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RUSSIAN FOREIGN POLICY AND THE DISCOURSE OF EURASIANISM
RHETORIC VERSUS REALITY

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RUSSIAN FOREIGN POLICY AND THE DISCOURSE OF EURASIANISM
RHETORIC VERSUS REALITY

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ABSTRACT

RUSSIAN FOREIGN POLICY AND EURASIANISM RHETORIC VERSUS REALITY

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This thesis aims to examine the evolution of the discourse of Eurasianism and its impact on the formulation and implementation of post-Soviet Russian foreign policy. The thesis argues that both of Russia's post-Soviet leaders: Boris Yeltsin and Vladimir Putin have used the discourse of neo-Eurasianism pragmatically whenever it suited Russia's interests. Moscow ignored this discourse when its foreign policy interests contradicted with the main tenets of this ideology. The thesis has five chapters. Following the introductory chapter, the second chapter explores the evolution of Eurasianism as a discourse and its main variants in post-Soviet era. The third chapter examines the relationship between the Eurasianist discourse and Russian foreign policy under Boris Yeltsin. The fourth chapter discusses the same relationship under Vladimir Putin. The concluding chapter evaluates the main findings of this thesis.

Keywords: Russia, Russian Foreign Policy, Eurasianism, Boris Yeltsin, Vladimir Putin.

ÖZ

RUS DIŐ POLİTİKASI VE AVRASYACILIK GERÇEK RETORİŐE KARŐI

Akgül, Esra

Yüksek Lisans, Avrasya Çalışmaları Yüksek Lisans Programı

Tez Yöneticisi: Yrd. Doç. Dr. Oktay F. Tanrısever

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Bu tez Avrasyacılık söyleminin gelişimini ve Sovyet-sonrası Rus dış politikasının oluşturulması ve uygulanmasındaki etkisini incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Tez Rusya'nın Sovyet-sonrası dönemde liderliğini yapan Boris Yeltsin ve Vladimir Putin'in yeni-Avrasyacılık söylemini Rusya'nın çıkarlarına uyduğu sürece pragmatik olarak kullandıklarını savunmaktadır. Moskova, dış politikasının çıkarları bu ideolojinin ana doktrinleriyle ters düőtüğünde ise, bu söylemi görmemezlikten gelmiştir. Bu tezde beş bölüm bulunmaktadır. Giriş bölümünü izleyen ikinci bölümde bir söylem olarak Avrasyacılığın gelişimini ve Sovyet-sonrası dönemdeki başlıca çeşitlerini incelemektedir. Üçüncü bölüm Avrasyacılık söylemi ile Boris Yeltsin'in Rus dış politikası arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemektedir. Dördüncü bölüm, aynı ilişkinin Vladimir Putin dönemindeki durumunu incelemektedir. Sonuç bölümü tezin başlıca bulgularını değerlendirmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Rusya, Rus Dış Politikası, Avrasyacılık, Boris Yeltsin, Vladimir Putin.

To my father and mother...

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

As Europe and Asia are not separated from each other by exact lines, 'Eurasia', a geographical term, has been derived by connecting the words: 'Europe' and 'Asia'.¹ However, today Eurasia also denotes political, historical, geo-strategic and cultural dimensions.² This thesis focuses upon the geopolitical-strategical element as it pertains to Eurasia. In this regard, I would like to quote from Zbigniew Brzezinski who attaches special importance to Eurasia since "it accommodates seventy-five percent of the world population, sixty percent of the world gross national product (GNP) and seventy-five percent of the world energy sources".³ According to him, an overall look to Eurasia, may give the hint that this region has the potential to rival the U.S. power. Actually, his striking argument: "The center of the strategic struggle in the world, will be based in Eurasia"⁴ has been the one which triggered my interest in the region, especially in the discourse of Eurasianism; and since the influence of the Eurasianism is far more dominant in Russian foreign policy, when compared to the policies other great powers, I have limited the scope of

¹ *Büyük Larousse*, Volume II, (Istanbul: Milliyet Yayınları) p. 1043.

² Murat Yılmaz, "Avrasya Yeni Bir Uygarlık Yolu Olabilir mi?", *Uygarlığın Yeni yolu Avrasya*, ed. Erol Göka- Murat Yılmaz (İstanbul, Kızıl Elma Yayıncılık,1998) , p. 12.

³ Zbigniew Brzezinski, "Bir Avrasya Stratejisi", *Türkiye Günlüğü*, September-October 1997, No. 47, p. 35.

⁴ *Ibid.*

this thesis to the relationship between Russian foreign policy and the discourse of Eurasianism.

Although accepting that Eurasianism has from time to time been somewhat influential upon Russian foreign policy, this thesis puts forth arguments which asserts that the influence has merely been located at the ephemeral level. Therefore, the aim of this thesis is to reveal the hidden motivations behind the neo-Eurasianist inclinations of the Russian government's disposals, particularly since the emergence of the new Russian Federation after the end of the Cold War.

The main argument of this thesis is that both of Russia's post-Soviet leaders: Boris Yeltsin and Vladimir Putin have used the discourse of neo-Eurasianism pragmatically whenever it suited Russia's interests. Moscow ignored this discourse when its foreign policy interests contradicted with the main tenets of this ideology. In fact, the discourse of neo-Eurasianism has been used occasionally as an instrument, for sometimes settling down inner conflicts and for sometimes gaining an advantage in the international political arena. Thus, my starting point has been the impossibility of a constant ideology to be embraced by the Russian government, particularly after the collapse of the Soviet Union, since just like other states, post-Soviet Russia determines its foreign policies in accordance with its national interests rather than any ideology.

In this context, this thesis examines the origins of the discourse of Eurasianism and its evolution throughout the Russian history in order to determine its impact on the formulation and implementation of Russian foreign policy. The roots of Eurasianism is based on the 18th and 19th century trend 'Slavophilism', which argued for the Slavic constitution of Russian cultural identity, emphasizing on the need of a Slavic union. The counter argument had simultaneously emerged as

‘Westernism’ or as some name it ‘Atlanticism’, that was mainly in favour of the rapprochement of the Russian Empire with the ‘West’. As the debate developed between these two cultural and philosophical trends, a synthesis had come into being, which considered both Europe and Asia significant in the formation of Russian culture and ethnic identity: this synthesis has come to be known as Eurasianism.⁵

In the beginning of the 20th century, after the 1917 Revolution, Eurasianism re-emerged on the scene of history; this time as a trend of history-philosophy for developing the political-ideological outline of the new Russia. The defenders had again emphasized the uniqueness of Russian identity and culture by acknowledging the Slavic, Turkic and even Byzantine roots of Russian culture. As this trend developed throughout the 1930s, the Eurasianists refused the Euro-Centrist emphasis of world history, such as the Western type of the liberal democracy, state of law, parliamentarism, and individual human rights. Their anti-thesis for this Western value system was the thesis of strong authoritarian state and the organic union of the individual and the state. As they juxtaposed themselves against their ‘other’ (‘West’ and ‘Westerners’), they explicitly accepted their real or imagined links with the Slavophiles.⁶

The re-emergence of Eurasianism occurred soon after the collapse of the Soviet Union, with similar debates concerning the efforts for understanding Russian originality. This time, the triggering incident was the Atlanticist shift of the Boris Yeltsin government in Russian foreign policy, during the first years of its tenure.

As the influence of Eurasianism over Russian foreign policy after 1991 is going to be analysed through the second and third chapters under the titles of

⁵ Christian F. Werschutz , “Rus Fikriyatı’nın Parçası Olarak Avrasyacılık ,” *Uygurluğun Yeni yolu Avrasya* , ed. Erol Göka- Murat Yılmaz (İstanbul: Kızıl Elma Yayıncılık,1998) , pp 23-33.

⁶ *Ibid.*

‘Eurasianism and Russian Foreign Policy under Boris Yeltsin’ and ‘Eurasianism and Russian Foreign Policy under Vladimir Putin’, I continued my research on the two factions of neo-Eurasianism which are Hard-Line and Moderate Eurasianism.

The hard-line version of Eurasianism emerged in late 1980s as a reaction by conservative intellectuals to Michael Gorbachev’s domestic and foreign policy reforms, which also had two different factions: Modernizers and Expansionists. The Modernizer’s main agenda was condensing economic and military development in order to revive their former Russian Empire or Soviet Union, essentially within the same borders. On the other hand, the Expansionists stated their general aim as the notion of a ‘Conservative Revolution’, advocating for an imperial expansion of Russia beyond the borders of the Soviet Union, from Dublin to Vladivostok. By means of this future Eurasian Empire, they would be able to block the U.S.A.’s imperial nationalism’s pressure.⁷

The other main version of neo-Eurasianism is Moderate Eurasianism which argues for an original way of achieving modernisation other than copying the Western type of modernisation. They are in favour of Russia’s development by means of utilizing Russia’s own native resources, be it human, intellectual, technological and fiscal.⁸

In this context, this thesis attempts to analyze the different neo-Eurasianist disposals in Russian foreign policy toward the main great powers in world politics: the United States (US), the European Union (EU), China and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), particularly under the Boris Yeltsin and Vladimir Putin

⁷ Andrei P. Tsygankov, “Hard-Line Eurasianism and Russia’s Contending Geopolitical Perspectives”, *East European Quarterly*, Vol.XXXII, No. 3, Fall,1998, p. 317-329.

⁸ Charles Clover, “Dreams of the Eurasian Heartland’ [Online] Available: http://www.geocities.com/eurasia_uk/heartland.html [Accessed June 29, 2005]

tenures. Concerning Russian foreign policy, I argue that although Eurasianism has been popular among the Russian foreign policy élite, it has been pragmatically used by the government when a necessity emerged.

Russian foreign policy under Boris Yeltsin can be divided into two phases. In the first phase, the pro-Atlanticist stance was dominant due to the direct inclination of Yeltsin's first foreign minister Andrei Kozyrev to the Western Alliance (namely the US and the EU) for developing and maintaining economic partnerships. This pro-Atlanticist inclination soon led to a foreign policy debate in the government between the pro-Eurasianists and the pro-Atlanticists. As the criticism increased toward the pro-Atlanticist policies, both in the government and in the public, that is mainly displayed as the suspicion of the sacrifice of Russia's long-term interests in return of the uncertain possibility of becoming America's ally, the neo-Eurasianists' stance started gaining power in the disposals of the Boris Yeltsin's Government.⁹ Actually, the triggering force behind this pro-Eurasianist shift was the outcome of the 1993 elections when the nationalists won a large share of votes.¹⁰

Consequently, the government adopted a new foreign policy concept in January 1993. According to this foreign policy concept, the Russian Federation had leaned on the former Soviet Republics which they had ignored since the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Actually, the highly interdependent and integrated economic system of the former Soviet Republic and a not negligible amount of Russian diaspora abandoned in the former Soviet Republics obliged Russia to seek rapprochement with these states which had been once dealt with under her domestic

⁹ Mike Bowker, *Russian Foreign Policy and the End of the Cold-War*, (Dartmouth Publishing Company Limited, Ashgate Publishing Limited, 1997), pp. 206-207.

¹⁰ Emre Erşen, "Neo-Eurasianism and Putin's 'Multipolarism' in Russian Foreign Policy, *Turkish Review of Eurasian Studies*, Annual 2004 – 4, p. 135.

policy. Another leading motive behind this rapprochement was the fear of the transmittance of the unstable political situation and threatening radical Islamic movements in these newly formed republics. As a result, 'Basic Provisions of the Concept of the Russian Federation' were composed by the Russian Security Council in April 1993. These Basic Provisions shed light on the neo-Eurasianist shift of Russian foreign policy, and interpreted as the success of the neo-Eurasianist wing in the government. These provisions revealed that Russia was retreating to the East, to her new and former territory, focusing more on her newly formed neighbours.¹¹

The following significant neo-Eurasianist move had been the 'Establishment of the Strategic Course of the Russian Federation with Member States of the CIS' in 1995. This decree emphasized the further integration of the Alliance in economic and political terms for achieving a significant position in the world balance of power.¹² Although the neo-Eurasianist tendencies of the government had been pursued by the foreign minister Yevgeni Primakov; for example by the formation of the 'Club of Four' by Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, it is difficult to classify Yeltsin's foreign policies as neo-Eurasianist in overall. Because, in my point of view, as one observer put it, the neo-Eurasianist shifts in Foreign Policy had been used for "currying favour amongst the nationalistic tendencies" due to the populist and pragmatist concerns of the Government.¹³

As for the analysis of Russian foreign policy under Vladimir Putin, contrary to the arguments that Vladimir Putin could be seen a sincere supporter of neo-

¹¹ Mike Bowker, *Russian Foreign Policy and the End of the Cold-War*, (Dartmouth Publishing Company Limited, Ashgate Publishing Limited, 1997), pp. 208-209.

¹² Nicolai N. Petro, Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Russian Foreign Policy From Empire to Nation-State*, (New York, 1997), p. 115.

¹³ Mike Bowker, *Russian Foreign Policy and the End of the Cold-War*, (Dartmouth Publishing Company Limited, Ashgate Publishing Limited, 1997), p. 189.

Eurasianism, this thesis argues that pragmatism influenced Vladimir Putin in adopting neo-Eurasianist policies.¹⁴ Because, despite the occasional neo-Eurasianist tendencies of the former Prime Minister Primakov whose multi-polarism has been adopted by Putin, the overall focus to Russian foreign policy under Putin reveals the pragmatic use of both the neo-Eurasianist and pro-Atlanticist policies. Even Primakov reveals this pragmatism by his own statements for pursuing a “rational pragmatism” devoid of romanticism and unaffordable sentimentality, referring to the need for approaching the former Soviet Republics in a realistic manner.¹⁵ Finally, their striking policy shift embarked upon, immediate after the September 11 attacks has demonstrated the pragmatism of Putin Government, specifically when they gave unconditional support to the US intervention in Afghanistan and when they tried to capitalize upon of the events on 11 September 2001 by placing themselves in a similar situation as the U.S., regarding their war in Chechnya.¹⁶

Moreover, the Putin government’s political shifts have continued with its approaches and conflicts with the U.S. and other world powers. As previously-mentioned, these occasional shifts illustrate the lack of a constant neo-Eurasianist stance in Russian foreign policy. The establishment of closer ties with China, as well, could be given as an example for this inconstant policy; since China has been seen as a threat for Russian dominance in the region according to the neo-Eurasianist discourse. The reluctance of the CIS states for establishing a Eurasian Union and their willingness for partnerships with the US after the U.S. rapprochement in this

¹⁴ Emre Erşen, “Neo-Eurasianism and Putin’s ‘Multipolarism’ in Russian Foreign Policy, *Turkish Review of Eurasian Studies*, Annual 2004 – 4, p. 135.

¹⁵ Alvin Z. Rubinstein, “Russia Adrift- Strategic Anchors for Russia’s foreign policy,” *Harvard International Review* , Vol.22,Issue I, Win/Spring 2000, p. 6.

¹⁶ Emre Erşen, “Neo-Eurasianism and Putin’s ‘Multipolarism’ in Russian Foreign Policy, *Turkish Review of Eurasian Studies*, Annual 2004 – 4, p. 135.

region due to security concerns led by September 11 may be interpreted as the failure of even this pragmatic use of neo-Eurasianism.¹⁷

This thesis has five chapters. Following the introductory chapter, the second chapter explores the evolution of Eurasianism as a discourse and its main variants in post-Soviet era. The third chapter examines the relationship between the Eurasianist discourse and Russian foreign policy under Boris Yeltsin. The fourth chapter discusses the same relationship under Vladimir Putin. The concluding chapter evaluates the main findings of this thesis.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

CHAPTER II

EURASIANISM AS A DISCOURSE

2.1. Origins of the Eurasianism

Throughout the 18th and the 19th centuries, two philosophy discourses arose in cultural philosophy, which were termed '*Slavophilism*' and '*Westernism*'. While *Slavophiles* maintained the Slav Culture, since they believed that it had constituted a cultural identity for Russians and they emphasized the significance and the need of good negotiations with other Slav Peoples; the *Westernizers* latched onto the idea of Peter the Great, which was based on the rapprochement of the Russian Empire with the West. During the last few decades, the third trend of the culture-philosophy has come into being, that which considers both Europe and Asia as very significant and highlighting the impact of Tatar-Mongol culture over the formation of the Russian ethnic identity. The debate among these above-mentioned discourses was envenomed by means of the problematic with respect to the question : 'Which continent does Russia belong to?'. Indeed, as the famous culture-philosopher Nikolai Berdyaev (1874-1948) wrote in his book, '*The Basic Problems of the Russian Ideology in the Beginning of the XIXth and the XXth Centuries*': "...Russian people are neither pure European nor pure Asian ...She (Russia) connects the two different worlds (East and

West) and there has always been the two conflicting principles, Eastern and Western, in the Russian spirit.”¹⁸

After the 1917 October Revolution, in the debate of the consequences of the Revolution, the third trend “Eurasianism” has come on the history scene. Eurasianism (or Eurasism) was a trend of the history-philosophy which was used to develop the politic-ideological outline of the new Russia. This philosophic idea of Eurasianism has born by the publication of the famous historian Trubetskoi’s book called *The Exodus to the East*, in 1921.¹⁹ As being the philosophical founder of Eurasianism Trubetskoi declared that:

The spirit and all meaning of our ideas lies in the acknowledgement and the declaration of a unique Eurasian-Russian Culture and the existence of its own particular subject as a symphonic personality.²⁰

The personality which Trubetskoi referred above is Russian which embraces Slavic, Turkic and Byzantine elements all together in its own culture. Although this culture is getting closer to Asian and European culture on the peripheries, it has never personalized with them.²¹

The Eurasianists refuse the Euro-centrist emphasis of World history based on the universal value system determined by western civilisation; the refusals of the

¹⁸ Christian F. Werschütz , “Rus Fikriyatı’nın Parçası Olarak Avrasyacılık ,” *Uygurluğun Yeni yolu Avrasya* , ed. Erol Göka- Murat Yılmaz (İstanbul: Kızıl Elma Yayıncılık,1998), pp 23-33.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Elif Hatun Kılıçbeyli, “Avrasyacılık: Düşünsel Problematığı”, *2023 İkibinyirmüç*, No. 42, October 2004, p. 23

²¹ *Ibid.*

Western type of liberal democracy, state of law, parliamentarism and the individual human rights are added ones. In response to these values and norms, Eurasianist innovated the anti-thesis, that was based on the commune-principal of Russian Orthodoxy; the thesis of strong authorithier state, the organic union of the individual and the state. Furthermore, the above-mentioned religious characteristic of Eurasianism (Orthodox principle), should be taken into account as one of the indicators of the diversity of it from the opponent discourses. As it can be understood from the above-mentioned refusals, Eurasianists qualify their *'other'* as the *West* and the *Westerns*. This refusal of *Eurocentrism* signifies that Eurasianists perceived themselves as sharing more common characteristics with the Slavophiles than Westernists.²² For example; one wing of Eurasianists, which approved the 1917 Revolution as the re-birth of Russian culture and the starting point of the construction of the refreshed and strengthened Eurasia, admitted their closeness with the Slavophiles by declaring that:

...Roman-German World is our biggest (greatest) enemy... Roman-Germans were so sure of their human-nature that they called themselves as 'humanity', their culture as 'the civilization of humanity' and finally their chauvinism as 'cosmopolitism'.²³

As they refused any possible ties with *'the West'*, Eurasianists based history of their trend on the era of Tatar-Mongol sovereignty. They emphasized the positive impact of this era on the autonomous development of Russia. The geographer Paul Sawizky, who is among the firsts to use the name 'Eurasia' commensurate with this middle placed and bridge world, wrote about this subject: "Without the Tatar-

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Ibid*, p. 24.

sovereignty, Russian State could not form herself. Russia ... is the one who sustains the assertion of Cengiz Khan and Timur. She is the unifier of Asia. She is the carrier of the tradition ... which has very deep roots".²⁴ Paul Sawizky also mentioned that Russia, as the requisite of her own geography, has a centre place between Asia and Europe and by means of this centre place, she should be conscious of her Eurasian culture characteristics. Thus, she will radically differentiate herself from a Western European outlook. In the Eurasian history-philosophy, as the geographical factor plays a very important role, the Russia's originality is initially determined by her own natural structure and location. It is impossible to separate Russia into Whitesea-Caucasus, West Siberia and Turkistan regions because Russia is a whole, with all her constituents, united in her-ownself.²⁵

Consequently, these discourses examined above -especially Eurasianism- had some impact on various areas of Russian foreign policy, from time to time, throughout the different eras.

2.2. Neo-Eurasianist Discourse In The Post-Soviet Era

In order to examine Eurasianism thoroughly, it would be appropriate to begin with a quotation of Sir Halford Mackinder, a British geographer, who argued that, in light of geopolitics, the earth will forever be divided into two naturally

²⁴ Christian F. Werschutz , "Rus Fikriyatı'nın Parçası Olarak Avrasyacılık ," *Uygarlığın Yeni yolu Avrasya* , ed. Erol Göka- Murat Yılmaz (İstanbul: Kızıl Elma Yayıncılık,1998), pp 23-33.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

antagonistic spheres: land and sea.²⁶ In Mackinder's theory, this above called land-power is Eurasia -the territory of the former Russian Empire. According to him, whoever dominates the Eurasian landmass, as a result of this domination, will forever seek to dominate the whole world. Naturally, this geopolitical theory has drawn the attention of many people living in the Eurasian territory.²⁷

Many Russian intellectuals, who once thought their homeland's victory over the world would be the inevitable result of history, now pin their hope for Russia's return to greatness on a theory that is, in a way, the opposite of dialectical materialism. Victory is now to be found in geography, rather than history; in space, rather than time.²⁸

Similar to the process that had developed after the 1917 October Revolution, Eurasianism arose again among the Russian intellectuals by means of the debates concerning the efforts for understanding Russian Originality and as a political opposition to the Atlanticist shift in Russian foreign policy under the Yeltsin government in the years following the collapse of the Soviet Union, particularly after the 1993 parliamentary elections.²⁹ Considering that Eurasianism became the common focus and policy of the Russian Federation's Red-Brown Coalition -the alliance of ultra-left and ultra-right politicians who together controlled close to half of the Duma (the lower house parliament of Russia)-, the significance and the extent of neo-Eurasianism's impact on the Russian Foreign Policy, from the very beginning of its spring can be better understood.

²⁶ Geopolitics is an approach that analyses politics, history and social science with reference to geography. [Online] Available: <http://en.wikipedia.org> [Accessed November 12, 2005]

²⁷ Charles Clover , "Dreams of the Eurasian Heartland, [Online] Available: http://www.geocities.com/eurasia_uk/heartland.html [Accessed June 29, 2005]

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ Emre Erşen, "Neo-Eurasianism and Putin's 'Multipolarism' in Russian Foreign Policy, *Turkish Review of Eurasian Studies*, Annual 2004 – 4, p. 135.

Moreover, for better examining and determining the impact of Eurasianism on Russian foreign policy, it is essential to discuss the two versions of Eurasianism: *Hard Line Eurasianism* and *Moderate Eurasianism*.

2.2.1. Hard-Line Eurasianism

Eurasianism, in its hard-line version, envisions the Eurasian heartland as the geographic launch pad for an Anti-Western movement which first starts at Russia and then spreads abroad. Furthermore, hard-line Eurasianism's main goal is the exact eviction of the influence of 'Americanism' or 'Atlanticism' or 'Westernism' from Eurasia.³⁰ This hard-line strain arose in the late 1980s as a reaction of conservative intellectuals to domestic and foreign policy reforms launched by Gorbachev. With the publication of the conservative weekly journal 'Den' (Day) in 1990, Eurasianists began to express their stated goal; the realisation of a new Eurasian Empire located in Eurasian territory and distinguished from the Soviet Empire. 'Elementy' (Elements), a geopolitical journal, was another major literary tool for hard-line Eurasianists.³¹

Another, but more powerful, cause of the Eurasianists' intense emergence was the collapse of the Soviet Union. The disintegration of the Soviet Union spurred the Eurasianism movement and provided it to be distinguished among the other conservative political currents, such as 'communists' and 'nationalists'.³² Andrei P. Tsygankov well defines their distinction from other currents by the below quote:

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ Andrei P. Tsygankov, "Hard-Line Eurasianism and Russia's Contending Geopolitical Perspectives", *East European Quarterly*, Vol.XXXII, No.3, Fall, 1998, p.317.

³² *Ibid.*

...Unlike Communists, whose dream is to restore the Soviet Union, and Nationalists who see the attainment of a Greater Russia as their ideal, hard-line Eurasianists put forward the idea of the “Eurasian Empire” distinguished from both Russian and Soviet Empires, and established by the means of the strengthening of geopolitical power and the forming of the United Slav-Turkish Community.³³

Besides the above-mentioned statements, for a more detailed examination of contemporary ‘*Russian Eurasianism*’, it is essential to analyze the different échols –‘*Modernizers*’ and ‘*Expansionists*’ as labelled by Andrei P. Tsygankov- within Eurasianism.

2.2.1.1. Modernizers

The first strain of Eurasianism, *Modernizers* is older (and perhaps as a result of this), more nostalgic about the demise of the Soviet Union. This movement criticises the Soviet Union and even the Empire, only in respect to the Soviet leaders. *Modernizers*’ main agenda is to combine economic and military development in order to revive their former empire in a different form and regime, within more or less the same borders. Moreover, they are influenced by western realist international relations theories and similar to western realists, they are still nostalgic about the bipolar Cold-War world because of its stability. They are concerned with power (since they have a realist approach) and ‘*geopolitical stability*’. The similarities of their approach with the western realists are not finished yet; their definition of security is also similar with that of Hans Morgenthau. They assert that security is one of the major constituents of national power.³⁴

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 321-322 .

The most prominent advocates of this strain are Alexander Prokhanov, – *Den's* and *Zavtra's* (Tomorrow) editor in chief, and Shamil Sultanov, the first deputy editor of *Den'-Zavtra*. Their major international political principles can be deconstructed as follows: First, self sufficient empires as key units of action , as key players of international politics. Second, power as a means to protect the ‘empire’ from its collapse. Lastly, moderate aggressiveness and rational behaviour - continuation of the historical traditions of Russian unity with other former Soviet nations and the closeness of cultural and language ties among them.³⁵

2.2.1.2. Expansionists

Expansionists are more recent than Modernizers and they do not respect the former Soviet Union, because they consider the Soviet Union as being too fearful of geopolitical expansion, thus, too conservative to survive as an empire. Expansionists state their general concept as the notion of a ‘conservative revolution’. Contrary to Modernizers, they think that being conservative is not enough.³⁶ Alexander Dugin, (the most prominent expansionist, who is the editor in chief of the geopolitical journal *Elementy*, a frequent contributor to the weekly *Den'* and the founder-leader of the Eurasia Movement and Party), argues that :

Conservative revolutionaries support in principle the ideal and ‘positive’ side of the Right – that is, the ideas of tradition, hierarchy, statism, nationalism – the intimate bond with native soil, spirituality and so forth. Conservative revolutionaries , on the other hand, aspire to restore the entirety of right-wing values in their full-scope, because they are not satisfied with compromises and palliative measures. That is why they are revolutionaries.³⁷

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.322-326.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p.323.

Corresponding with their goal, 'revolution', and unlike Modernizers, Expansionists advocate an imperial expansion of Russia beyond the borders of the former Soviet Union, from Dublin to Vladivostok. By means of this future Eurasian Empire, they aim to block the United States' imperial nationalistic pressure and to resolve European and world problems. Their main theoretical inspiration is old Western and domestic geopolitical theories. They are ready to do whatever is necessary to expand beyond Russia and to confront the U.S. as an 'embodiment of all possible evils'.³⁸

Although Expansionists are not 'realists' as Modernizers, the explicit presence of war rhetoric in their writings can be observed easily. One example of this rhetoric is Alexander Dugin's word patterns and metaphors while talking about the future 'Eurasian liberation'. He issues a call to establish a 'front of European liberation' in order to fight against overseas invaders and 'to rise out of ashes and ruins'.³⁹

Consequently Expansionists can be distinguished from Modernizers on several striking points such as their interpretation of power as a foreign policy goal, empires as the key units of action, and non-rational behaviour as a motivation for action.

Their major assumptions about international politics can be abridged as the following points: First, constantly expanding empires as key units of action, as key players of international politics. Second, power as a means to expand and conclude geopolitical alliances which serve to resist the U.S. Last, aggressiveness

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ See 'Manifest of the Eurasist movement', [Online] Available: http://www.eurasia.com.ru/eng_manifest.html [Accessed July 15, 2005]

and irrationalism; suggesting to move beyond traditional nationalism and promoting Eurasianism as a last and a highest stage of Russian nationalism and as a rationale for pursuing territorial expansion.⁴⁰

2.2.2. Moderate Eurasianism

Moderate Eurasianists emphasize Russia's uniqueness and are in favour of Russia following an original way of modernisation rather than copying the Western type of modernisation. Namely, their goal is not a global anti-Western (mostly anti-American) campaign; they are mainly interested in Russia's development; at least in the very beginning.⁴¹

Sergey Kurgenyan, who is one of the most interesting and popular personalities of the 'New Right' in Russia, explains the milder Eurasianism as a 'third-way' which is different from the other currents -such as Westernism, Communism, Slavophilism et cetera in Russia. He argues that everyone who attempts to develop the country should adopt the idea that the country should be built with her own domestic resources in terms of human, intellectual, technological and fiscal components. Sergey Kurgenyan also argues the necessity of development abiding by traditions. According to him, modernisation and development are the terms different from each other. He describes development as the growing-up of a child by his/her own mind and will. He states that "a child can be fed but cannot be transformed into dark, if he/she is blonde", and in

⁴⁰ Andrei P. Tsygankov, "Hard-Line Eurasianism and Russia's Contending Geopolitical Perspectives", *East European Quarterly*, Vol.XXXII, No.3, Fall, 1998, pp. 324-325.

⁴¹ Charles Clover, "Dreams of the Eurasian Heartland, [Online] Available: http://www.geocities.com/eurasia_uk/heartland.html [Accessed June 29, 2005]

Kurgenyan's view modernisation is a transformation like this. By the way, he criticizes Turkey since she is being settled in a rigid perspective and she is being directed by a definite Western centrist model of direction.⁴²

Consequently, Sergey Kurgenyan explains the goal of the milder Eurasianism as Russia's constant goal: the development of civilisation on the fundamental principles of *Christ* (referring to the Orthodox Church) and on the principles of equity and brotherhood. He also adds that scientific and technological development should not be ignored, but it should occur in a synthesis which abides by Russian traditions.⁴³

In addition to all of these above-mentioned theoretical examination about Eurasianism, it is necessary to analyze the differentiating practices of Eurasianism in Russian foreign policy after the Cold War, in order to comprehend whether these practices have been temporary or permanent.

⁴² Kai Ehlers, "Rusya'nın Üçüncü Yolu," *Uygarlığın Yeni Yolu Avrasya*, ed. Erol Göka-Murat Yılmaz (İstanbul:Kızıl Elma Yayıncılık ,1998), pp.53-56.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 56

CHAPTER III

EURASIANISM AND RUSSIAN FOREIGN POLICY UNDER BORIS YELTSIN

3.1. Introduction

During the first few years of Boris Yeltsin's Government, Russia had witnessed a gradually strengthening neo-Eurasianism influence over the public as a reaction to Yeltsin's pro-Atlanticist shift in Russian foreign policy. From August 1991 to mid-1992, the Atlanticist influence over Russian Foreign Policy were dominant which displayed itself in the pursuit of Gorbachev's western-oriented foreign policy with expectation of the willingness of the West to accept Russia as an equal partner to whom the West would provide generous economic cooperation and aid. At the same time, the Yeltsin government considered the integration with the Western world as a guarantee of Russia's security. According to some commentators, during this transitional period in Russia, Yeltsin pursued Gorbachev's 'new political thinking' particularly in foreign policy.⁴⁴ However this pursuit, along the line of Atlanticism, became the subject of severe criticism of the Eurasian lobby. The critique had been so intense that there had even been a foreign policy debate in the Russian Federation which demonstrated itself in the conflict between Yeltsin's

⁴⁴ Joo, Seung-Ho, "Russian Policy on Korean unification in the post-Cold War era", *Pacific Affairs*, Spring 1996, p.1.

Foreign Policy Adviser Sergei Stankevich and Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev.⁴⁵

As cited by Mike Bowker, Sergei Stankevich, in his article published in the Russian newspaper *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*⁴⁶ on March 28, 1992, criticised Andrei Kozyrev's overall strategy for his pro-Western (particularly pro-US) views:

...Stankevich argued for a greater emphasis on the near abroad and third world countries, especially the Middle East, South West Asia and the Pacific Rim. Stankevich described his views as Eurasianist and Kozyrev's as Atlanticist. In many ways, Stankevich was reviving the centuries old debate between Westernisers and Slavophiles... He was not advocating a return to expansionist policies or the complete rejection of Western culture. On the contrary, he supported reform and recognised it was not in Russia's interest to ignore the West. Stankevich's critique of Kozyrev was important because it came from a reformer and a potential ally of the Russian Foreign Minister.⁴⁷

Furthermore, Sergei Stankevich was not the only statesman in the government who opposed Andrei Kozyrev; influential nationalists such as the Vice President Alexander Rutskoi and the chairman of the Congress, Ruslan Khasbulatov were also against the pro-Western policies, even more severely, arguing that "the West had deliberately undermined the Russian economy to take advantage of temporary Russian weaknesses and reimpose its global dominance".⁴⁸

As a result of these oppositions, by summer 1992, Russia's foreign policy started shifting to Eurasianism and emphasising an independent and neutral foreign policy based on her own national interests. The adoption of the "foreign policy concept" by the Yeltsin government in January 1993⁴⁹ followed by the new

⁴⁵ Mike Bowker, *Russian Foreign Policy and the End of the Cold-War*, (Dartmouth Publishing Company Limited, Ashgate Publishing Limited, 1997), pp. 206-207.

⁴⁶ Cited in Mike Bowker, *Russian Foreign Policy and the End of the Cold-War*, (Dartmouth Publishing Company Limited, Ashgate Publishing Limited, 1997), pp. 206-207.

⁴⁷ Mike Bowker, *Russian Foreign Policy and the End of the Cold-War*, (Dartmouth Publishing Company Limited, Ashgate Publishing Limited, 1997), pp. 207, 208.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 208.

⁴⁹ "Russia's Foreign Policy Concept", *International Affairs (Moscow)*, January 1993, pp. 14-16

Military Doctrine in the end of the same year barely displays the reorientation of the Russian foreign policy towards Eurasianism. These developments indicated the final consensus of the Yeltsin Government over the Russian foreign policy direction after nearly two years of debate. Consequently, idealism and economic determinism that focuses on East-West cooperation and economic development had been abandoned, and realpolitik and security determinism emphasizing independent policy, security consideration, and national interests had been embraced in Russian foreign policy.⁵⁰ Thus, according to Russia's new foreign policy concept, the new set of foreign policy tasks and priorities were determined as follows:

First, Russia's vital interests lie in developing fullscale relations with the other ex-Soviet republics. Russia's relations with the CIS states ("near abroad"), and to a lesser extent with east-central Europe, became the focal point of Russia's foreign policy. At the same time, the reassertion of strategic hegemony (maintaining the sphere of influence) over these areas became the primary task of Russian foreign policy. Second, another important task of Russia's foreign policy is to form a belt of stability and neighborliness along its eastern and southern borders.⁵¹

As such, Russian foreign policy under Yeltsin can be divided into two phases. In the first phase, the pro-Atlanticist influence was dominant, whereas the neo-Eurasianist influence had been gaining power in the second one, particularly since 1993 elections. With this in mind, to analyse the influence of the neo-Eurasianist foreign policies through Yeltsin's tenure, the course of Russian foreign policy towards different powers in the world, namely, the US, the EU, China and the CIS and Caucasus States, will be argued throughout this chapter.

⁵⁰ Joo, Seung-Ho, "Russian Policy on Korean unification in the post-Cold War era", *Pacific Affairs*, Spring 1996, p. 2.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

3.2. Russian Foreign Policy towards the United States

Boris Yeltsin, as being the first popularly elected president of Russia, with his new foreign minister Andrei Kozyrev, decided to establish a different Russian foreign policy course toward the U.S. whose guiding principles were already determined even before he was elected.⁵² The distinction of this new foreign policy from the preceding one may be better understood from the quotation below:

...the United States and the other Western democracies are now to be deemed as much friends and even perspective allies of democratic Russia, as they were enemies of the totalitarian USSR.⁵³

However, American fear, which can be traced back to the Cold War, regarding the tenor of the Russian American relations had been the impeding force on the way to the strategic partnership with the United States despite the attempts of the Russian Foreign Ministry for persuading the US concerning the emergence of the partnership possibility by embracing the same basic values of the Western democracies whose prominent example was the Reagan Administration's view that "the national interests of democratic states do not conflict, but rather complement each other in the international arena".⁵⁴ In this context, according to Andrei Kozyrev, the US should have supported the new Russian Federation's key role in creating a democratic state open to the rest of the world and in transforming the CIS region into a region of stability and democracy. The American financial resources and diplomatic status could have assisted the stabilization of the CIS by means of both

⁵² Nicolai N. Petro, Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Russian Foreign Policy: From Empire to Nation-State*, (New York, 1997), p. 302.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

direct financial support and encouraging the Western Investment in the region. Thus, a democratic and peaceful international system after the fall of communism could have been obtained in the world, which had been of mutual interest of both sides.⁵⁵

Consequently, the strategic Russia-US partnership that the Yeltsin Administration sought were to be accomplished in five major aspects determined by Andrei Kozyrev:

- i. In obtaining guarantees of a global security regime. ... strengthening of the nuclear nonproliferation regime.
- ii. In peacekeeping. ... Russia must take a role in preserving domestic tranquility in the regions on its border.
- iii. There should be an explicit recognition of the “special role and responsibility of Russia” for stability within the states of the former Soviet Union. ... which necessarily means closer economic ties with Russia.
- iv. The West and the United States in particular, should support Russia’s concern for the equal treatment and concern for human rights violations within the former Soviet republics.
- v. There should be Western assistance for Russian integration into the world economy. ... political partnership between Russia and the United States ... for the reform process inside Russia, ... should also encourage Western investment in the region. ... a speedy acceptance into regional and international financial agreements ... that would allow for the reduction and eventual elimination of tariff barriers against Russian goods.⁵⁶

As already noted through the introductory part of this chapter, Andrei Kozyrev’s foreign policy strategy toward the U.S. had been the subject of severe criticism in Russia, mainly for its pro-Atlanticist approach and by the allegation that Russia’s long-term interests were sacrificed at the expense of the uncertain possibility of becoming America’s ally. Actually, these critiques turned out to be partially correct, mainly due to the lack of mutual confidence whose roots were buried in the Cold War era and the various problems had arisen during the Yeltsin

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 303.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 303, 304.

era. The prominent disagreement issues were the NATO expansion, the export of Russian nuclear technology to Iran, and arms control issues.⁵⁷

The eastward expansion of NATO, being the most significant conflict point between Russia and the US, was perceived as a great threat to undermine national security and a formidable obstacle in the reintegration of the CIS. Consequently, Yeltsin and one of the prominent members of nationalist wing in the government, Defense Minister Grachev declared that in return for the prospective NATO enlargement towards the Baltic states, Russia would not refrain from supporting the initiation of a new military-political bloc of CIS states. Behind these declarations loomed Russia's fear that the main motive of this expansion could be the attempts of Russia's exclusion from the Western alliance.⁵⁸

The second area of disagreement with the US was the export of nuclear technology to Iran, where an issue of nuclear non-proliferation and preventing Iran from becoming a dominant actor and a threat in the Middle East. On the other hand, Russia perceived it as one of the double standards of the U.S. since the U.S. itself was helping North Korea to build the same type of reactors. Besides, Iran had always been a reliable member of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) which inspects nuclear development programs around the world. Therefore, Russia did not abstain from exporting her nuclear technology to Iran, in spite of the cost of cooling the relations with the US.⁵⁹

In terms of the disagreement regarding the arms control, the START II Treaty played a crucial role, since the ratification of the treaty had not been ensured

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 304-305.

although it was submitted to the Duma by President Yeltsin, in June 1995. This was mainly because of the prospective financial burden of the treaty that was envisaged by the legislators. Actually, it was an unfortunate time when there was a shortage of funds even for the housing and military pays. Therefore, the excessive financial burden of destroying heavy ICBMs and replacing them with the single-warhead missiles stopped the Duma legislators from ratifying the Treaty. However, some Duma leaders were in favour of extending the validity of the START II beyond 2003, so that the weapons could be utilized and not be wasted until the end of their usefulness. Furthermore, the American interpretation of the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty having an inclination to permit the deployment of Theater Missile Defense (TMD) systems led the Russian Parliament to call for strict implementation of the ABM Treaty as a precondition for ratification of SALT II.⁶⁰

However, despite all of these disputes between the two states, from time to time there had been cooperations and mutual compromises, as well. For example, bringing forward the unfairness and one of the doctrines of the International Law: *rebus sic stantibus*⁶¹, Russia complained about the restrictive 'flank' limitations of the CFE Treaty. These complaints had been returned by the NATO proposal of moving some oblasts from one military district to another, so that Russia could gain more flexibility in the allocation of her forces.⁶²

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 305.

⁶¹ In Latin this means that "Matters standing thus" — The doctrine that treaty obligations hold only as long as the fundamental conditions and expectations that existed at the time of their creation hold. [Online] Available: http://www.measuroo.com/Leg-R/rebus_sic_stantibus.php [Accessed November 10, 2005]

⁶² Nicolai N. Petro, Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Russian Foreign Policy: From Empire to Nation-State*, (New York, 1997), p. 305.

On the U.S. side, the first years of the Yeltsin era corresponded with the Clinton Presidency. The most prominent incident of this era should be considered as the Charter on US-Russian Partnership and Friendship signed on June 17, 1992 since there were many principles of a strategic partnership with Russia which declared the relationship as a “mature, strategic partnership based on equality, mutual advantage and recognition of each other’s national interests”.⁶³ However, the honeymoon between the two countries did not last long and gave way to the increasing influence of the nationalistic trends in Russia which demonstrated itself in the outcome of the 1993 elections when the extremist Zhirinovskiy gained a large share of the votes that yielded to pessimism in the US which was displayed in a key speech in March 1994, by the then Defense Secretary William J. Perry who had major doubts in the course of Russian democracy⁶⁴ and expressed these doubts by his words: ‘...it is possible that Russia will emerge from the turbulence as an authoritarian, militaristic, imperialistic nation hostile to the West.’⁶⁵

Furthermore, the share of the 1992 Congress elections where a Republican majority won, should not be neglected in the above-mentioned US foreign policy shift. Despite the call of the former democratic policy adviser Brzezinski for supporting ‘geopolitical pluralism’ in the CIS, the Clinton Administration could not resist the vociferous opposition from the Senate and the American Public claiming that American foreign policy was being turned over to the Russians.⁶⁶

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ Cited in Nicolai N. Petro, Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Russian Foreign Policy: From Empire to Nation-State*, (New York, 1997), p. 305.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 305-306.

Eventually, as mentioned earlier in the introductory lines of this chapter, the attempts of the pursuit of Gorbachev's new political thinking reflected themselves as the pro-Atlanticist inclination whose prominent example was the adoption of a strategic partnership plan divided into five major arenas during the first period of the Yeltsin tenure. However, this inclination soon gave way to pro-Eurasianist tendencies in the Russian Foreign Policy which displayed themselves by the Russian Foreign Policy makers' stances throughout the handling of the three major disagreement issues with the US: the NATO expansion, the export of Russian nuclear technology to Iran and arms control issues.

3.3. Russian Foreign Policy towards the European Union

Soon after the emergence of the new Russian Federation in December 1991, pursuing the 'new thinking' of Michael Gorbachev, the Russian State embarked upon a new radical foreign policy stance whose orientation had been strongly pro-Western. The foreign minister of that period, Andrei Kozyrev, as being the initiator of this stance in the post-Cold War era, was in favour of closing up with the West in terms of both economic and political relations. Actually, his main concern was mostly the new economic transformation of Russia, without which the political transformation could not be realized. According to him, Russia would build up her strength and open herself to the rest of the world, with the direct or indirect foreign economic assistance of the highly industrialized states of the West. He saw the main Western power focuses, the United States and the European Union, as the leading contributors for the foreign aid, trade, investment capital, advanced technology and entrepreneurial expertise that could boost and ease Russia's economic and political

transition to the world markets and alliances. Furthermore, regarding Kozyrev's main concern in the economic area, his subordinate concern was the military area. He would have realized that improved Russia-West relations in total, would eliminate the potential external threat; so that the share of the military expenses in the whole state budget would decrease which would let the conversion of the military industry to civilian production. Thus, Russia would have regained her dominant stand in the international arena, which -it seemed as if- she had just lost.⁶⁷

However, realizing these pro-Western goals would be difficult as Andrei Zagorsky of the Moscow State Institute of Relations stated: "the independence of the former Soviet Republics places Russia farther away from Europe than ever before in its history".⁶⁸ Furthermore, the loss of Russia's hegemony in Eastern Europe and the deep sea ports on the Baltic and Black Seas as a consequence of the dissolution of the USSR in 1991, made the prospective Russia-Europe relations even more complex. In addition to these, the former USSR Republics such as Ukraine and Moldova, and the Baltic States -who used to be in the Russian sphere of influence before the disintegration- were now the buffer states estranging Russia and the Western Europe.⁶⁹ Consequently, Russia initially placed emphasis on these above-mentioned states and regions in enhancing her relations with Europe:

The first efforts of Russian Diplomacy, therefore, were aimed at dealing with the legacy of the Soviet era, first and foremost, the withdrawal of Soviet troops from all of the former Warsaw Pact Countries, a process completed by August 1991. The second objective was mending relations by publicly acknowledging the atrocities of the Soviet era. This included accepting responsibility for the Katyn massacres and apologizing for the Soviet suppression of the Hungarian uprising in 1956 and the

⁶⁷ Paul J. Marantz, "Neither Adversaries Nor Partners: Russia and the West Search for a New Relationship", *The Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation*, Roger E. Kanet, Alexander V. Kozhemiakin (ed. by), (St. Martin's Press, Inc, New York, 1997), pp. 78-79.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ Nicolai N. Petro, Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Russian Foreign Policy: From Empire to Nation-State*, (New York, 1997), p. 184.

Prague Spring of 1968. The third task was to reestablish vital commercial links between the former communist economies in order to stave off economic collapse in the process of economic transition.⁷⁰

The pro-Atlanticist foreign policy approach of the Yeltsin tenure continued with a Treaty between Bulgaria and the Russian Federation on the basis of respect for the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, equality, noninterference in each others affairs, and mutual cooperation, soon after the failed 1991 coup. In the end of the same year, a three-billion dollar economic agreement between Poland and Russia followed that envisaged the continuation of Russia's oil and gas export to Poland at subsidized prices in return for the coal, sulfur, medicine and food products from Poland.⁷¹

Nevertheless, these initial successes discontinued due to the lack of a conscious strategy and a foreign ministry section developed merely for these former Eastern, newly Central European states, in spite of Foreign Minister's Andrei Kozyrev's pro-Atlanticist stance setting Eastern Europe as a priority region for Russian national interests that is also revealed in his speech at the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (RMFA) on November 3, 1993.⁷² According to some commentators, the conflicts among the foreign policy professionals which later occurred as the fore-mentioned foreign policy debate between pro-Atlanticists and neo-Eurasianists were the main reason behind the resistance of the ministry. In order to overcome this resistance and go beyond the individual relations with a few states in the area of commerce, Kozyrev declared a new phase in relations with the Central Europe by defining four main objectives:

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.184, 185.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 185.

⁷² "Eastern Europe and Russia", *International Affairs (Moscow)*, March-April 1994, p. 21.

- i. The implementation and expansion of existing bilateral accords;
- ii. The deepening of legal commercial ties so as to prevent the further expansion of criminal commerce and black marketing;
- iii. The expansion of Europe-wide agreements and institutions that transcend the traditional divisions between east and west;
- iv. The enhanced cooperation on a sub-regional level within Europe, also with the intent of further eroding the 'bloc mentality'.⁷³

These foreign policy objectives seem not to be in accordance with the main assumptions of the neo-Eurasianist discourse.

Nevertheless, Central Europe remained to be an area of secondary importance to Russia during the Yeltsin Presidency, whereas the significance of Western Europe gradually increased, due to the intense trade relations with the European Union countries, as well as the EU humanitarian assistances to Russia. Actually, there were positive attempts from the EU as well. For example; the European Community (EC) extension of the same tariff preferences that had been granted to developing countries (December 1992); the signing of a Joint Political Declaration on Partnership and Cooperation enabling the future agreements by the leaders of the EC (December 1993); granting the 'most favoured nation' status beside the other members of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). The climax of these positive attempts seemed to be the consensus between the EU and Russia on -by 1998- starting the discussion of creating a pan-European free trade zone which was going to involve Russia.⁷⁴

⁷³ Nicolai N. Petro, Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Russian Foreign Policy: From Empire to Nation-State*, (New York, 1997), p. 185.

⁷⁴ Boris Pichugin, "The EC and Russia in the All Europe Context", *International Affairs*, March-April 1994, pp. 40-41.

However, in spite of all these mutual attempts, economic integration with the Western Europe had been a slow process mainly due to the domestic problems that Russia encountered as a natural result of the reform process she's going through and the reluctance of the West European markets for opening their doors to cheap Russian goods which could have shaken their economies. The second hindrance that could have abtained the EU in enhancing the relations with Russia, seemed to be the stabilizing of Central Europe. As being a direct border to Western Europe and being the subject of attention after the tragic consequences of the Yugoslav War, EU focused on Central Europe for preserving there territorial integrity and social stability. Setting up this as a priority, EU intensified its political and economic relations with these countries, as well as trying to avoid the Russian influence over them, which consequently led to a standstill over Russian-EU relations.⁷⁵

While Europe was trying to keep Russia at a distance, Boris Yeltsin's popularity started eroding due to the increasing criticisms regarding the pro-Atlanticist policies, both among the Russian parliamentarians and the various Russian foreign policy experts. The rumours about the resignation of Andrei Kozyrev by force had spread through the corridors of the Parliament by the end of 1992. Critics focused upon negligence of the relationships with the other significant states such as the CIS and China, who was an emerging power in the international arena. In the meantime, Russia's decreasing relations with her old allies, such as Cuba, Iraq, Serbia and Libya, were also the subject of criticism toward the Yeltsin Government. According to these critics, simply, the pro-Atlanticist policies did not paid off, since merely the small share of the promised Western aid and foreign investment reached Russia. In this situation, although there was almost a consensus

⁷⁵ Nicolai N. Petro, Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Russian Foreign Policy: From Empire to Nation-State*, (New York, 1997), p. 186.

over the Russian political spectrum regarding the criticism against Kozyrev's foreign policy, the most significant group had been the neo-Eurasianists. Firstly, they condemned both Yeltsin and Kozyrev for not applying a conscious and serious policy toward the CIS, forgetting Russia's special historic role in the region, which should be ensuring stability, avoiding and preventing regional and ethnic conflicts, and integrating these states in political and economic terms. Secondly, they opposed the pro-Atlanticist foreign policy stance, arguing for a stance which is far more independent of the West. They criticized the Government of being visionary for assuming that Russia can be the eighth member of the G7 (the group of seven leading industrialized states), on the basis of the weakness of the Russia's economy and that EU is more likely to integrate with a European country. Instead, they were in favour of developing "a clear conception of the distinctive national interests Russia possesses by virtue of her unique geographical and historical position straddling Europe and Asia."⁷⁶

Although not being anti-Western, the neo-Eurasianists drew attention to the fall of Russia's freedom of action and defense of national interests even at the cost of inconvenience with the US and other Western countries. Consequently, these criticisms started to appeal to Russian people in the chaotic environment of the post-Soviet Russia. This was mainly due to the worsening economic situation which even got worse by the Yeltsin Government's economic policies attempting to create a basis for the Western type market economy.⁷⁷ In this regard, it would be illustrative

⁷⁶ Paul J. Marantz, "Neither Adversaries Nor Partners: Russia and the West Search for a New Relationship", *The Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation*, Roger E. Kanet, Alexander V. Kozhemiakin (ed. by), (St. Martin's Press, Inc, New York, 1997), pp. 81-82.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

quoting from Paul J. Marantz who is teaching as a Political Science professor at the University of British Columbia:

The critics of Yeltsin's foreign policy were able to appeal to people's sense of outrage and humiliation. They drew a direct link between foreign policy and the way people were living. They argued that if Russia stood tall, it it vigorously defended its interests, if it prevented the West from taking advantage of its weakness, if it actively competed in the sale of arms abroad, then this would produce better results than the present weak-kneed policies.⁷⁸

As the pressure concerning the need for the shift in foreign policy leaped also to the public, by 1993, it became necessary to re-define a new foreign policy stance moving away from a Western emphasis. This new stance had firstly displayed itself, by the South Korea, China and India visits of Yeltsin in early 1993⁷⁹; and continued with the Kozyrev's declarations whose one of the prominent examples is quoted below:

In the future, our foreign policy will continue to defend Russia's vital interests, even in those cases where it is contrary to the interests of the West and to the interests of our partners within the CIS and the former Soviet republics.⁸⁰

These declarations did not mean the avoidance of the partnerships with the West though. As Kozyrev pursued a more cautious attitude toward the West respecting for the domestic demands of his country, the neo-Eurasianist tendencies in foreign policy had continued until his resignation in 1996 and substitution by Primakov who is known as a practitioner of neo-Eurasianism.⁸¹

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 83-84.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 84-85.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

⁸¹ Emre Erşen, "Neo-Eurasianism and Putin's 'Multipolarism' in Russian Foreign Policy, *Turkish Review of Eurasian Studies*, Annual 2004 – 4, p. 137.

3.4. Russian Foreign Policy towards China

With the warm breeze brought by the Gorbachev Government's achievements whose prominent and historic example should be the resolution of the four-thousand and three hundred (4300) kilometers long border dispute between Russia and China, under Yeltsin tenure, the relations with China had started in a positive manner. Although the rumours of the Chinese support for the 1991 August Coup, seemed to jeopardize this rapprochement inclination, Yeltsin send Vladimir Lukin, then Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the parliament to Beijing in the end of 1991, for reassuring China of their willingness to maintain the positive air between two countries by declaring that Russia would abide by all treaties and agreements signed by the Soviet Union. This first visit was preceded by Yeltsin's first visit to China a year later, in December 1992. With this initiatives, both countries decided on further extending relations, on the basis of Gorbachev's achievements of the previous three years.⁸² According to some commentators, the leading motive behind this warm breeze was the 'changed strategic context':

For the first time in several centuries, Russia was in an intrinsically weaker position vis-à-vis China, and hence no longer a threat. Not only was its economy in shambles, its military demoralized, and its role in regional affairs drastically diminished as a result of the collapse of the USSR, but as a noncommunist country it is now also less of an ideological problem for China's aging oligarchy.⁸³

Nevertheless, along with the changed strategic context, trade between two countries has played a crucial role in this newly defined strategic partnership. The Russia trade figures with China may give an idea about the significance of this item:

⁸² Nicolai N. Petro, Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Russian Foreign Policy: From Empire to Nation-State*, (New York, 1997), p. 197.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

in 1993, \$ 8 billion trade capacity was realized with China, whereas there had been steady growth in the instant following years. According to the experts, China would have become Russia's largest trading partner by 2000⁸⁴; however, China has merely become the largest trading partner in Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) by 2004⁸⁵, which should also be considered as a significant issue for sustaining prosperous relations between two countries. Even if the year 1992 (as being the first year of Yeltsin Government) is taken solely, with the \$ 1.8 billion military export capacity, China had already become a major supporter of the Russian Economy. Considering the Soviet era's disputes with China, these kind of increasing trade relations were taken as prospective threatening signs for Russia's future by some; however since the export with China, -even if it was for upgrading Chinese Military, including radar evading stealth technology for a new generation of Chinese fighter jets-, attracted the hard-cash to Russia, which her economy was demanding for, the vociferous opposition kept silent.⁸⁶

Actually, the fore-mentioned first visit of Yeltsin to Beijing in December 1992, mutually strengthened the above-mentioned status of relations, by means of the signed memorandum of understanding on military cooperation in which Russia's willingness to 'cooperate in all sectors, including the most sophisticated armaments and weapons' had been stated. Furthermore, even going further than Gorbachev's accomplishments, by this memorandum, two states are bounded for not getting involved in any 'military-political alliance directed against the other party'.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ Economy and Statistics. Foreign Trade. [Online] Available: <http://www.rusimpex.ru> [Accessed November 12, 2005]

⁸⁶ Nicolai N. Petro, Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Russian Foreign Policy: From Empire to Nation-State*, (New York, 1997), p. 198.

Following these positive accomplishments, the ‘five year agreement’ on military cooperation enabling transfer of Russia’s advanced military technology and expertise signed in November 1993. This agreement had also enabled close ties between the Russian military complex and People’s Liberation Army (PLA) in China -who are considered as mutual counterparts-. This was mainly because of the pragmatic concerns of two countries, as both of their strategic interests were overlapping, such as; “... a common desire for stability along their long and erratically delineated border; fear over Japan’s growing regional influence; an interest in the stability on the Korean peninsula; and the pursuit of good relations with the United States, which both countries wish to see playing a minor role in Asia”. As these interests coincided with each other, the relations had almost peaked by the visit of Chinese head of state, Jiang Zemin, in September 1994, -the first visit of the head of the state to Russia since 1950-, as it symbolically implied that the “growing Sino-Soviet détente was... moving toward an entente of sorts”.⁸⁷

With this scenario in mind, one may not abstain him/herself to wonder whether there had been any oppositions regarding relations with China, since she had been a rival –even a hostile- of Russia for centuries. Besides, there has always been oppositions in the parliament to government foreign policies in general, without the exception of concerning even a single state. Naturally, there had been some oppositions leading to initial reluctance for realizing rapprochement policy with China, not only in the Russian Foreign Ministry but also from Yeltsin’s close advisors. The oppositions’ ground was mainly the human rights violations record of China, for which the violent suppression of Tiananmen Square incidents in 1990 can be set as a prominent example. In addition to the human rights case, the disputed

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

borders, the flow of cheap Chinese employment force into Siberia, and espionage had been the remaining problems between two states. However, the Russian leadership had finally reached a consensus on the above-mentioned strategic benefits of pursuing good relations with their only neighbour whom they have the longest border in the whole world. So much so that, they even withdrew from extending relations with Taiwan since these increasing relations led to the displeasure of China. In order to overcome this displeasure, Yeltsin issued a decree which affirmed Russia's 'one China policy' and 'unofficial' Taiwan relations. The role of the neo-Eurasianist trend in foreign policy in this consensus should not be neglected since the reservation regarding the possibility of a standstill with the West that the Chinese rapprochement might lead to, had been ignored due to the newly embraced neo-Eurasianist policies.⁸⁸

The warm relations between the two countries have been maintained by both parties also with Primakov's foreign ministry assignment since January 1996. As being a practitioner of neo-Eurasianism, hardly revealing it though, Primakov was in favour of pursuing a multi-polaristic foreign policy to prevent the US unipolarism after the Cold War; therefore he continued seeking for strategic partnership opportunities with China who has been considered as a new pole, now. Consequently, Yeltsin's visit to China in April 1996 signified the new 'climate of trust' between two countries, revealed by the new agreements on military-technical cooperation, economic issues, and delineation of borders. As mentioned before, with the strengthening of the neo-Eurasianism discourse and its multi-polaristic foreign policies among the Russian elite and the public, this 'climate of trust' has been carried to Putin tenure.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

3.5. Russian Foreign Policy towards the Commonwealth of Independent States

The criticisms directed toward the initial pro-Atlanticist policies of Boris Yeltsin and Andrei Kozyrev, were also directed toward the Government's policies to the 'near abroad', a term invented by Russians in 1992 to refer to the fourteen states that once were members of the Soviet republics.⁸⁹ Actually, according to the neo-Eurasianist criticisms, the 'near abroad' has been too important for Russia to be handled with the Yeltsin Government's even-handed diplomacy and constructive cooperation. The vital economic, political, and security interests of Russia in Central Asia and the Caucasus, obliged her to treat this region with intensive care. This obligation was mainly grounded on the highly interdependent and integrated economic system of the former Soviet Republic. According to this system, each republic was bounded by each other for the flow of both their economies and the whole system itself. Consequently, after the dissolution, not only the Russian economy but also the economies of the other CIS countries were harmed as a result of broken- down transportation, the unavailability of the sources which were once available, the markets that had been lost, and the disrupted division of labour that once freely circulated throughout the huge USSR territory. Besides these, almost twenty-five million Russians who were "abandoned" and now experiencing worse economic conditions and ethnic tensions in the 'near abroad' along with the

⁸⁹ Wynne Russell, "Russian Relations with the 'Near Abroad'", in Peter Shearman (ed.), *Russian Foreign Policy since 1990*, (Boulder: West View Press, 1995), p. 53.

refugees fleeing to Russia should be considered as the crucial factors that imposed Yeltsin Government to re-consider their policy toward this region.⁹⁰

Furthermore, if Russia did not handle these countries with care, the chaotic environment, the instable political situation and threatening radical Islamic movements near her borders could not only be easily contagious to herself, as well, but also attract the interests of other states in the Eurasia, such as Iran, Turkey and China who would unquestionably be willing to make these countries their region of influence.⁹¹

As these above-mentioned issues proved the neo-Eurasianist critics regarding the 'near abroad' policy of the Yeltsin Government, by mid 1993, Kozyrev adopted a more assertive foreign policy toward these states who had been instruments of domestic policy for Moscow for centuries, but now were a foreign policy challenge.⁹² Thus, in the same year, Russia sent her troops to Moldova, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Tajikistan for solving conflicts. For most of the commentators, this signified the return of the superior economic and military power of Russia in the region. Soon, these comments proved to be right and Russia started to reap what she sow, by Azerbaijan's consent in reactivating her membership that is followed by Georgia's membership in the CIS. In addition to these, in return of the lasting presence of the Russian troops in her country, Moldova put distance to Romania and improved her ties with Moscow. In regard of Tajikistan, Russian

⁹⁰ Paul J. Marantz, "Neither Adversaries Nor Partners: Russia and the West Search for a New Relationship", *The Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation*, Roger E. Kanet, Alexander V. Kozhemiakin (ed. by), (St. Martin's Press, Inc, New York, 1997), p. 84.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² Robert H. Donaldson, "Boris Yeltsin's Foreign Policy Legacy", *41st Annual Meeting of the International Studies Association*, Los Angeles, California, March 18, 2000, p. 10. [Online] Available: <http://www.personal.utulsa.edu/~robert-donaldson/yeltsin.htm> [Accessed November 5, 2005]

troops intervened in the civil war, there, and protected the government from opposition forces who were residing across the Afghanistan border. In return, Tajikistan became a 'virtual Russian protectorate', which strengthened Russia's hand in Eurasia.⁹³

Moreover, the broad consensus among Yeltsin and Kozyrev along with the Russian Foreign Policy élite, on embracing the former Soviet Union region as a sphere of vital interests in which Russia had a key role for maintaining stability and peace, had led Yeltsin to declare in a speech on 28 February 1993:

Russia continues to have a vital interest in the cessation of all armed conflicts on the territory of the former USSR. Moreover, the international community is increasingly coming to realize our country's special responsibility in this difficult matter. I believe the time has come for authoritative international organizations, including the United Nations (UN), to grant Russia special powers as guarantor of peace and stability in this region.⁹⁴

This statement of Yeltsin shows that Russia was keen in preserving the CIS region as its exclusive sphere of influence.

Following these developments, Russia took steps toward realizing the peace-keeping role which she demanded from United Nations.⁹⁵ While she was searching to get UN approval for the role in the region, she was also seeking UN financial assistance to avoid the financial costs that might possibly arise.⁹⁶

⁹³ Paul J. Marantz, "Neither Adversaries Nor Partners: Russia and the West Search for a New Relationship", *The Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation*, Roger E. Kanet, Alexander V. Kozhemiakin (ed. by), (St. Martin's Press, Inc, New York, 1997), p. 87.

⁹⁴ Suzanne Crow, "Russia Asserts Its Strategic Agenda", *RFE/RL Research Report*, Vol. 2, no. 50, December 17 1993, p. 2.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ Jonathan Valdez, "The Near Abroad, the West and National Identity in Russian Foreign Policy", (in Adeed Dawisha and Karen Dawisha ed.), *The Making of Foreign Policy in Russia and the New States of Eurasia*, (Sharpe: New York, 1995), p. 97.

Meanwhile, as these military actions took place, a set of official documents, laying out the principles of Russian Foreign Policy, issued by the Government, whose first example was the ‘Basic Provisions of the Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation’ adopted by presidential decree in April 1993. Since the ‘Basic Provisions’ were composed by the Russian Security Council, according to some observers, it was an instrument of the foreign policy debate between the Council and the Foreign Ministry. So much so that, it seemed as if this instrument indicated the success of the Council in the debate; because if it is compared with the Foreign Ministry’s December 1992 draft document on foreign policy, one may easily conclude that the ‘Basic Provisions’ were less pro-Atlanticist.⁹⁷ In this context, it would be explanatory to quote the foreign policy tasks set out in the document::

- i. Guaranteeing processes in the formation of the statehood of Russia;
- ii. Defending Russia’s territorial integrity;
- iii. Creating the conditions which ensure the stability and irreversibility of political and economic reforms;
- iv. Securing the Russian Federation’s active and full participation in building a new system of international relations in which it is assured a fitting place;
- v. Protection of the interest of the Russian citizens abroad.⁹⁸

These objectives as set out in the document show that Russia could endorse a neo-Eurasianist discourse whenever it suited its interests.

After the adoption of the ‘Basic Provisions’, a certain gradual shift in foreign policy in favour of the neo-Eurasianist policies could be observed. Although, “Russia has sought to reverse the process of disintegration” by her attempts to preserve her former status among the former Soviet Republics who are now members of the CIS, since 1991; starting from 1993, by the above-mentioned

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 95-96.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 96.

developments, Russian Foreign Policy started more assertive policies toward the 'near abroad'. In this context, President Yeltsin's 1994 New Year's address to the Federation Council where he remarked that Russia was the 'first among equals' regarding the CIS region, should be referred. Thus, Russia started enforcing her policies by attracting these newly independent nations closer to herself with her military, economic and political instruments. As for materializing this goal, firstly, she provided maintaining security by means of her nuclear powers. Secondly, she guaranteed inner stability and territorial integrity of these countries by CIS peacekeeping forces. Thirdly; as mentioned above, the already interdependent economies of the states including Russia served as a crucial factor in Russia's strive for this goal. She even used "the possibility of the economic sanctions..., emphasis on the civil rights of the large Russian diaspora, and tacit encouragement of opposition and secessionist forces within the republics" as means of threat.⁹⁹

The Russian approach toward the CIS States continued with a decree on "The Establishment of the Strategic Course of the Russian Federation with Member States of the CIS" involving the major objectives of Russian policy toward the region, which is issued by President Yeltsin, in September 1995. This decree emphasized on the integration of the alliance in economic and political terms for achieving a significant position in the world balance of power. As fore-determined by Yeltsin, being the 'first among equals', in order to sustain her former dominant position in the post-Soviet region, she should lead the way in the establishment of inter-state political and economic relations over the region. In this regard, favoring the economic cooperation, the decree stipulated three types of unions: Economic,

⁹⁹ Nicolai N. Petro, Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Russian Foreign Policy: From Empire to Nation-State*, (New York, 1997), p. 115.

Customs and Payments Unions. The motive lying behind being in favour of the economic cooperation has been the hope for binding the states closely to Russian economy by means of the notions such as ‘common foreign currency regulation’ and as a result of this, “strengthening the strategic partnership between these states”. Other major sections of the decree may be outlined as; “national security (section three), humanitarian cooperation and human rights (section four), and emphasis on the familiar goals of safeguarding the interests of Russian citizens (both in Russia and the Near Abroad).”¹⁰⁰

The last, but not least, level for the gradual shift of the Yeltsin Government, had started with the assignment of Primakov as foreign minister whose neo-Eurasianist tendency has been mentioned above. Therefore, since 1996, neo-Eurasianist policies had gained strength, and the moves regarding the integration of the CIS had got a boost. The meeting of the leaders of Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan to form the club of four, on March 29, symbolized the prospective further integration of the CIS; since the leaders set up an Interstate Council and an Integration Committee, along with the decision on new cooperations in the fields of economics, culture and education. As soon as four days later, the process of integration took another significant step by the decision of Moscow and Minsk for setting up a ‘Community of Sovereign Republics’, which put forward “a common constitution, a common budget, common currency, the co-ordination of foreign policy and the integration of military forces”. Although the other CIS countries were

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 115-116.

invited to the Community, there had not been any more participants other than Russia and Belarus.¹⁰¹

In light of the above information mentioned through this chapter, it is difficult to conclude that the Yeltsin Administration had been sincere in adopting neo-Eurasianist policies. Since the observers interpret this above-mentioned policy shift as “ a populist attempt to curry favour amongst” the nationalistic tendencies increased after the Cold War.¹⁰² The first two years of the Yeltsin Government proves this interpretation since until the rise of the neo-Eurasianist criticisms, the Government had pursued a pro-Atlanticist policy, particularly demonstrated itself during the Kozyrev’s tenure. In this regard, these political shifts could be attributed to the pragmatic view of the Russian Government, which has hardly changed, particularly since the dissolution.

¹⁰¹ Mike Bowker, *Russian Foreign Policy and the End of the Cold-War*, (Dartmouth Publishing Company Limited, Ashgate Publishing Limited, 1997), p. 189.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

CHAPTER IV

EURASIANISM AND RUSSIAN FOREIGN POLICY UNDER VLADIMIR PUTIN

4.1. Introduction

In order to examine Vladimir Putin's stance in Eurasianism, it would be more appropriate to begin with Neo- Eurasianists' stance about Vladimir Putin. According to Eurasianists, Putin -whom they radically support- is a supporter of an étatist power policy, a patriot strengthening the vertical line of authority, an Orthodox Christian, true to the Russian spiritual roots but royal to the other Eurasian traditional confessions. They appreciate Putin as the leader who saves the country from separatism and disruption, and encourages the integration processes within the framework of the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU -which was established on 10 October 2000 with the four states of CIS; Russia, Belorussia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan) and the CIS; they also appreciate him as being one of the pioneers of the creation of the EEU.¹⁰³

Looked at through the eyes of Eurasianists, Putin is a president above the parties, embodying the hopes and expectations of the Russians' majority. The outcome of an opinion survey led by the VTsIOM (Pan-Russian Centre for the Study of Social Opinion) should be added to these above-mentioned statements in order to

¹⁰³ Alexander Dugin, "The Political Conference of the Pan-Russian Social-Political Movement EURASIA [Online] Available: <http://www.eurasia.com.ru> [Accessed: October 26, 2005]

realize the significance of Putin's majority: 73% of the Russians consider Russia as an Eurasian Civilisation, while only 13% consider her as a part of the West. Since Putin had been a majoritarian, popular president, Neo-Eurasianists thought that his popularity leaned on the 73% of the population. Although Putin has never followed a complete Eurasianist stance in the foreign policy, according to Eurasianists the reason lying behind the full and radical support, from Russia, to Putin, is his Eurasianist Policies.¹⁰⁴

Moreover, in the first years of Putin Government, according to some commentators, Russian Foreign Policy embraced more nationalistic and aggressive methods particularly concerning relations with the US. Not only Putin's militaristic stance for the 'solution' of the Chechnya Problem¹⁰⁵ but also his approach to the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) should be served as an exemplary case for the above-mentioned Eurasianist Putin policies. Especially CIS has remained a top priority area for Putin's Administration's foreign and security policy. This point is made by Duygu Sezer Bazoğlu as follows: "Putin's policy initiatives so far indicate a firm determination to reinforce Moscow's influence especially in the states of Central Asia and the Southern Caucasus."¹⁰⁶

In addition to these, former prime and foreign minister Yevgeni Primakov's policies which has been sustained by Putin, were also correspondent with the Eurasianist main-goal so much so that Yevgeni Primakov may be called as the most prominent 'Eurasianist' among practitioners of Russian Foreign Policy;

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ Emre Erşen, "Neo-Eurasianism and Putin's 'Multipolarism' in Russian Foreign Policy, *Turkish Review of Eurasian Studies*, Annual 2004 – 4, pp. 135-136.

¹⁰⁶ Duygu Bazoğlu Sezer, "Turkey-Russian Relations a Decade Later : From Adversity to Managed Competition," *Perceptions*, Vol. VII , No. 1, March-May 2001, p.7.

although he never called himself a Eurasianist.¹⁰⁷ Primakov has argued for that Russia had important chips to play; and has stressed her accumulation of political influence, special geopolitical position, early membership in the world's nuclear club, growing economic possibilities and military production which establishes the condition for military-technological cooperation with numerous foreign partners. He plans that, if these above-mentioned diplomatic- political instruments are used cleverly, they will be the means of American policies' frustration and Russia's interests' advancement or safeguard. Primakov also observed that many countries resent and fear a US dominated-world and that their uneasiness could be mobilized to Russia's advantage. Besides these, Primakov is in favour of and executes a multifaceted policy for Russia rather than an uni-dimensional approach. He has barely used congenial adroitness in relations with the United States, Germany, France, Great Britain, Japan, China and India; but at the same time, he has always been in favour of the pursuation of good relations with secondary powers such as Turkey, Iran, Indonesia, Syria and Greece.¹⁰⁸

...Today, he said, we need to pursue a "rational pragmatism" devoid of romanticism and unaffordable sentimentality , and Russia needs to look much farther afield for "constructive partnerships", especially to China, India and Japan, as well as Iran, Libya, Iraq, and others.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ Emre Erşen, "Neo-Eurasianism and Putin's 'Multipolarism' in Russian Foreign Policy, *Turkish Review of Eurasian Studies*, Annual 2004 – 4, p. 143

¹⁰⁸ Alvin Z. Rubinstein, "Russia Adrift- Strategic Anchors for Russia's foreign policy," *Harvard International Review* , Vol.22, Issue I, Win/Spring 2000, p. 6.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

The abovementioned quotation and the multi-faceted (multi-polar) policy of Primakov may be taken into account as the reasons of his being categorization as ‘Eurasianist’ since his multi-faceted foreign policy and the Eurasianist vision of the world commensurate with each other.¹¹⁰ The below-mentioned words of Alexander Dugin should be considered as the proof of this coherency:

Eurasianism...is a multi-polar world envisaging the balanced concrete system of the poles and powers, the number of which must be more than one.¹¹¹

Since Primakov’s Foreign Policy had important impacts on Putin’s Policies and since the key elements of his ‘multi-faceted’ policy were later adopted by Putin to give direction to the Russian Foreign Policy as opposed to Yeltsin’s policies especially towards the USA¹¹², it is essential to review the five key aspects of Primakov’s multi-faceted foreign policy:

- i. Russia should continue to defend its position as a great power in world politics (despite all its current weaknesses)
- ii. Russia should follow a multi-dimensional policy and increase its relations not only with great powers such as the US, China and the European Union (EU), but also with regional powers like Iran and Turkey
- iii. Russia has very important cards at its disposal such as its unique geopolitical position, possession of nuclear weapons and permanent membership in the United Nations (UN) Security Council
- iv. Russia should forge ties with those countries which are also uneasy about the increasing American tendency towards uni-polarism
- v. There are no constant enemies for Russia, but there are constant national interests, thus, Russia should “pursue a ‘rational pragmatism’ devoid of romanticism and unaffordable sentimentality” and it should “look much farther a field for ‘constructive

¹¹⁰ Emre Erşen, “Neo-Eurasianism and Putin’s ‘Multipolarism’ in Russian Foreign Policy, *Turkish Review of Eurasian Studies*, Annual 2004 – 4, p. 143

¹¹¹ ‘Ankara-Moskova Ekseni Pek Çok Sorunu Çözer’, (interview with Alexander Dugin), *Perspektif*, Year: 8, No: 38, Spring 2004, p. 33

¹¹² Emre Erşen, “Neo-Eurasianism and Putin’s ‘Multipolarism’ in Russian Foreign Policy, *Turkish Review of Eurasian Studies*, Annual 2004 – 4, p. 144

partnerships', especially to China, India, and Japan, as well as Iran, Libya, Iraq, and others.¹¹³

It could easily be seen that these foreign policy objectives are in line with the basic assumptions of Eurasianism.

4.2. Russian Foreign Policy towards the United States

In 'The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation of 2000'¹¹⁴, Putin declared that primary concern was the "growing trend towards the establishment of a uni-polar structure for the world with the economic and power domination of the United States." The mainstream in Putin's Foreign Policy has been to assess the development and recovery of Russia vis-à-vis the US. However economic and military weaknesses, then, were an obstacle in front of Russia's way to establish a pole against the US as in the Cold War Period. Therefore, Putin searched for other strategic partnerships with the significant actors in World Politics such as China and the EU.¹¹⁵

Despite the fact that, the cold relations between Russia and the US had lasted through the first years of the Putin's Presidency, sticking to his multi-faceted foreign policy Putin has always attempted to warm up the relations with the US. However, the tough foreign policy led by the new US President George W. Bush

¹¹³ Alvin Z. Rubinstein, "Russia Adrift- Strategic Anchors for Russia's foreign policy," *Harvard International Review* , Vol.22, Issue I, Win/Spring 2000, p. 19

¹¹⁴ The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, June 28, 2000., [Online] Available: <http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/russia/doctrine/econcept.htm> [Accessed November 1, 2005]

¹¹⁵ Emre Erşen, "Neo-Eurasianism and Putin's 'Multipolarism' in Russian Foreign Policy, *Turkish Review of Eurasian Studies*, Annual 2004 – 4, p. 148

towards Russia that was first revealed in his stance in favor of NATO Enlargement towards the Baltic Countries, inevitably perceived as a threat by Russia for weakening Russia's influence over these countries. The following and maybe even more important US Foreign Policy executions which may be summarized as the continuation of the National Missile Defence (NMD) project of the Cold War Period, the banishment of several Russian Diplomats from the US on the allegation of espionage, and Bush's declarations targeting and accusing Russia of the human right violations in Chechnya, led to a public view in Russia in favour of the neo-Eurasianists.¹¹⁶

In this context, Putin re-evaluated his foreign policy towards the US and as both a reprisal and a demonstration of his multi-faceted policies, he immediately signed a Treaty of Good Neighbourliness, Friendship and Cooperation with China (July 2001) who was the subject of severe criticism and anger by the US since an American EP-3 spy plane was shot down by Chinese Forces at that time. In the meantime, he even searched for negotiations with Iran, Iraq, Libya, Cuba and North Korea which were categorized as 'rouge states' by the US and one of the major reasons of the National Missile Defense Project. So much so that, Russia re-started the nuclear partnership with Iran which was supposed to be stopped according to the 1995 Al Gore-Victor Chernomyrdin Agreement; as well as signed technical and economic partnership agreements with North Korea.¹¹⁷ Besides that; Putin declared that Russia could outlaw all the nuclear agreements signed with the US, such as

¹¹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 148-149.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 149

START I and II, if the US intends to withdraw from the 1972 ABM Treaty which includes the mutual decrease of nuclear warheads.¹¹⁸

In spite of all the abovementioned developments which were in conformity with the neo-Eurasianist idea that the US uni-polarism in the world should be resisted and balanced, the uni-polarist world envision of the US has continued, maybe, even more vehemently due to the worsening economic and military situation of its old Cold-War counter pole successor: Russia. The continuation of the uni-polarist policy has been displayed by Bush Administration's refusal in taking part at the Kyoto Agreement on Global Warming and/or the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and the International Criminal Court.¹¹⁹

In return of all these abovementioned, besides the policy of 'multipolarism', Putin focused on Russia's economic development which has always been a key element in his foreign policy. Regarding this, Putin attempted to make Russia a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) which would help to increase the credibility of the Russian Economy in the eyes of the foreign investors and could put an end to the damages of the 1998 financial breakdown.¹²⁰ Putin's first foreign policy concept declared that:

... Russia would follow a rational and realistic foreign policy which would serve the economic and political interests of Russia and that Russia would do anything to attract foreign investment to the country...¹²¹

¹¹⁸ Jack Mendelsohn, 'America, Russia and the Future of Arms Control', *Current History*, Vol. 100, No. 468, October 2001, p. 327.

¹¹⁹ Emre Erşen, "Neo-Eurasianism and Putin's 'Multipolarism' in Russian Foreign Policy, *Turkish Review of Eurasian Studies*, Annual 2004 – 4, p. 150

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p.151

¹²¹ The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, June 28, 2000. [Online] Available: <http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/russia/doctrine/econcept.htm> [Accessed November 1, 2005]

In this statement, one could easily see the signs of pragmatism rather than Eurasiansism.

Although the economic gap between Russia and the US started widening soon after the dissolution of the USSR, the desperate situation of the economy got worse with the 1998 financial breakdown. In this connection, Putin realized that healing the damages of the economy would have been possible only if they could develop better relations with the US: 'the global economic leader'. However, some commentators argued that Putin's policy of intensification of relations with the US was due to the NMD. They asserted that since Russia did not have adequate economic and technological power to enforce a counter project, she was obliged to stand for the NMD. The tragic abandonment of the Russian Soldiers in the Kursk submarine in 2000 due to the lack of technological sources seems supportive to the above argument.¹²²

Furthermore, Putin had continued his rapprochement policy by attempting to ratify START II in April 2000; nevertheless the ratification of the project waited for a long time in the Duma¹²³, although there were a supporting public-view for developing warmer relations with the US according to the results of the polls in March 2001 which implicitly displayed the non-neo-Eurasianist view of the public at that time; whilst 83 % of the Russian People were in favor of the policy of rapprochement with the US; only 13 % of them were in favor of a coalition with the states who are officially out of and politically against NATO¹²⁴.

¹²² Emre Erşen, "Neo-Eurasianism and Putin's 'Multipolarism' in Russian Foreign Policy, *Turkish Review of Eurasian Studies*, Annual 2004 – 4, pp. 151-152

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p. 152

¹²⁴ John O'Loughlin, Gearoid O Tuathail, Vladimir Kolossov, "A 'Risky Westward Turn?' Putin's 9-11 Script and Ordinary Russians', *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 56, No. 1, January 2004, p. 6.

In this conjuncture, the consequences of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks (9/11 Attacks) against the US, have supported Putin's rapprochement policy to some extent. Although the neo-Eurasianists led by Dugin, claimed that the US Government had it coming as a result of its own policies especially in the '90's towards the Arab-Israel conflict and the Balkans, which led to the encouragement of international terrorist organisations such as Al Qaida¹²⁵; on the other hand, Putin acted as a pragmatist and tried the best as he can to take advantage of the situation by interpreting Russia's Chechen War as the 'struggle against Islamic terrorism'. In this regard, his intention was to obtain the legitimacy of the human rights abuses in the war, in the public view of the Western countries, particularly the US.¹²⁶ Thus, since Putin had already accused Osama bin Laden -who was supposedly behind the 9/11 Attacks - of providing military and economic support to the Chechen militants; he thought Russia and the US could unite against a common enemy: International Terrorism or Al Qaida.¹²⁷ In addition to these, he even gave unconditional support to the US War in Afghanistan also by declaring that the War in Chechnya and the War in Afghanistan could be categorized as "struggles between civilized mankind and the barbarians" that could have risked Russia's alliance with China, India and Iran.¹²⁸ Consequently; in spite of all its former criticism towards the human rights violation in Chechnya, Bush Administration's stance in the Chechnya War had shifted in

¹²⁵ Vladimir Shlapentokh, "Is the Greatness Syndrome Eroding?", *Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 25, Issue 1, Winter 2002, p. 140.

¹²⁶ John O'Loughlin, Gearoid O Tuathail, Vladimir Kolosov, "A 'Risky Westward Turn?' Putin's 9-11 Script and Ordinary Russians", *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 56, No. 1, January 2004, p. 3.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 9

¹²⁸ Oksana Antonenko, "Putin's Gamble", *Survival*, Vol. 43, No. 4, Winter 2001, p. 49.

favour of the Russia, showing the claims of contacts between Chechnya Leadership and Al-Qaida, as a reason of this shift.¹²⁹

On the neo-Eurasianist's side, Putin's withdrawal from the Eurasianist policies, particularly Putin's being the first leader in expressing condolences and even support after September 11 attacks, and more significant than this, his support to the US Intervention in Afghanistan were not perceived in a positive way, naturally.¹³⁰ On the other hand, some commentators defended Putin's side for his latter support by mentioning that one of the reasons why the Shanghai Five¹³¹ was established was to prevent the radical Islamic Movements in the territory, which were mainly coordinated by Taliban; and Afghanistan should have been intervened since it was the habitat of Taliban. However, supporting the US, in the Afghanistan was not the worst deed that Putin did according to the neo-Eurasianists; Putin let the establishment of the US Military Bases and Station Troops in the former Soviet Republics such as Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan which clashed with the Russian 'Near Abroad' Doctrine that was founded in the '90's to pursue the Russian influence among the former Soviet Republics.¹³²

Nevertheless, some commentators argued that it was inevitable for Putin to support the war in Afghanistan and to let the US establish its military bases and station troops in the Russia's near abroad, due to the rising power gap between

¹²⁹ James Goldgeier, Michael McFaul, "George W. Bush and Russia", *Current History*, Vol. 101, No. 657, October 2002, p. 318

¹³⁰ Emre Erşen, "Neo-Eurasianism and Putin's 'Multipolarism' in Russian Foreign Policy, *Turkish Review of Eurasian Studies*, Annual 2004 – 4, p. 154

¹³¹ "...a multilateral forum founded by China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kirghizia, and Tajikistan in Shanghai in 1996." Qingguo Jia, "The Success of the Shanghai Five: Interests, Norms and Pragmatism" [Online] Available: <http://www.ndu.edu/inss/symposia/pacific2001/jiafinal.htm> [Accessed November 2, 2005]

¹³² Emre Erşen, "Neo-Eurasianism and Putin's 'Multipolarism' in Russian Foreign Policy, *Turkish Review of Eurasian Studies*, Annual 2004 – 4, p.155

Russia and the US.¹³³ Even Putin had stated this by saying that Russia for the first-time in history, was faced with the threat of falling into the second or third league among world powers.¹³⁴ In this regard, the words of the then deputy foreign minister Louikov are also important:

Neither China nor ourselves experience joy at an American military presence arising in Central Asia...we could not counter these threats on our own or with China's help...It became possible to eliminate this threat with the help of American Intervention.¹³⁵

This acknowledgement had been expressed in a more diplomatic way by

Putin:

If Russia becomes a fully fledged member of the international community, it need not and will not be afraid of its neighbours' developing relations with other states, including the development of relations between the Central Asian states and the United States.¹³⁶

However, Putin's faith in intensifying relations with the US had been shaken firstly in February 2002 by the Washington's back-up to the Georgian Government at the crisis between Moscow and Tbilisi over Georgia's Pankisi Gorge where the Chechen militants were active due to the weakness and inefficiency of the Georgian Government. Russia was frustrated by the US demonstration of power and a possible Russian intervention to Georgia had been prevented by Putin's reasonable policy of decreasing the tension and accepting the US terms over Georgia.¹³⁷

¹³³ *Ibid.*

¹³⁴ Teoman Alili, "Putin'in Başarısının Anahtarı: Millicilik ve Avrasyacılık", *Teori*, September 2004, p. 26

¹³⁵ Alexander Lukin, "Shanghai Cooperation Organization: Problems and Prospects", *International Affairs (Russia)*, Vol. 50, Issue 3, 2004, p. 36

¹³⁶ John O'Loughlin, Gearoid O Tuathail, Vladimir Kolossov, "A 'Risky Westward Turn?' Putin's 9-11 Script and Ordinary Russians", *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 56, No. 1, January 2004, p. 14

¹³⁷ Emre Erşen, "Neo-Eurasianism and Putin's 'Multipolarism' in Russian Foreign Policy, *Turkish Review of Eurasian Studies*, Annual 2004 – 4, p. 156-157.

Furthermore, the US withdrawal from the ABM Treaty in June 2002 was the second frustration of Putin in the Russia-US rapprochement. Although he was considering this withdrawal, he was hoping that this would turn in favour of Russia by strengthening Russia's hand over NMD. However, the US demanded an agreement with Russia limiting the number of nuclear warheads both of them could acquire by December 2012.¹³⁸ The agreement was criticized not only by the neo-Eurasianist side, namely Dugin but also by some other commentators claiming that it included some disadvantages and uncertainties for Moscow such as the absence of a timetable for the reductions to be made until 2012 and a definite explanation over which strategic nuclear warheads are to be subject to the reduction.¹³⁹ Whereas, the argument of the neo-Eurasianist's opposition to the agreement was that the possession of the nuclear powers had been strengthening Russia's hand in the struggle against the US. In this regard, Alexander Dugin's ideas about the necessity of the nuclear powers of Russia should be considered:

The New Empire -in context of military-strategic- could be realized solely by the preservation of the nuclear power of the former USSR and also all kinds of the strategic and space arms...it is not a coincidence that the development of the Soviet Rocket Industry had led to an alarm in the USA...Only the intercontinental arms could make the USSR an 'almost continent'. The USSR had obtained the means to become a strategic equivalence of the USA who is a 'genuine continent'...¹⁴⁰

NATO's second round enlargement towards the Baltic States had been another issue that perpetuated Putin's disappointment regarding the Russia-US Relations. Besides being against the membership of the Baltic States into NATO, he

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 157

¹³⁹ Jack Mendelsohn, "America and Russia: Make-Believe Arms Control", *Current History*, Vol. 101, No. 657, October 2002

¹⁴⁰ Alexander Dugin, *Rus Jeopolitiği – Avrasyacı Yaklaşım*, (İstanbul, Küre Yayınları, 2004), pp. 97-105

could not rationalize the necessity that NATO felt for enlarging to the East, baring in mind that after September 11, both the West Alliance and Russia have agreed in principal that the common enemy is the 'international terrorism'.¹⁴¹ Consequently, he planned a visit to NATO headquarters in Brussels in October 2001, where he sought for a new agreement which could include Russia into a partnership with NATO, in case the political mechanism of the organisation goes beyond its military mechanism.¹⁴² Although, the agreement had been signed between Russia and NATO in May 2002 with high expectations such as it would register Russia as the 20th member of the Organisation, it had been another disappointment for Putin; since Russia still was not given the right of veto by the new NATO-Russia Council that was founded in 1997. The disadvantages of Russia in NATO such as the above-mentioned, had led her to be anxious with NATO's second round enlargement.¹⁴³

In the meantime, finally Putin also had some advantages in the Economy area regarding the US rapprochement, when the Russian Economy had been recognized as a market economy by the US and EU in May 2002. In addition to this, the G-8 Group decided to accept Russia as a full member, in June 2002. With the enthusiasm of these economic developments, according to some commentators, Putin may have thought that one of his prior economic goals, being a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO), would be realized, in the near future. However, this has never been happened, most probably since the US had been pursuing its unipolar

¹⁴¹ Emre Erşen, "Neo-Eurasianism and Putin's 'Multipolarism' in Russian Foreign Policy, *Turkish Review of Eurasian Studies*, Annual 2004 – 4, pp. 157-158

¹⁴² Oksana Antonenko, "Putin's Gamble", *Survival*, Vol. 43, No. 4, Winter 2001, p. 56

¹⁴³ Emre Erşen, "Neo-Eurasianism and Putin's 'Multipolarism' in Russian Foreign Policy, *Turkish Review of Eurasian Studies*, Annual 2004 – 4, p. 158

policies which utmost displayed themselves in the US intervention to Iraq in 2003 in spite of the interferences of China, France, Germany and Russia as well.¹⁴⁴

According to some commentators, the last frustration of Putin in the US approachment: the American Intervention in Iraq have been a turning point for Russian Foreign Policy; which is basically the policy of multi-polarism. In this respect, the statements of the founding father of the multi-polarism, Primakov, should be taken into account:

... The US Invasion was realized within a new foreign policy doctrine under which the United States assumed the right to independent decisions and independent actions if it discovered any threat to the country's security. This line called 'unilateralism' was formulated and is supported by the neoconservative circles close to the president. Iraq was the first to fell victim to 'unilateralism' ...¹⁴⁵

With reference to Primakov's stance, and multi-polarism, Putin has turned his eyes to China, the EU and even the states which was categorized as the "Axis of Evil", as a result of the Bush Administration's goof, such as Iran and North Korea.¹⁴⁶

Meanwhile, in late 2003, the statements of the then foreign minister Igor Ivanov who succeeded Primakov, barely demonstrated the pursuation of multi-polarism:

Russia still see NATO as a potential threat...the Americans are neither enemies nor friends of the Russians.¹⁴⁷

Consequently, enforcing the multi-polarist policy, Putin still cherished the hopes of the multilateral organizations pioneered by the UN and had returned to

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 158-159

¹⁴⁵ Yevgeni Primakov, "Positive Course of Russia's Leaders", *International Affairs (Russia)*, Vol. 50, Issue 2, 2004, p. 9

¹⁴⁶ Emre Erşen, "Neo-Eurasianism and Putin's 'Multipolarism' in Russian Foreign Policy, *Turkish Review of Eurasian Studies*, Annual 2004 – 4, p. 159

¹⁴⁷ "NATO'yla Savaşabiliriz", *Radikal*, 1 Kasım 2003; "ABD Ne Dost Ne Düşman", *Radikal*, 29 Ekim 2003

strengthening ties with the EU, China, CIS and the Middle East. In the following sections, the course and the possibility of the prospective success of the ‘multipolarism’ are going to be researched.

4.3. Russian Foreign Policy towards the European Union

Russia’s relations with the EU have always been important for Moscow. This could be seen in the following quotation from Russia’s former foreign minister Igor Ivanov: “Russia regards strategic partnership relations with the European Union as one of her top priorities.”¹⁴⁸ In this regard, the outcome of a poll taken in 2002 should be considered as a proof and the support of the public to this top priority in Russia then: 60 % of the participants embraced positive feelings and thoughts for the EU, whereas a major amount of the respondents, namely 69 %, had a negative stance towards the NATO.¹⁴⁹ In addition, also with reference to the “multipolarism”, the Russia-EU rapprochement has developed with the Putin’s Presidency, particularly right after the US Intervention in Iraq, although remained in the areas of economy and energy issues, mainly because of the 40 % foreign trade capacity, 70 % export capacity of Russia with the EU, and 21 % oil import, 41 % natural gas import capacity of the EU with Russia.¹⁵⁰ As Putin knew that Russia’s hand is strong in economic relations regarding underground resources, he approached the EU

¹⁴⁸ Tuomas Forsberg, “The EU-Russia Security Partnership: Why the Opportunity was Missed”, *European Foreign Affairs Review*, Issue 9, 2004, p. 249

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 251

¹⁵⁰ Emre Erşen, “Neo-Eurasianism and Putin’s ‘Multipolarism’ in Russian Foreign Policy, *Turkish Review of Eurasian Studies*, Annual 2004 – 4, p. 162

countries by means of the oil and gas resources by promising the constant flow of oil to world markets along with a global price stability, at the July 2002 G-8 Summit.¹⁵¹

On the other hand, the US Intervention in Iraq in 2003, had brought Russia together with France and Germany by means of their common opposition to the US. This cooperation has been called “Troika” and appraised as “a new phenomenon in world politics, the significance of which goes beyond the Iraqi Crisis” by the former foreign minister Igor Ivanov.¹⁵² The warmth of this trilateral cooperation in the political field, bounced to the security field, where it affected the the status of Kaliningrad and the Russian views about European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP). Although the Russian view was persuading the European countries to turn the OSCE into the main organ of the European Security, in the past, she withdrew her objections to the ESDP; so much so that according to the official Russian Strategy on this subject the ESDP has been a positive process commensurating with the Russia’s ‘multipolarist’ policies.¹⁵³ In return, the EU granted Russia monthly meetings on ESDP, which has been an exception for the EU policies, since not even a single member of the non-EU NATO members has been given this privilege.¹⁵⁴ Nevertheless, Russia has not given up on one condition and still working to persuade the European Countries to make the EU get approval from the UN or OSCE for ESDP conducted military operations. On the other hand, the other significant topic between the EU-Russia relations, the Kaliningrad Issue which arose after the last EU

¹⁵¹ Andreas Andrianopulos, “The Economics and Politics of Caspian Oil”, *Journal of Southeast European & Black Sea Studies*, Vol. 3, Issue 3, Sep2003, p. 88

¹⁵² “America must not return to Cold War Attitudes”, *Financial Times*, February 14, 2003.

¹⁵³ Tuomas Forsberg, “The EU-Russia Security Partnership: Why the Opportunity was Missed”, *European Foreign Affairs Review*, Issue 9, 2004, p. 254

¹⁵⁴ Clelia Rontoyanni, “So Far, So Good? Russia and the ESDP”, *International Affairs*, Vol. 78, No. 4, 2002, p. 814.

enlargement when the two former East-Bloc countries; Poland and Lithuania surrounded Kaliningrad by their borders. Subsequently, due to the new visa regime of the EU, and the possibility that the Russian citizens still residing in Kaliningrad would experience problems travelling to their homeland, Russia “objected to the violation of the travel rights of its own citizens in Kaliningrad”. Consequently, the EU has granted a special status for the Russian citizens residing in Kaliningrad in the Russia-EU Summit in November 2002. According to some commentators, Russia’s poor human rights record -particularly in Russian-Chechen War- and the EU criticisms regarding the democracy in Russia, seem as the remaining problems in the current situation.¹⁵⁵

4.4. Russian Foreign Policy towards China

Throughout the Putin’s Presidency, unlike the hard-line neo-Eurasianist prudence on strengthening relations with Japan rather than China, Putin chose to get closer with the rising Chinese superpower. According to commentators, one of the main reasons of Putin’s withdrawal from this neo-Eurasianist prudence has been the intense support of the Japanese Government for the US actions and policies in Iraq and Korea. In this regard, Putin moved towards China seeking for partnerships when the political situation was in favour of this as well, since 1996. In 1996, the Shanghai Five Cooperation (SCO) Mechanism whose members are Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, was established against seperatism and fundamentalist Islam, which marked the turning point in Russia-China relations. The mechanism should be considered as the turning point since it put an end to the Russia’s role of

¹⁵⁵ Emre Erşen, “Neo-Eurasianism and Putin’s ‘Multipolarism’ in Russian Foreign Policy, *Turkish Review of Eurasian Studies*, Annual 2004 – 4, pp. 163-164.

the '90's to be the sole power breaker in the former Soviet territory. As it is the case in his desert from Japan, the US played the crucial role in Putin's approachment with China. Due to the increasing influence of the US in the former Soviet Republics, Putin sought for partnership opportunities with China to balance the situation in the region.¹⁵⁶ Although the political situation seemed to change and Russia seemed to approach towards the US, whilst the US encircled China by means of the alliances with Pakistan, Japan and Russia after the September 11, according to some commentators:

...it is more likely that relations between Russia (whose major expectations after September 11 are not met despite its support to the US War in Afghanistan) and China (which feels encircled by American influence) will get even closer rather than more distant. On the other hand, especially after the October 2002 crisis when Putin's forces killed Russian civilian hostages along with their Chechen militant captures while storming a Moscow Theatre, the West has renewed its criticism over Chechnya. This could lead to deeper understanding between Russia and China regarding their problems with seperatism in Chechnya and East Turkistan.¹⁵⁷

Though not being an advice of the hard-line neo-Eurasianists, establishing closer ties with China has also advantages which is in line with the 'multi-polarism' which neo-Eurasianists highly credits. Having a permanent seat in the UN Security Council has strengthened China's hand since the Security Council has been an important vehicle to stand against the US uni-polarism, not only for Russia and China but also for France. The latest Iraqi crisis displayed the crucial significance of this vehicle when these three states could consult via this mechanism to resist the uni-polarism. Furthermore, the SCO has turned out to be one of the effective cooperations in the region against the uni-polarism; since except for Turkmenistan, all other Central Asian states have been involved in the cooperation. So much so that,

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 160-161.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 161.

India, who is regarded as one of the significant powers in the Eurasia region by many scholars and commentators, expressed her will to participate in the SCO.¹⁵⁸ Although, the proposal of establishing the Moscow-Beijing-New Delhi axis, had not been realized as if frustrating the Declaration on Strategic Partnership between Moscow and New Delhi in October 2000; however this was of less relation with Russia than China due to the Chinese enduring support for Pakistan who has been India's historical enemy.¹⁵⁹

4.5. Russian Foreign Policy towards the Commonwealth of Independent States

Regarding the relations with the post-Soviet republics, the September 11 events have again marked a turning point that led to disapproval among the neo-Eurasianists; mainly because of the increasing interest and influence of the US in the region by means of the military and economic support to the CIS countries. Some commentators argued that the '90's Russian 'Near Abroad Doctrine' which focused on the CIS, mostly in terms of the security concerns and "Russian (and the Eurasianist) dream of becoming a great power once again", was not succeeded. The basis of their argument was the interest and pleasure of the countries in the region for getting the support of the US.¹⁶⁰ In this regard, Uzbekistan, which is considered as the closest ally of the US in the region by some commentators, should be taken as

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 161-162.

¹⁵⁹ Galina Yaskina, "Russia-China-India: Prospects for Trilateral Cooperation", *Far Eastern Affairs*, Vol. 31, Issue 1, 2002, p. 17.

¹⁶⁰ Emre Erşen, "Neo-Eurasianism and Putin's 'Multipolarism' in Russian Foreign Policy, *Turkish Review of Eurasian Studies*, Annual 2004 – 4, pp. 155-164.

a case-study. Baring in mind the only alternative of the US Influence in the Central Asia could be the Russian-Chinese dominance, Uzbekistan came fore among the states who declared full support to the American Foreign Policies, even before September 11.¹⁶¹ Although having represented in the Shanghai Five before the start of the US interest in the Central Asia triggered by September 11, this was mainly because Uzbekistan had no other option as she felt threatened by the fundamentalist and radical Islamic Movements, particularly the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) for which she demanded but could not receive support from the US. Consequently, she “had to give consent to the Russian-Chinese influence exercised through the Shanghai Five” like the other Central Asian States. However, it seemed as if the Russian-Chinese Influence did not pay much off, due to the increasing radical Islamic movements led by Taliban and the Afghanistan Civil War. Eventually, the worsening situation in the region made the regional states support the US intervention in Afghanistan as they believed this could be the only way to eliminate the Taliban led Islamic movements and to balance both Russia and China.¹⁶²

Another leading motive for the argument of Russia’s Near Abroad Policy failure is the reluctance of the CIS states in following the neo-Eurasianist course particularly in establishing a Eurasian Union. This can be envisaged in the view-conflicts of the CIS members over a greater integration in Eurasia which demonstrated itself in adopting a policy of maintaining close ties with Russia. Whilst Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan have adopted this policy, Uzbekistan, aiming

¹⁶¹ Svante E. Cornell, “America in Eurasia: One Year After”, *Current History*, Vol. 101, No. 657, October 2002, p. 330

¹⁶² Emre Erşen, “Neo-Eurasianism and Putin’s ‘Multipolarism’ in Russian Foreign Policy, *Turkish Review of Eurasian Studies*, Annual 2004 – 4, p. 156.

at the regional leader position -thus being the subject of criticism mainly by Kazakhstan who has a similar aim-, and Turkmenistan, pursuing a policy of 'positive neutralism', have abstained. Meanwhile Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova founded the GUAM initiative whose main goal has been the resistance against the Russian domination in the CIS and to seek for strategic partnerships with the US and NATO. With the participation of Uzbekistan, this initiative, newly named GUUAM, had been strengthened and transformed into a resistance body towards Russia. Meanwhile, the remaining CIS countries Belarus and Armenia, have not joined these above-mentioned initiatives due to their economic, political and military dependency to Russia. Since 1997, Belarus has been in an economic unification process with Russia, whereas Armenia is heavily dependent on Russia's support for the Nagorno-Karabagh affair.¹⁶³

If the possibility of the evolution of the CIS into a successor of the Soviet Union -as it is desired by the neo-Eurasianists- is analyzed, the frustration of the neo-Eurasianists could be witnessed, once more. In this regard, the Tashkent Collective Security Agreement should be considered as an exemplary case:

...the Tashkent Collective Security Agreement, signed in May 1992, included all CIS members other than Ukraine, Moldova and Turkmenistan, however, it has failed to become much more than a tool Russia has used to maintain its regional influence. This was mainly because the Tashkent mechanism suffered from a lack of troops and funding... Depending exclusively on Russian military power, the Tashkent Agreement's only reputable achievement has been the suspension of civil war in Tajikistan.¹⁶⁴

In the light of the above information, it would not be surprising to learn that the Agreement had not been extended by Georgia, Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan. In addition to these, declarations of Ukraine, Georgia and Azerbaijan regarding their

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 164, 165.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

intentions to become NATO members have been another issue that has frustrated both the neo-Eurasianists and Putin's presidency, although later Ukraine abandoned her stance in favour of Russia.¹⁶⁵

Actually, among the CIS countries, Kazakhshtan is the prominent actor whose policies may be considered as being in line with the neo-Eurasianists'. Maintaining her close ties with the Russia, the Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbaev has been the initiator of the idea of a Eurasian Union, in 1994. In order to materialize this goal, Nazarbaev has participated in almost every regional initiative, so as to find new ways of cooperation to strengthen the mutual relations in the Eurasia. In this context, the greatest efforts of Nazarbaev in the formation of the CIS for involving the Central Asian states should be considered as his neo-Eurasianist stance since the CIS remains as one of the most significant focus area of the neo-Eurasianists. Nevertheless, the idea of an Eurasian Union remains far from prospective, as Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan have already revealed their negative point of view for such a union; so much so that they did not send any representatives to the 1994 Eurasian Union conference in Almaty.¹⁶⁶

On the other hand, regarding economic issues, the CIS countries seem more interested in a partnership than they are regarding political issues. According to the current situation, the main economic cooperation mechanisms in the region are the Central Asian Cooperation Organization (CACO) and the Eurasian Economic Community (EURASEC). CACO founded in 2002 as the successor of Central Asian Economic Community (CAEC), embodying Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan,

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 166.

¹⁶⁶ Zharmukhamed Zardykhan, "Kazakhstan and Central Asia: Regional Perspectives", *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 21, No. 2, 2002, p. 169.

Tajikistan and having the security and the economic integration among its members as the main motive.¹⁶⁷ The second and the more important economic formation in the region, EURASEC has been founded in 2001 on account of the necessity to constitute a single and common territory for all CIS countries. It has been initiated by the Customs Union between Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan signed in 1995, which has later been enlarged by the joining of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. As being one of the founders and the chairman of the Interstate Council of the EURASEC, Nazarbaev has shaped the structure and motives of the Community, mostly in favour of the Eurasian Union path; so much so that, he even suggested the proceeding of the EURASEC should be similar to the EU.¹⁶⁸ In this regard, mentioning to the official symbolism of the EURASEC flag colours would be meaningful; as blue symbolizes the Europe along with the terms of beauty, greatness, fidelity and prudence, yellow symbolizes Asia along with the terms of hope, pleasure, blossoming and abundance.¹⁶⁹ As the proportion of these colours on the flag is considered, the founders' assumption of putting themselves in the same position with the EU, and the purpose of following the EU way should better be understood as both colours are equal in shape and proportion on the flag. Moreover, the neo-Eurasianist stance towards EURASEC is the same, as even Dugin himself considers the framework as

¹⁶⁷ Celeste A. Wallander, "Silk Road, Great Game or Soft Underbelly? The New US-Russia Relationship and Implications for Eurasia", Shireen Hunter (ed.), *Strategic Developments in Eurasia After 11 September*, London: Frank Cass, 2004, p. 99.

¹⁶⁸ Muzaffer Dartan, Esra Hatipoğlu and Mehmet Dikkaya, *ECO Bölgesi: Uluslararası Aktörlerin Rolü ve Türkiye*, (İstanbul: MÜ AT Enstitüsü, 2002), p. 45.

¹⁶⁹ [Online] Available: <http://www.crwflags.com/fotw/flags/int-eura.html> [Accessed November 14, 2005]

an important step toward realizing an Eurasian Union, by setting the German Zollverein and the EU as examples.¹⁷⁰

On the other hand, there are some important obstacles on the way to an Eurasian Union such as the multiplicity and complexity of cooperations in Eurasia and the US involvement in the region.¹⁷¹ Starting from the first, to visualize a better view of the multiplicity and complexity of the picture, the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO)¹⁷², re-led by Turkey and Iran after Cold War, embodying the prominent Central Asian and Caucasian countries that are supposed to be in an Eurasian Union such as Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan; the Caspian Cooperation Council founded by the Caspian Sea littoral states who has Russia and Turkmenistan among its members, in order to determine the status of the Caspian Sea's legal status; the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC)¹⁷³ who has Russia, Azerbaijan, and Turkey among its ten members should be regarded as the examples of the complexity of the regional relations. Because the multiplicity of the cooperations seems as a proof of the lack of a coherent stance among the regional actors since all of the above-mentioned organizations serve for different interests with different actors. Regarding the latter obstacle towards an Eurasian Union, as it is mentioned earlier through the lines of 'Russian Foreign Policy Towards USA', the increase and the intensification of the economic, political and military relations

¹⁷⁰ Alexander Dugin, "Eurasia will be done and is already being done", Rossiiskaya Gazeta, July 4, 2002. [Online] Available: <http://www.evraziya.org/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=759> [Accessed November 6, 2005]

¹⁷¹ Emre Erşen, "Neo-Eurasianism and Putin's 'Multipolarism' in Russian Foreign Policy, *Turkish Review of Eurasian Studies*, Annual 2004 – 4, p. 168.

¹⁷² There are ten members of the Organisation; Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan. [Online] Available: <http://www.ecosecretariat.org/> [Accessed November 5, 2005]

¹⁷³ [Online] Available: <http://www.photius.com/bsec/bsec.html> [Accessed November 14, 2005]

between the CIS States and the USA has led to a mutual pleasance which makes the formation of a Eurasian Union even more complicated than it was in the past.¹⁷⁴

In light of the above-mentioned information regarding Russian Foreign Policy under Putin, his political shifts through the pro-Atlanticist and the neo-Eurasianist stance may be observed. As these shifts could be interpreted as a reflection of his pragmatist policies whose prominent examples are noted above such as his support to US after September 11 and the founding of the EURASEC, 79 % of the public approval rating for his overall foreign policy¹⁷⁵ and the outcome of the 2004 presidency elections proves that these pragmatist policies payed off.¹⁷⁶ His pursuation of Primakov's policy of multi-polarism should be dealt as a direct consequence of this pragmatism, as well; since even in the Germany, France, Russia opposition against the US intervention in Iraq, Russia may be considered as the warmest country in the Troika¹⁷⁷:

Russian diplomacy did not condemn that move and did not urge the international community to treat it as an act aggression.¹⁷⁸

In return of this warmer stance led by pragmatist concerns, Russia was forgiven by the USA, which is expressed by the US Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice's formula: "Punish France, ignore Germany, forgive Russia." However, even Putin's approachment policy –in line with his multipolarism- towards the US

¹⁷⁴ Emre Erşen, "Neo-Eurasianism and Putin's 'Multipolarism' in Russian Foreign Policy, *Turkish Review of Eurasian Studies*, Annual 2004 – 4, p. 168.

¹⁷⁵ John O'Loughlin, Gearoid O Tuathail, Vladimir Kolossov, "A 'Risky Westward Turn?' Putin's 9-11 Script and Ordinary Russians", *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 56, No. 1, January 2004, p. 21

¹⁷⁶ Emre Erşen, "Neo-Eurasianism and Putin's 'Multipolarism' in Russian Foreign Policy, *Turkish Review of Eurasian Studies*, Annual 2004 – 4, p. 168.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 170.

¹⁷⁸ Vladislav Inozemtsev, 'Russian-U.S. Relations: Outlook for the Future', *International Affairs (Russia)*, Vol. 49, Issue 6, 2003, p. 94.

particularly after September 11 should not be considered as pro-Atlanticist since, as mentioned above, this rapprochement had been borned out by the economy and military weaknesses of Russia after 1991.¹⁷⁹ In light of the neo-Eurasianist discourse, Putin's refrain from a confrontation with the US, should be regarded as his distance from the Expansionist wing led by Dugin:

In this regard, Putin's multi-polarism seems to be more in line with Prokhanov's Modernizers' understanding of world politics in the post-Cold War era. The dilemma here is that it was not the Modernizers, but the Expansionists who invested a great deal in Putin's presidency.¹⁸⁰

Nevertheless, Putin's rapprochement with either neo-Eurasianism or the US, should not be considered as choosing a static stance. Since the beginning of his presidency, he maintained a pragmatic and realistic way regarding the relations with Anglo-American, European, Chinese and Central Asian-Caucasian sides, refraining from nationalistic or aggressive policies. As already mentioned, these shifts should be considered as his successful multi-polarist policies which payed off by creating "a room of manoeuvre for Russian Foreign Policy".¹⁸¹ If he chose to act in an 'Expansionist' way by confronting to the Atlantic bloc, Russia would not be able pursue this peaceful position in the international arena.

¹⁷⁹ Emre Erşen, "Neo-Eurasianism and Putin's 'Multipolarism' in Russian Foreign Policy, *Turkish Review of Eurasian Studies*, Annual 2004 – 4, p. 168.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 169-170.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 172.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

As stated in the introductory chapter, this thesis sought to examine the evolution of the discourse of Eurasianism and its impact on the formulation and implementation of post-Soviet Russian foreign policy. The findings of this research supports my main argument that both of Russia's post-Soviet leaders: Boris Yeltsin and Vladimir Putin have used the discourse of neo-Eurasianism pragmatically whenever it suited Russia's interests. Moscow ignored this discourse when its foreign policy interests contradicted with the main tenets of this ideology.

Although its roots are based on the 18th and 19th century philosophy trend Slavophilism, Eurasianism has re-emerged on the scene of history after the collapse of the Soviet Union, mainly among the Russian Elité. Its diffusion throughout the public has been led by the foreign policy debate in the government initiated by Boris Yeltsin's Foreign Policy Adviser Sergei Stankevich, as a political opposition to the pro-Atlanticist foreign policies of the then Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, during the first years of the Yeltsin Government. Therefore, Yeltsin Government's Russian Foreign Policy has been divided into two phases in the thesis-research as the first two years of the Yeltsin Government, pro-Atlanticist policies were dominant upon foreign policy because of Kozyrev's efforts of approachment to the Western Alliance (mainly the US and the EU) in search of economic aids and partnerships. Soon after the vociferous opposition to these policies both within the Government and from the

opposition who later won an unexpected large proportion of votes in 1993 elections, gradual foreign policy shift towards Eurasianism had started by embarking upon a more independent and neutral foreign policy on grounds of Russian national interests which finally led to a full neo-Eurasianist re-orientation whose peak points were the adoption of the new 'Russian Foreign Policy Concept' and the new 'Military Doctrine' in 1993. These adoptions signified the abandonment of idealism and determinism which focused on the East-West Cooperation and economic development; whereas on the other hand, signified the embracing of realpolitik and security determinism which emphasizes independent policy, security consideration, and national interests. By Yevgeni Primakov's succession of Kozyrev in 1996, the neo-Eurasianist inclination over Russian Foreign Policy has gained momentum which were displayed by some significant co-operations such as the formation of the 'Club of Four' which embodied Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Belarus along with Russia. However, it would be misleading to categorize Yeltsin second phase foreign policies totally neo-Eurasianist; since Russia inevitably could not turn away from the West, even during the succeeding Putin Tenure, mainly because of the economic concerns and the increasing power gap between the US and herself.

Moreover; as Putin pursued his pre-decessor's former foreign minister Primakov's foreign policy concept, the neo-Eurasianist inclination has been sustained, so much so that some commentators interpreted the first years of the Putin tenure as being more nationalistic and aggressive in line with the neo-Eurasianist foreign policies whose prominent examples were put forward as his militaristic stance in Chechnya problem and giving precedence to the CIS. Nevertheless, despite the above-mentioned commentators' interpretation, some other commentators argue

for that the neo-Eurasianist policies were adopted by pragmatistic and populist concerns, as if ‘currying favour amongst the nationalistic tendencies’. The preceding commentators also argue for that Eurasianism will be the mainstream in Russian Foreign Policy, in the near future, whereas the latter commentators and I argue for that these comments have been far from realistic. Although Russian Government’s foreign policies have somehow corresponded with neo-Eurasianist policies, particularly during the Putin’s tenure, the recent-significant developments after the September 11, whose prominent example is considered as the approachment policy of the Russian Federation toward the USA, along with her attendance to NATO as an associate member, have revealed that the foreign policy shifts such as the tendency towards the neo-Eurasianism, were mainly led by pragmatistic concerns; that is to say Russian Government have appealed to the discourse of neo-Eurasianism when and where considered it in favour of the Government’s vital interests as seen after the 1993 elections when a large majority of the votes were shared by the nationalistic, even extremist parties such as Vladimir Zhirinovskiy’s.

Even the fact that Alexander Dugin, -who is considered as the founder of the neo-Eurasianist trend in post cold-war period Russia-, is one of the head counsellors of Putin, is not enough to convict that the neo-Eurasianism is or will be prevalent trend in Russian Foreign Policy. The simplest reason behind this argument of mine is that since it would be false to assume that Putin may adopt every head-counsellor’s political stance regarding the government policies. The conflicts of view between Putin and Dugin which started revealing themselves, as recently, displayed by Dugin in the severe criticism for the ‘loss’ of Ukraine. He argued that ‘Euro-Atlantic’ involvement in the Ukrainian presidential election meant

for creating a ‘*cordon sanitaire*’ around Russia. Which is more striking in this regard is his accusation of Putin as having an ‘empty’ comprehension of Eurasianism, for allowing this ‘*cordon sanitaire*’. The Ukraine case was not the only disappointment that Dugin went through regarding Putin. He was also reactive for the ‘vagueness of his behaviour toward the US’¹⁸² particularly after September 11, as he declared full and unconditional support to the Bush Administration in the US War in Afghanistan. In this regard, the below quotes of the Eurasia Movement’s communique about the participation of Russia to acts of war against Taliban by the side of the US would shed a light on the motives behind the referred criticism and conflict of view:

The main strategical task of the US, in this situation is to clearly reconfirm in the eyes of the world community its leading situation in the world, seizing the right to violate all international rules and the state sovereignty of those countries which stand on the way of US national interests. The US demand full support to their initiative from all the states in the world (especially in Eurasia). Offering such support will be considered as the acknowledgement of the unipolar world, while refusing it –as a direct challenge thrown at the USA. The rejection of the full American request evaluated by the US government as a ‘declaration of war’ and ‘supporting international terrorism’ . Without going in deep to the question of true authors of the attacks, we must unequivocally state : the US try to exploit the occurred tragedy in their avid interests, and –on the wave of international solidarity, emotion and human compassion–build and consolidate the strategic ‘new world order’, and their formal strategical, ideological and political supremacy in it.¹⁸³

On the other hand, the motive lying behind Russia’s support to the U.S. was also due to the pragmatic concerns, as she used this approachment for getting implicit approval for the human rights violations in Chechnya for which the Western Alliance was very critical before September 11.

¹⁸² Emre Erşen, “Neo-Eurasianism and Putin’s ‘Multipolarism’ in Russian Foreign Policy, *Turkish Review of Eurasian Studies*, Annual 2004 – 4, p. 169.

¹⁸³ [Online] Available: <http://www.eurasia.com.ru> [Accessed: November 15, 2005]

As a matter of fact, if any of the Russian Federation Governments disposals were to be labeled as any faction of the neo-Eurasianism, it would be appropriate to state that the disposals of the governments' -who are under research in this thesis- have been more in line with the Modernizers who may be considered as the defenders of the counter faction toward the Dugin's Hard-Liners who are also called as Expansionist. Because, as Modernizers suggest, the Government also avoided any possible struggles with the world power focuses by concentrating on economic and technological improvements. However, this also is not sufficient to label any fore-mentioned government as neo-Eurasianist.

Although the discourse of neo-Eurasianism has been popular among some part of the Russian élite and some nostalgic Russians longing for the old Soviet Union days when their country was a world power and dominated a more huge land, Eurasia; my argument is that the discourse has been used as an instrument from time to time, sometimes for settling down the inner conflicts and sometimes for getting advantage of the international political arena. As my starting point has been the impossibility of a permanent ideology to be assumed by the Russian Government, particularly throughout the post-Soviet period; these pragmatist shifts have been examined by focusing on the Russian Foreign Policy practices under Yeltsin and Putin tenure, throughout the second and third chapters.

Overall, I think, the discourse of neo-Eurasianism continue to be used by Russian foreign policy-makers, along with many other discourses, in the future. However, as it has always been the case, the foreign policy makers will act pragmatically and assess Russia's relations with other great powers pragmatically.

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