

## The Return of Neo-Eurasianism: Russia's Geopolitical Self-Identification in the Post-Liberal World Order

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### Abstract

Neo - Eurasianism has re-emerged as a core ideological framework of Russia's geopolitical identity in the 21st century, particularly in the context of the decline of liberal universalism and the rise of a multipolar world order. This article explores the historical roots and theoretical foundations of Neo-Eurasian thought and examines its practical application in Russian foreign policy. It analyzes how the Kremlin uses Neo-Eurasianism as a tool of civilizational self-identification and resistance against Western liberal hegemony. Key concepts such as civilizational sovereignty, the Eurasian Economic Union, and strategic realignment toward the Global South are discussed as part of Russia's evolving international strategy.

**Keywords:** Neo-Eurasianism, Geopolitics, Russian Identity, Post-Liberal Order, Civilizational Sovereignty, Eurasia.

### Introduction

At the turn of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the international system underwent dramatic change. The end of the Cold War seemed to establish a “unipolar world,” with the liberal West and the United States at its center. This was a period when liberal democracy, the free market, and global integration were viewed as the natural and unquestionable path of human development. Many Western thinkers - Francis Fukuyama, Zbigniew Brzezinski, and Anthony Giddens - framed this as the “end of history,” in which there was no longer an alternative model to this order.<sup>1</sup>

However, over the first two decades of the twenty-first century, this vision gradually eroded. The crisis of globalization, the rise of new regional powers, and value-based polarization demonstrated that international relations no longer obey a single logic. Liberal universalism lost its monopoly - both institutionally and ideologically. The idea of a post-liberal world order emerged precisely as a response to these processes, as an attempt to redefine the balance of power and civilizational diversity.<sup>2</sup>

Within this new reality, the Russian Federation has sought to articulate an identity that goes beyond the framework of Western integration and rests on an independent civilizational path. This path connects to the historical idea of Eurasianism - of Russia as a unique cultural and social space that belongs neither to the West nor to the East.

Neo-Eurasianism became one of Russia's principal ideological pillars at this turning point. It brings together philosophical, cultural, and geopolitical dimensions and offers the theoretical basis through which the Kremlin positions itself within a new, multipolar world order.

This article analyzes the intellectual roots of the Neo-Eurasian doctrine, its post-Soviet transformation, and the ways this ideology is used as an instrument of Russian foreign policy. Particular attention is devoted to the concept of civilizational sovereignty, the project of a Eurasian union, and Russia's attempt to articulate an alternative global order and to become one of its anchoring centers.

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<sup>1</sup> Fukuyama, F., *The End of History and the Last Man*, New York: Free Press, 1992. pp. xiii–xiv; Brzezinski, Z., *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives*, New York: Basic Books, 1997. pp. 30-33; Giddens, A., *The Consequences of Modernity*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990. pp. 37-41.

<sup>2</sup> Wallerstein, I., *The Decline of American Power: The U.S. in a Chaotic World*, New York: New Press, 2003. pp. 7-12; Sakwa, R., “Russia's Vision of a Post-Liberal World,” *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 75, No. 2, 2023. pp. 215-228. [https://www.tandfonline.com \[L.s. 18.10.2025\]](https://www.tandfonline.com [L.s. 18.10.2025]).

## 1. Theoretical Foundations of Neo-Eurasian Ideology

Neo-Eurasianism, as a civilizational ideology, is a product of twentieth-century Russian intellectual discourse that later evolved into an instrument of Russia's geopolitical self-identification. Its roots are to be found in classical Eurasianism, which emerged in the 1920s among Russian émigré thinkers living in Berlin and Paris - most notably Nikolai Trubetzkoy and Pyotr Savitsky.

Trubetzkoy argued that Russia was “neither Europe nor Asia” but rather a distinct civilization that should unite with the peoples living in the heart of Eurasia - Tatars, Turkic, and Mongol ethnic groups. In his view, Western civilization was aggressive and self-destructive, while the Russian–Eurasian space represented the foundation of cultural synthesis based on mutual respect and organic diversity.<sup>3</sup>

The essence of Trubetzkoy's and Savitsky's ideas was that Russia should not be seen as Europe's periphery but as a self-sufficient civilizational center. This idea later became the cornerstone of Neo-Eurasian theories, including that of Lev Gumilev, who assigned to Eurasianism a bio-energetic and ethnogenetic meaning. Gumilev's theory of passionarity explained that the rise of civilizations depends on the internal energy and historical mission of nations. Within this framework, the Russian people were portrayed as the nucleus of Eurasia - carriers of an ethnogenetic process that unites the steppe and Slavic cultural worlds.<sup>4</sup>

In the post-Soviet era - particularly since the 1990s - Neo-Eurasianism underwent significant theoretical transformation. Aleksandr Dugin, the principal theorist of the contemporary Neo-Eurasian school, endowed the idea with an explicitly geopolitical content. His works, *The Foundations of Geopolitics* (1997) and *The Eurasian Mission* (2002), became alternative paradigms of Russian geopolitical thinking.

Dugin contends that the world is divided into two meta-civilizations: the Atlantic (Western) and the Eurasian. He perceives Atlanticism as cosmopolitan, secular, and individualistic, whereas Eurasia embodies solidarity, tradition, and spirituality. Accordingly, Dugin sees Russia's mission not merely in state survival but in a global anti-hegemonic mission aimed against Western liberalism.

This theory sparked considerable debate and criticism in both Russian and Western academic circles. Marlene Laruelle, in her monograph, emphasizes that Dugin's Neo-Eurasianism is synthetic—it merges the elitist traditions of classical Eurasianism, elements of Soviet imperialism, and modern anti-liberal discourse. In her assessment, Neo-Eurasianism is no longer a purely academic idea; it has evolved into an ideology of mobilization, granting cultural legitimacy to the Russian state in global politics.<sup>5</sup>

For example, the political scientist Sergey Karaganov argues that the Neo-Eurasian idea in practice represents an alternative model of Russia's historical modernization. According to him, Western liberal hegemony has failed to ensure global stability, whereas Russia, with its civilizational diversity, can serve as a mediator between East and West.

The synthesis of these concepts forms the theoretical and ideological framework of modern Neo-Eurasianism, which rejects liberal universalism and supports civilizational pluralism.<sup>6</sup> For this reason, Neo-Eurasianism fits seamlessly into the theory of the post-liberal order, where a multicentric world is understood not as chaos but as the natural coexistence of civilizational powers.

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<sup>3</sup> Trubetzkoy, N., *Nasledie Chingiskhana, The Legacy of Genghis Khan*, Sofia: Eurasian Publishing House, 1927. pp. 7-11.

<sup>4</sup> Gumilev, L., *Ethnogenesis and the Biosphere of Earth*, Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1989. pp. 55-63.

<sup>5</sup> Laruelle, M., *Russian Eurasianism: An Ideology of Empire*, Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2008. pp. 15-179.

<sup>6</sup> Karaganov, S., “From Containment to Cooperation: Russia's Strategy in a Multipolar World,” *Russia in Global Affairs*, Vol. 14, No. 2, 2016. pp. 8-12; Tsygankov, A., *Russia's Foreign Policy: Change and Continuity in National Identity*, Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016. pp. 10-35.

## 2. Russia's Geopolitical Self-Identification in the 21st Century: Civilizational Sovereignty and the Alternative Order

The geopolitical reality of the twenty-first century has placed the Russian Federation before a critical dilemma: whether to remain a periphery of the Western order or to form its own civilizational identity, grounded in historical and cultural distinctiveness and an autonomous system of values.

After the end of the Cold War, Russia's foreign policy oscillated for many years between "Western integration" and "geopolitical autonomy." Yet, beginning in the 2000s - especially during Vladimir Putin's presidency - this dilemma evolved into a clear ideological decision: Russia chose an independent civilizational path.

The term "civilizational sovereignty", popularized by Putin, extends far beyond political autonomy; it encompasses the protection of cultural, spiritual, and moral space from global uniformity and external interference.<sup>7</sup> The term officially entered Russia's strategic documents, including the National Security Strategy of 2021, which explicitly states the need to defend "traditional Russian spiritual and moral values."<sup>8</sup>

This conceptual shift fundamentally redefines the notion of national security. Security is no longer confined to military strength or economic stability but also includes cultural identity and value preservation as key components of state resilience. Within this framework, the safeguarding of national identity becomes central to the concept of state survival.

It is precisely this approach that laid the groundwork for the integration of the idea of civilizational sovereignty into Russia's political discourse-transforming it into a cornerstone of state ideology. Civilizational sovereignty presupposes that Russia perceives itself as a distinct civilizational system, which neither conforms to the norms of the global West nor imitates the centralized model of China. While the West is rooted in liberal individualism and China in statist centralism, Russia identifies itself as a "third way", combining tradition, spirituality, and historical continuity.

As Sergey Karaganov writes, Russia's mission is to "create a world order where no single power holds a global monopoly."<sup>9</sup> In his view, the post-liberal era requires recognition of "value-based multipolarity," in which diverse civilizations coexist according to their own models of development.

This vision finds practical expression in the construction of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU). Official Moscow regards the Union not merely as a mechanism of economic integration but as an institutional form of civilizational unity. In Putin's programmatic article "A New Integration Project for Eurasia" (2011), he emphasized that the EAEU should become "one of the centers of global development capable of effective competition with other regional blocs."<sup>10</sup>

According to this concept, Eurasian integration is not an attempt to restore the Soviet Union but rather an expanded form of the Russian civilization - a geopolitical space founded on sovereign equality and cultural affinity.

At the cultural level, civilizational self-identification is supported by the active role of the Russian Orthodox Church. Patriarch Kirill has repeatedly stated that "Russia's historical mission cannot be limited to political or military dimensions - it must rest upon spiritual and moral principles." Thus, church and state form a synergistic relationship that strengthens Russia's image as a civilization defending traditional values.

<sup>7</sup> Kortunov, A., "Civilizational Sovereignty as Russia's Strategic Concept," RIAC Commentary, Moscow: Russian International Affairs Council, 2022. pp. 2-5. <https://russiancouncil.ru> [L.s. 18.10.2025].

<sup>8</sup> Security Council of the Russian Federation, National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation, Moscow, 2021. pp. 3-4. <https://scrf.gov.ru> [L.s. 18.10.2025].

<sup>9</sup> Karaganov, S., Multipolarity and the Future of World Order, Moscow: Council on Foreign and Defense Policy, 2020. pp. 7-15.

<sup>10</sup> Putin, V., "A New Integration Project for Eurasia: The Future Born Today," Izvestia, 4 October 2011, p. 3. <http://kremlin.ru> [L.s. 18.10.2025].

Another major instrument of civilizational self-representation is the state-controlled media system - notably Russia Today (RT) and Sputnik - which disseminate anti-liberal and anti-hegemonic narratives worldwide. Their goal is not merely information competition but the deconstruction of Western value discourse, reinforcing Russia's ideological autonomy in the global arena.

Accordingly, Russia's geopolitical self-identification in the twenty-first century rests on the philosophical principles of Neo-Eurasianism: cultural solidarity, historical mission, and the defense of civilizational sovereignty. This ideology shapes Russia's worldview as one of the central pillars of an alternative global order, in which value pluralism is not seen as a threat but as the natural logic of world development.

### **3. The Realization of the Neo-Eurasian Strategy in International Relations**

The idea of Neo-Eurasianism has transformed in the post-Soviet period from an abstract philosophical notion into one of the central ideological foundations of Russia's foreign policy. Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, the Kremlin has consistently sought to institutionalize the Neo-Eurasian worldview through practical mechanisms of regional and global cooperation. The initiatives pursued under this framework reveal an attempt to build a geopolitical architecture that reflects Russia's civilizational identity and denies Western hegemony.

The practical dimension of this strategy is expressed through a network of alliances, organizations, and partnerships that embody Moscow's long-term ambition to construct an alternative world order. These platforms include the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the BRICS association, and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), all of which serve as instruments of Russia's multipolar diplomacy.

#### **3.1. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)**

The first institutional embodiment of the Neo-Eurasian idea was the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, founded in 2001. Initially created to ensure regional security in Central Asia and to manage border stability between Russia, China, and several post-Soviet republics, the SCO gradually expanded its mandate to encompass political and economic cooperation across Eurasia. Its foundational principle is that regional security must be maintained by Eurasian states themselves, without dependence on Western institutions.<sup>11</sup>

Since the 2010s, the SCO has evolved into one of the world's largest inter-governmental organizations, covering over 40 percent of the global population and nearly a quarter of the world's GDP. The organization's declarations consistently emphasize the equality and sovereignty of its members and reject external interference. Following the 2022 Beijing Joint Statement by Russia and China, the SCO articulated a shared vision of a "just and multipolar world order," asserting that no state has the right to impose its political model on others.<sup>12</sup> This principle directly reflects the Neo-Eurasian concept of civilizational sovereignty in the international sphere.

#### **3.2. The Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU)**

Another major expression of Russia's Neo-Eurasian strategy is the Eurasian Economic Union, established in 2015 by Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Armenia, and Kyrgyzstan. Officially presented as an economic integration project, the EAEU has, in practice, become a geopolitical tool designed to consolidate the post-Soviet space into a coherent civilizational bloc. Its founding treaty emphasizes not only economic interdependence but also "spiritual and cultural closeness," a formulation rarely found in trade agreements.

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<sup>11</sup> Laruelle, M., Eurasian Integration and the 'Russian World': Regionalism as an Ideology, Eurasian Geography and Economics, Vol. 56, No. 4, 2015. pp. 360-374.

<sup>12</sup> Joint Statement of the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China on International Relations Entering a New Era and Global Sustainable Development, Beijing, 4 February 2022. <http://kremlin.ru> [L.s. 18.10.2025].

The EAEU's institutional mechanisms - its Council, Commission, and Court - mirror those of the European Union, yet their underlying purpose differs: while the EU promotes supranational liberal governance, the EAEU aims to protect national sovereignty within a shared Eurasian framework. Putin has repeatedly underlined that Eurasian integration "is not about restoring the Soviet Union but about creating a strong union of equal states."<sup>13</sup>

In this sense, the EAEU represents not simply an economic project but a civilizational alternative to Western globalization. It integrates elements of cultural diplomacy, education, and value-based cooperation. For example, the Union's programs encourage cultural exchange and language education between Slavic and Turkic nations, echoing the early Eurasianist idea of organic unity among the peoples of the steppe.

### 3.3. BRICS and the Expansion toward the Global South

Beyond the immediate Eurasian region, the BRICS alliance - Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa—constitutes the global dimension of Russia's Neo-Eurasian policy. In the Kremlin's view, BRICS is the nucleus of the post-Western world, an institutional mechanism for states outside the liberal core to assert their autonomy and equality. Russian diplomats describe BRICS not as an "anti-Western bloc" but as a prototype of a post-Western system, characterized by pluralism, cultural diversity, and the rejection of ideological universalism.<sup>14</sup>

Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has repeatedly argued that BRICS represents a model of "civilizational multilateralism," where cooperation is based on equality and non-interference rather than the hierarchical norms of Western alliances.<sup>15</sup> For Moscow, BRICS exemplifies civilizational multipolarity in practice—a coalition of regional centers whose cooperation is grounded in shared resistance to Western domination.

Following Russia's increased diplomatic engagement in Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East, the BRICS format has been expanded to include new members such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Iran. This enlargement further embodies the Neo-Eurasian principle of cross-civilizational dialogue, connecting Orthodox-Slavic, Islamic, Confucian, and Latin American cultural spaces under one umbrella of cooperation.

### 3.4. Information Policy and Soft Power

A key component of the Neo-Eurasian strategy lies in the information and cultural domain. Russian state media, including Russia Today (RT), Sputnik, and other affiliated platforms, serve as soft-power instruments for the dissemination of Russia's worldview. Their editorial narratives consistently challenge Western liberal discourse, question the legitimacy of Western interventions, and promote the defense of traditional and conservative values.<sup>16</sup>

This media network forms part of what analysts describe as Russia's "civilizational communication system" - a coordinated effort to export cultural narratives aligned with Moscow's ideological position. The objective is not merely propaganda but the creation of an alternative epistemic space in which Russia defines the terms of global debate rather than accepting those imposed by Western outlets.

Similarly, the Russian Orthodox Church contributes to the country's soft power strategy by projecting moral authority. Patriarch Kirill's speeches frequently invoke Russia's spiritual responsibility to protect

<sup>13</sup> Putin, V., A New Integration Project for Eurasia: The Future Born Today, *Izvestia*, 4 October 2011. p. 3. <http://kremlin.ru> [L.s. 18.10.2025].

<sup>14</sup> Stuenkel, O., *Post-Western World: How Emerging Powers Are Remaking Global Order*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2016. pp. 101-107.

<sup>15</sup> Lavrov, S., "BRICS and the Future of Global Governance," *Russia in Global Affairs*, Vol. 18, No. 3, 2022. pp. 5-10. <https://eng.globalaffairs.ru> [L.s. 18.10.2025].

<sup>16</sup> RT Documentary, *Civilizational Sovereignty: Beyond Western Universalism*. Moscow: RT Productions, 2022.

the world from “moral relativism and cultural nihilism,” a message that resonates across conservative circles in Eastern Europe, the Balkans, and the Middle East.<sup>17</sup>

### 3.5. Expanding the Eurasian Vision: From Regional Bloc to Global Actor

Russia’s engagement with the Middle East and Africa also demonstrates the externalization of Neo-Eurasian principles. At the Russia–Africa Summit held in St. Petersburg in July 2023, President Putin emphasized the idea of a “Renaissance of the Global South,” reaffirming that “every state has the right to develop free from external coercion.”<sup>18</sup> This rhetoric clearly parallels the civilizational pluralism articulated in Dugin’s and Karaganov’s theoretical writings.

In the same year, Russian policy documents described the “Greater Eurasian Partnership” as a long-term vision connecting the EAEU, SCO, BRICS, and ASEAN into a single network of cooperation spanning from Lisbon to Jakarta. This ambitious concept positions Russia as a geopolitical integrator within a multipolar order - an idea that stems directly from the early Eurasianist ambition to create a bridge between Europe and Asia.

The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (2023) explicitly declares that Russia aims to contribute to “the formation of a fair and sustainable multipolar world order.”<sup>19</sup> This official language mirrors Neo-Eurasian terminology, revealing how the doctrine has been absorbed into the state’s strategic vocabulary. The emphasis on justice, equality, and pluralism demonstrates a departure from the liberal ideal of universal norms toward a model based on civilizational coexistence.

### 3.6. Education, Academia, and Ideological Dissemination

Neo-Eurasian ideas have also penetrated Russia’s educational and academic system. In the last decade, Russian universities - especially those offering programs in international relations and political science - have introduced Eurasian studies as a formal discipline. Courses explore the works of Trubetzkoy, Savitsky, Gumilev, and Dugin, treating them as legitimate sources of strategic thought rather than marginal intellectual curiosities.

Institutions such as Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO) and Lomonosov Moscow State University (MSU) regularly host conferences under the themes of “civilizational multipolarity” and “Eurasia as a common home.” These academic forums serve dual functions: they facilitate theoretical research and simultaneously act as channels for the normalization of Neo-Eurasian discourse in public consciousness.

Through these initiatives, Neo-Eurasianism has evolved from a geopolitical theory into a comprehensive ideological ecosystem encompassing diplomacy, education, media, and religion. It offers a moral framework through which Russia interprets its foreign policy not merely as power politics but as the fulfillment of a civilizational mission.

## 4. Resistance to Western Hegemony and Russia’s Position in the Post-Liberal Order

The defining feature of the post-liberal era is the gradual erosion of Western hegemony and the concurrent rise of alternative centers of power. The post–Cold War “unipolar world,” based on U.S. military and economic dominance and liberal ideological primacy, no longer reflects global reality. The crises of globalization, the fragmentation of Western politics, and the consolidation of new regional blocs have all contributed to the emergence of a world system characterized by civilizational pluralism rather than ideological uniformity.

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<sup>17</sup> Patriarch Kirill, “On the Mission of the Russian Civilization,” Moscow Patriarchate Bulletin, 2018. pp. 11-14.

<sup>18</sup> Russia–Africa Summit Declaration, St. Petersburg, 28 July 2023. pp. 2-4. <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news> [L.s. 18.10.2025].

<sup>19</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, Moscow, 31 March 2023. pp. 1-4. <https://mid.ru> [L.s. 18.10.2025].

In this context, Neo-Eurasianism has crystallized as one of the central narratives of the post-liberal world - a counter-discourse that challenges the universality of Western modernity and its liberal values. The doctrine articulates a vision of civilizational relativism, arguing that there is no single “model” of development applicable to all societies. This epistemological break marks the transition from the twentieth century’s ideological monologue to a twenty-first-century dialogue of civilizations.

Aleksandr Dugin contends that Western liberalism is losing its historical vitality because it seeks to impose a single civilizational schema upon a heterogeneous world. He frames the current global confrontation as a struggle between two metaphysical forces: the Atlanticist civilization of individualism and consumption, and the Eurasian civilization of tradition, spirituality, and solidarity. In Dugin’s words, the West “abolishes differences in the name of sameness,” while Eurasia “preserves difference as the essence of humanity.”<sup>20</sup>

Russian political elites interpret Western hegemony not only as a geopolitical challenge but as a moral and cultural threat. Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has repeatedly stated that “the West seeks to maintain ideological monopoly, but history is moving in another direction. Civilizations are awakening.”<sup>21</sup> This rhetoric, while deeply ideological, serves a strategic function: it positions Russia as the defender of traditional values and cultural sovereignty in contrast to what it depicts as the moral decline of the liberal order.

In numerous speeches, President Vladimir Putin has denounced what he calls the “moral decay” of Western liberalism - its relativism, secularism, and erosion of cultural identity. During his 2019 address at the G20 Summit in Osaka, he famously declared that “the liberal idea has become obsolete,” asserting that the time had come for the world to reaffirm “the importance of family, religion, and moral order.”<sup>22</sup> In subsequent years, his speeches at the Valdai Discussion Club have further reinforced this position, portraying Russia as a civilization of moral resistance that rejects what he calls the “postmodernist deconstruction of human identity.”

This ideological stance has been reflected in Russia’s domestic and foreign policy frameworks alike. The state now conceptualizes its global role not only in terms of national interest but as a civilizational mission - a mission to preserve the diversity of cultures against the homogenizing pressures of globalization.

Western reactions to this value-based challenge have been multifaceted. On the one hand, Washington and Brussels have sought to reassert the legitimacy of the liberal order through renewed ideological campaigns. The U.S. National Security Strategy (2022) explicitly identifies Russia and China as powers seeking to “reshape the global order according to authoritarian rules.”<sup>23</sup> On the other hand, an increasing number of Western scholars and strategists acknowledge the limits of liberal universalism, recognizing that the age of unipolarity has given way to a contest among civilizations rather than ideologies.

The framework proposed by Samuel Huntington in *The Clash of Civilizations* has thus acquired new relevance, albeit in an inverted form: where Huntington warned of conflict, Neo-Eurasianists perceive opportunity - an opening for multiple civilizations to coexist as equals. For Moscow, this means a redefinition of world order in terms of moral sovereignty, cultural security, and civilizational parity rather than dominance.

This concept has been further elaborated by Russian theorists such as Sergey Karaganov, who introduced the notion of moral sovereignty (*npravstvennyi suverenitet*) - the right of nations to maintain their moral and spiritual foundations free from external interference.<sup>24</sup> In his analysis, the primary

<sup>20</sup> Dugin, A., *The Fourth Political Theory*, London: Arktos, 2012. pp. 55-101.

<sup>21</sup> Lavrov, S., “Civilizational Multipolarity and the Future of Global Politics,” *Russia in Global Affairs*, Vol. 19, No. 4, 2023. pp. 3-6. <https://eng.globalaffairs.ru> [L.s. 18.10.2025].

<sup>22</sup> Putin, V., “Speech at the G20 Summit in Osaka,” Official Kremlin Website, 28 June 2019. <http://kremlin.ru> [L.s. 18.10.2025].

<sup>23</sup> The White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States*, Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2022. pp. 4-5.

<sup>24</sup> Karaganov, S., “Moral Sovereignty and Cultural Security in Russian Strategy,” *Russia in Global Affairs*, Vol. 20, No. 1 2024. pp. 17-21. <https://eng.globalaffairs.ru> [L.s. 18.10.2025].

battlefield of the twenty-first century is not military but ideological: the struggle over the power to define good and evil, order and chaos, progress and decline.

Russia's foreign policy discourse now routinely employs this language. The term kul'turnaya bezopasnost' - cultural security - appears alongside references to traditionalism, faith, and moral revival. These ideas converge into a single narrative: that Russia's role in the post-liberal world is to act as the guardian of traditional civilization and the architect of multipolar stability.

From this perspective, Moscow's resistance to Western hegemony is not merely reactive. It represents an affirmative ideological project: the construction of a post-Western order rooted in diversity, sovereignty, and mutual respect among civilizations. The Russian leadership seeks to frame this struggle not as a geopolitical confrontation but as a philosophical contest over humanity's future.

Thus, the Neo-Eurasian vision does not reject modernity per se; it seeks to redefine it by infusing technological and political modernization with spiritual and ethical content. In doing so, Russia presents itself as the advocate of a "plural modernity," wherein each civilization preserves its unique cultural code while engaging in global dialogue.

In sum, Russia's positioning in the post-liberal order rests on three interrelated pillars:

1. Civilizational sovereignty - the defense of cultural and ideological independence from global standardization;
2. Multipolar stability - the creation of a balanced system of power that excludes Western monopoly;
3. Value-based mission - the promotion of conservative and traditional norms as a civilizational alternative.

Through this lens, Neo-Eurasianism emerges not only as a geopolitical strategy but as a comprehensive civilizational response to the crisis of liberalism. It seeks to replace the Western narrative of universalism with a pluralist paradigm in which every civilization participates as an equal subject of history.

## **Conclusion**

The return of Neo-Eurasianism within Russia's geopolitical strategy reflects a profound civilizational transformation underway in the post-liberal world order. While at the end of the twentieth century Russia attempted integration into Western institutional structures, the twenty-first century has made evident the Kremlin's decisive choice of an independent civilizational trajectory that fundamentally opposes liberal hegemony.

Today, Neo-Eurasianism is no longer a mere philosophical theory or ideological discourse; it has evolved into a synthesis of state strategy and civilizational ideology, merging historical heritage, cultural self-consciousness, and global pragmatism. Its essence lies in Russia's self-perception not as a periphery of either West or East but as a third civilization, striving to preserve and develop its own axiological space.

Through this ideological framework, Russia aspires to shape an alternative vision of world order—one that counters the Western paradigm of unipolarity and instead promotes multipolar stability grounded in value pluralism and civilizational equality. This alternative model rests on three interrelated foundations:

1. Civilizational sovereignty - the protection of national culture and spiritual values from global standardization and ideological coercion;
2. Geopolitical autonomy - the reinforcement of regional integration within the Eurasian space and the creation of institutional alternatives to Western structures;
3. Value pluralism - the recognition of civilizational equality as a precondition for global harmony and sustainable development.

In this sense, Neo-Eurasianism functions as both an ideological and geopolitical project, binding together Russia's historical consciousness, religious tradition, and strategic interests. It represents not only Russia's reaction to the decline of liberal universalism but a civilizational response that seeks to redefine the foundations of international coexistence.

The post-liberal epoch - marked by the waning influence of the West and the empowerment of new regional centers - provides fertile ground for Russia's emergence as one of the key pillars of a multipolar system. Within this structure, Neo-Eurasianism serves as both a theoretical justification and a strategic instrument for Russia's participation in shaping the architecture of the twenty-first-century world.

Ultimately, the evolution of Neo-Eurasianism illustrates how geopolitical ideas can transcend the boundaries of theory and become drivers of civilizational identity formation. In this respect, Russia's Neo-Eurasian project embodies a broader global phenomenon: the quest for plural modernities - for a world where diverse civilizations coexist, not in conflict, but in dialogue, contributing to the moral and political rebalancing of the international system.

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