direct or indirect influence of Soviet society on Gumilev's theory, the key difference being that unlike Soviet theories which were based on shared principles or linguistics, 'ethnos' had a unique system of relations between its members embodied in behavioural stereotypes. For him, the relation was more important than the similarity in language, race or common origin between individual members. The concept of "Super-ethnos" is a higher order of ethnos. The level of *passionarniy* energy, impulses, geography and the ethnic pre-history plays a significant role in the emergence of super-ethnos.

Limitations of Theory of Ethnogenesis

Critics of Gumilev's theory argue that his concept of Super-ethnos and *passionarnost* attracted the attention of Russian nationalists or "empire saviours", who wanted to preserve the geographical integrity of the existing state with the role of Russian nationality redefined as a special leading role to keep the territory united (Korenyako 2006: 22; Bassin: 210).

As noted earlier, post-Soviet Russia could not follow the erstwhile Soviet approach of maintaining territorial integrity and sustaining a multicultural society. The ideals of Eurasianism satisfied the requirement of a collective vision that affirmed the principle of ethno-national integrity. Hence, Eurasianism began to "emerge as an alternative ideological glue to hold the country together" (Dunlop 1993: 292; Yasmann 1992: 23; Titov 2005: 10). Possibly, it could also be associated with the crisis the country was facing with the decline of Russian ethnology due to its "catastrophic asynchronous process of a paradigm shift" (Pavochka 2011: 203). V. V. Pimenov identifies several grounds for the crisis in ethnographic knowledge - the inter-ethnic relations, theoretical weakness of many ethnologists, and their methodological indexing etc. (Pimenov in Pavochka 2011: 199). Though many diverse perceptions coexisted on ethnology such as those of S.A. Tokarev, V.I. Kozlov, N.N. Cheboksarov, V.V. Pimenov, Y.V. Bromley, L. N. Gumilev, nonetheless, as Pavochka highlighted, there was an absence of a single theory, which would have taken care of "theoretical vacuum" (Pavochka 2011: 203). So, Gumilev's popularity was the result of sympathy among the intelligentsia, who supported anti-communists and considered him to be a victim of a totalitarian regime. Another possible cause is the reaction to the emergence of chauvinistic and isolationist tendencies of the Yeltsin period's crisis. Thus, Gumilev came to be regarded as an exotic figure with the label "primordialist", and his concept "Russian-Eurasian Super-Ethnos" was found to be a satisfactory replacement for the USSR.

Theory of ethnogenesis is also considered a breakthrough as it provides a unique overview of ethnic transformation as a natural process. However, as noted earlier, the publication of Gumilev's article on "Ethnogenesis and Ethno-sphere" in 1970 in the magazine, "Nature", drew severe criticism related to inconsistencies regarding facts, and not considering socio-

economic factors. In his article, Julian Bromley criticized the frequent use of an already well-defined term, 'ethnos', in a new and destructive manner that portrayed Russians as superior beings compared to other nationalities. (Bromley 1970: 51-55) Aside from Bromley, Panarin and Kedrov, also regarded these concepts as having destructive factors and wrote about the moral flaws of Gumilev's concept. Their concern revolved around the question as to how one could justify seizures, aggressions and genocides that were committed by 'passionarities' with less passionate contemporaries (Korenyako 2007). Bromley, while talking about the concept of *passionarnost*, pointed towards the unfeasibility of identifying the physical energy absorbed by people as a result of their social activity. As per him, social activity primarily depended upon specific historical conditions of their existence and was mainly determined by social factors (Bromley 1970: 51-55). Yanov questions Gumilev's explanation of historical events by way of natural phenomena of an eruption of the biosphere. He calls the eruption of the biosphere that creates "new nations (ethnic groups) and civilizations (super-ethnos) are unpredictable". (Yanov 2013)

Buryatskiy, one of the ideologists of international Islamist resistance in North Caucasus, interpreted Gumilev's 'passionarnost' to justify the importance of *jihad*, as a "concept that in its highest form leads to *Istishhad*" (Garaev 2017: 203, 210).

"I have always been interested in [Gumilev's] idea of 'passionarity', and in the theory according to which the emergence of ethnos is directly connected to that phenomenon. [Gumilev] understood this term [passionarity] as the general striving of a people (*narod*), of an ethnos, to reach its major goal, [and for this goal] people were ready to perform great deeds. In his opinion, [passionarity] was the reason why ethnos could emerge, seemingly out of nothing; and a reduction in the level of passionarity led to the disappearance of an ethnos. The main thing here is that [Gumilev developed a matrix] on which he indicated the highest level of passionarity [under the term] P6; this peak Gumilev understood as self-sacrifice (*samopozhertvovanie*), a readiness to make sacrifices (*zhertvennost'*) to fulfil a given task. If we look at this from a neutral position, we will understand that Gumilev was right – because not only states but also the people on the whole (*narod*) rose only when persons were ready to sacrifice their lives for a certain idea" (Garaev 2017: 210).

Thus, the "Chess Board" image of Eurasia in American and Euro-Atlantic discourses as observed by Brzezinski in 1997, had changed by the second decade of 21st century to one that is more pragmatic, based on the social, political, and economic assessment of Eurasia (Nadtochey 2019: 189). As noted earlier, the Eurasian ideology of Dugin takes into account the Economic aspects of this integration. However, he reiterates that the economy is a "separate segment" of this integration, while the cultural and civilizational aspects remain the primary (Dugin: 2012). The political units of Eurasian Empire should be established following "cultural, historical, and ethnic identification, rather than simple ethnic administrative division" (Shekhovtsov 2009:617-714). The theory of ethnogenesis emphasized the biosphere, and the natural phenomenon of ethnos, where the energy is determined by external factors that pass through several stages. Eurasian integration, as per Dugin's opinion, "is more of a conscious effort to unite the people of Eurasia (Dugin: 2012). Dugin believes that irrespective of the declining status of Russian community it 'will soon become the dominant phenomenon of Eurasian geopolitics' (Dugin 2000:192; Shekhovtsov 2009:617-714). Eurasian ideology certainly got immense support from

erstwhile Soviet Republics ever since the formation of CIS region. As per the observation of Oleg Donskikh, a professor in the Department of Philosophy and Humanities of Novosibirsk State University of Economics and Management, Eurasian movement could not be fruitful in 20th century despite specific and concrete ideological contribution; however, trends in the transformation of post-Soviet discourses in the 21st century reinforce the need for fresh debates on the role of Eurasia. Nonetheless, the scientific and intellectual work immensely contributed to lay the foundation of Eurasian identity. Orlova, a professor from the Institute of Socio-Political Research under Russian Academy of Sciences, observed: "The biggest noticeable contribution of Eurasianism in understanding ideas of socio-historical, socio-cultural, and socio-economy of Eurasia was the formation of a methodological Polycentric, multipolar socio-historical process, the idea of parallel existence and development of different civilizations, each of them having its logic of development, its cultural dynamics, specialized values, aims and priorities." (Donskikh 2007: 43; Nadtochiy 2019: 189). There is no direct link of the theory of ethnogenesis with Eurasianism, as the former is perceived to be an independent intellectual contribution by Gumilev. Nevertheless, it carries forward the arguments raised by Eurasianists. One of the main arguments of Eurasianism is that it rejects the existence of universal culture, the superiority of any one culture and, accordingly, denies the existence of any universal progressive movement.

Conclusion

An alternative way of Eurasians to look at the relations between regions across the globe is to recognize the contribution of several coexisting great civilizations rather than only a linear pathway where developing countries follow the developed countries. As per Sergeeva, Gumilev's ethnology incorporated minute details and has exceptional explanatory potential, because it answers questions such as: "why many peoples die during their heyday, why some ethnos win, why some are clearly inferior in their technical equipment, and why some people easily conquer and others can only be subdued by destroying most of them, etc." And all this is done without valuing cultural differentiation of ethnic groups (Sergeeva 1998: 76; Pavochka 2011: 232-233).

Reinterpretation of historical events through ethnos and super-ethnos structure, by Gumilev, is inclined towards Eurasianism, though it deviates a little from the geo-cultural emphasis of Eurasians. Along with the rejection of universal culture, Eurasians also reject the geopolitical understanding of the relation between the centre and the periphery (Pavochka 2011: 229; Donskikh 2007: 45; Vodichev 2007). Consequently, they propagated manifestation of multipolarity instead of mono-polarity, and so, big culture or civilization could become the dominating centre of influence. It is the prism of the biosphere and the socio-natural synthesis approach of ethnogenesis theory that the Eurasianists adopted for the study of multi-polarity. Gumilev's theory regarding the biosphere and the formation of ethnicities is in close relation with nature and natural processes; at the same time, it is also linked to modernity in ethnographic studies making it relevant for contemporary ethnic studies.

Korenyako's point of view that Gumilev has more supporters in Eurasia than opponents, is possibly due to his pluralistic and relativistic approach towards interpretation of historical events. Despite the multiplicity of interpretation of the term "passionarnost" and its consequences

that remain unpredictable, it is noteworthy that the Eurasians were first to recognize the significance of local cultures and Gumilev's ethnos and *passionarnost* is a step forward in the Eurasian ideology debate by replacing universality with diversity. Carrying forward the idea of Eurasians and the concept of 'super-ethnos', Dugin emphasizes the special role of Russia, not only in keeping the post-Soviet space united but also keeping the 'second world' as independent. The need for revisiting the very fundamental concept of modern geopolitics is crucial for him. The emergence of Eurasian Economic Union in the post-Soviet space was more related to trade and economic cooperation between the East European, Central Asia and West Asian countries. Nonetheless, it indicates the joint efforts by CIS regions to maintain Eurasia as a unique space. Keeping in mind, the risk of ideological and socio-cultural vacuum, the regional authorities took initiatives towards the ethnic self-identification issues linked with Eurasian regional diversity. The crisis of Covid-19 has provided a new kaleidoscope or a new opportunity. This kaleidoscope will show how the relationship between the regions sustains itself or a new relationship develops with entities outside of this region. This will indicate potential trends of intra-regional and inter-regional cooperation for the future.

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Основание и эволюция евразийской идеологии

Аннотация: Большинство политических дебатов двадцатого и двадцать первого веков были посвящены кризису идентичности России. Этот кризис не был прямым результатом пост советского пространства. Последние дебаты о личности относятся к интеллигенции 1920-х годов, которые ссылались на первоначальные мысли о российской национальной идентичности из-за национального кризиса и гражданской войны 1918-го по 1921-го годов. Основной спор русской идентичности был между славянофилами и западниками; России и Европы; западом и востоком. Основопологающим аргументом евразийского убеждения было то, что русская цивилизация не принадлежала ни к Европейской, ни к азиатской категориям.

Евразийское движение 1920-х годов приобрело явный подтекст после распада Советского Союза. Хотя Нео-евразийство в равной степени популяризировало идею русской культурной близости к Азии, а не к Западной Европе, это не уменьшало социальную напряженность. Массовые межэтнические конфликты вспыхнули в конце 80-х - начале 90-х годов в результате этно-социальных и культурных факторов. Характер этих конфликтов был неустойчивым и имел потенциал дестабилизации основополагающих существования. В вышеупомянутом контексте теория этногенеза и таких понятий, как этнос и супер-этнос, продвигаемая Львом Гумилевым, стала удобной альтернативной перспективой для изучения этнической принадлежности, а также поддержания единой нации. В предлагаемом документе основное внимание уделяется базовому пониманию теории «Этногенез» и ее актуальности в текущих дебатах российской идентичности.

Ключевые слова: Евразия, Евразийская идеология, Культура, Этническая принадлежность, Гумилев, Этногенез