

## Grammar of the Unity in Europe – The Case of Russia

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### *Abstract*

This study aims to present that the grammar of the unity in Europe not only passes through the successful integration of all countries in the EU and the integration of new EU Member States, but mostly through the save and the use of the European spirit in all countries in Europe. We often forget that the largest country in Europe is Russia – it covers half of geographical Europe. The thought by Nikolai Berdyaev that “Russia must to acknowledge itself like a West. Like an East-West, which brings together two worlds, not divide them”, will be the leading construction in clarifying the thesis about a cultural compromise which Russia made in its history in order to afford the Russian notorious unity or the ideas for “Svyatáya Rus” (Holy Russia), “Glubokaya rus'skaja duha” (Great Russian soul) and the “Russian idea” against the ethnic and a religious diversity in the Russian society. Various political, economic, social, cultural, philosophical and religious factors and trends that lead to consciousness to speak of unity, Russian identity and Russian nationalism will be analyzed. The theses of Yevgeny Primakov, Aleksandr Dugin and Dmitri Trenin will be tracked. Russia must also comply with international law, which it often violates, so that Russia can be seen as a bridge between West and East.

*Keywords:* grammar, political rules, international law, EU, Europe, Russia, West, East.

### 1. Introduction

Grammar of the unity in Europe. Why not solidarity? The EU’s motto is “Unity in Diversity”, but we forget that Europe is not just the EU. There are many countries on this continent that cannot participate in the EU. They are also part of the geographical space of continent Europe, which is borne by European culture, traditions and history. The grammar that must be maintained by international relations is international law. We often forbid that Russia is the best existing country in Europe. Often Russian is the language of international law. What is happening there? How can we save this bridge, which is Russia, a bridge between the west and the east, so that Russia recognizes itself as the West?

### 2. The Russian cultural compromise

What is the cultural compromise that Russia has to do with itself in order to be able to take the thought by Nikolai Berdyaev “Russia must to acknowledge itself like a West. Like an East - West, which brings together two worlds, not divide them” (see Berdyaev, 2015)?

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It is an indisputable fact that could not be denied in any way is the conclusion that the Russians have always had the ability to soberly evaluate and see the state of their country, their political class, their economic situation, and with the same super-sobriety and confidence in their conclusions, they cannot take direct, swift and concrete steps to change the negative status quo. The broad and deep Russian soul is clothed with sarcasm, humor, jokes and songs (only as Russians can joke with themselves), this introverted and voiceless protest, beautifully expressed in the joking verse of the song: “In Russia, every liar is messiah... For millennia, Russia has been seeking Russia.” (see Galich, 2006).

Is Russia the West, or the East, or a center that combines the projection of the Western spirit and culture with the mystical Eastern Orthodox Christian worldview and Islamic sophism? Is Russia an Empire or a Modern State? Is Russia a liberal-democratic state or is it a post-totalitarian state of socialist type? All these questions asked in this way are questions provoked by cognitive interest that goes beyond the logic of Russian thinking. Thinking that tries to impose a Western – Euro-Atlantic experience of analysis and worldview, reality and cultural construction that has and lives its own logic. In fact, throughout their historical development, Russians have been arguing about their identity. What are they: Europeans, Asians, Eurasians? Are they from the West or from the East? And how do so many different ethnic groups manage to unite around the name Russia?

This is precisely the expression of Russia’s cultural compromise.

On the one hand, it must adapt itself, its image to itself, to the world, or more specifically to the focus through which the American-European mental model seeks to perceive Russia, and on the other, to bring about a cultural compromise. to really be West. Russia is undoubtedly, geographically, historically and culturally, part of Europe and European culture. Russia is even the construction of the European cultural model. But Russia has never been just part of Europe and has never been just part of Asia, but it has never been just Eurasia – Russia in this sense has always been west in east and east in west. Russia is multilateral, inclusive and multipolar. So are her estimates – multifaceted, unfinished, and multipolar. This is because Russia has:

- Its Renaissance, it is pro-European in nature, refracted through the prism and imprisoned in individual religious mysticism, aimed at a universal Orthodox universal;
- Its cosmopolitanism, which is as different from the European from the period of the seventeenth – nineteenth centuries, is different from it. Not only is Russian cosmopolitanism locked in the confines of socio-religious vocabulary and thinking, moreover, it is a kind of hybrid of social-religious construction of reality, broken through socialist ideology, which has mastered the thinking of the world for centuries. Ideas for the Great Russian Soul (*Glubokaya rus'skaja duha*) and Holy Russia (*Svyataya Rus*) are concepts that seek to convey what Valerian Muraviev wrote: “The most complete ideal of the ancient Russian worldview of the Kingdom of God on earth. Consciousness approached this ideal through the Church and the State at the same time, merging them into the image of the great – initially Russian. and then - universal theocracy,” (see Dimitrova, 2002), or as Nikolai Berdyaev writes on the pages of his “Russian Idea”: “What seems utopian in Russia is the most realistic” (see Berdyaev, 2015);
- “Holy Russia” – for the Russian is an expression of a single whole that could express itself in a united, unified society, long before the united, but in fact much more divided and torn apart, nationalism / wasteland Europe; Russia is not only a space of Slavs, Russia is a space of many ethnicities bearing their multipolarities, but united by something important, something without which there is no unity in one country or community – the enormous role that the Russian language plays in preserving Russian unity.

In order to outline how Russia recognizes itself as the West – as East-West, which unites two worlds rather than separates them, we must try to make a brief analysis of what Russia was like in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and what it decided it should be in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### 3. The 20th century – Russia of contradictions

During this enormous period, fixing throughout the century, major political-economic-social processes and changes took place in Russia, which radically changed both the geopolitical situation and what was happening in Russia itself as a socio-spatial state community: on the one hand, there is the October Socialist Revolution, the camps, the Russian National Socialism; and, on the other hand, the inclusion and unification of compact masses of people in the form of federal statehood, distinguishing some socialist forms of cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism. Somehow in parallel with all this, and embedded in it, one can observe the process of “progress” of the literary-philosophical-religious and socio-political life in Russia.

The notion that might be generalizable to the 20<sup>th</sup> century Russia is the “Messianic Idea”, which in its own way, compactly manages to transmit Russia in time, without yet being in its way and in its potential to realize it. Russia at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is not a tsarist, not an empire, in regional and political terms after the collapse of the USSR, it is aware that it is on track to remain a pro-forma federation, even though the Eurasian Union is structured. What characterizes Russia and Russian thinking at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, nonetheless, are the words of Alexander Block in *People and Intelligence*: “We are special mystics – in a Russian manner. We are indeed humans on earth, as we believe that our Millennial Kingdom will not be after the grave, not in heaven, but on earth” (see Block, 1908). This is Russia with its many Russians – multipolar.

Russia is not experiencing its “democratic revolution” like most post-socialist countries at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Yes, it has its coup (the 1991 Soviet coup, also known as the August Coup (Russian: Августовский путч, tr. Avgustovskiy Putsch “August Putsch”) in the 1990s, but its “colorful” revolution does not. The political and economic changes that have taken place since the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Russian society seem rather theatrical, against the backdrop of the unprecedented cardinal and effective reforms. It is this unprecedented reform that will mark Russia in the 21<sup>st</sup> century as a federation of the road between Europe and Asia, which, from a country with messianic ambitions, will gradually seek to maintain its status at least as a regional player on the political scene, and only because geographically occupying the space between Europe and Asia – Russia is marked by the problems of modern demographics, which are a sign of problems for national security, prosperity and the future: an aging population, high mortality, high migration and low fertility.

The question facing the USSR is where to go after 1990 – west or east – a historical time that is decisive for Russia? By the beginning of 1990, the processes and attempts for global change and the desire for integration had already begun. Europe was certainly not united in the early 1990s, but never more than at that time was determined to be. The US is proving to be an unprecedented and alternative leader in geopolitical and geo-strategic terms. The USSR, at its role as the other geopolitical and military pole until recently, is at a crossroads. Where to go? There are several roads ahead of the Union that must be approached at the same time.

For the USSR 1991 proved fateful. It is no longer possible to hold back the process of forcible detention of individual republics in a common union. The centrifugal forces, poor economic performance, and trends in globalization, globally lead to the need to renegotiate the treaties for the creation of the USSR or even to dissolve it. The uniting spirit of the communist idea of “Oneness, equality and brotherhood” seemed to have evaporated and left behind the traces

of different peoples assembled in one country, looking for avenues of self-identification and prosperity.

The person who took power in Russia on 12 June 1991 and was aided by the August coup in the same year, Boris Yeltsin, will also be the person to put an end to the existence of the USSR on 8 December 1991. Boris Yeltsin invited Leonid Kravchuk (President of Ukraine) and Stanislav Shushkevich (President of Belarus) to a meeting at a residence in area named “Belovezhskaya Forest” (Belovezhskaya Gora) near Minsk, signing with them an act to end the existence of the USSR. But the dissolution of the USSR is not completely complete. At the same meeting, a treaty was signed establishing the “Community of Slavic States”, which a few days later became the “Commonwealth of Independent States”. Thus, officially, the USSR was liquidated on 8 December 1991, and on 27 December 1991, the CIS was born, which included all the former USSR republics with the exception of Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Georgia. This new union was proposed and imposed by the President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, who clearly realizes that it is impossible to split states that have been associated with a common economic, political, educational, social, etc. with one stroke. structure. After a brief hesitation, Ukraine also leaves and withdraws from membership in the CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States).

For the Russian Federation, the beginning of 1992 proved to be cardinal for the future of the new formation. The restructuring, which began in 1986, did not bring economic benefits. This fact is quite justified, because in order to apply new market methods, technical and material security is required. The republics as a whole were in economic collapse in the early 1990s, which led to the disintegration of the Union. The decisions to be taken by Boris Yeltsin in early 1992 are cardinal, these are decisions that will predetermine the development of the Russian Federation for about a decade to come, but also decisions that will affect the geopolitical world status quo. On the one hand, he must acknowledge that Russia is facing a national and geopolitical catastrophe; It is these geopolitical priorities that shaped and shaped Russian foreign policy in the 1990s. Russia looks to Western Europe and the United States for help and advice on how to modernize so that it can walk the path of liberal democracy and a market economy. But the more important goal for Russia is to regain its dignity and presence on the world political scene as a military-political and economic factor.

In the early 1990s, Western partners were still not very convinced of Russia's openness and willingness to cooperate with them. The grounds for such fear are the events of the August coup of 1991 and the political arbitrations and crises of 1993. But the speed with which B. Yeltsin has mastered the political situation in the country by holding elections and adopting a new constitution signals, despite the very complicated internal situation that Russia could be a fully-fledged regional and geopolitical partner. B. Yeltsin does not stop here. For the first to happen and the second to follow – the partnership first needs to be built. The steps towards such construction are the emergence of Russia (the Russian Federation) on the international political scene. The International Monetary Fund allows and extends credit to Russia. In 1992, it became a member of the OSCE, in 1996 the Council of Europe, Russia was invited to join the G7 in 1997, and in 2000, the G-20 and in 2001 – BRICS. NATO-Russia cooperation began in 1991. In 1992, Russia became a partner in the US-NATO Partnership for Peace initiative. In 2002, the NATO-Russia Council was created to address security issues and joint projects. In turn, although extremely slow, changes are taking place in all areas of business life. The country's legislation has been completely changed and several administrative, military and educational reforms have been made. Russia has made it clear that it wants to become a modern country, to regain its position of superpower, but also to be a partner in the world game of international relations. The 1990s set out an apparent unipolar world in which the United States has a leading role in international life. These years are a kind of attempt to change the legitimacy of the rest of the world, of this non-US world, despite being an active part in the globalization process, an active partner in international relations. Evgeni Primakov points out his disagreement with this distorted image of the world, which can

serve as his solution, launched in the post-communist world. It is forgotten that the world is multipolar and that large Asian countries are weighing in it. This trend will become visible in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The “Yeltsin Age” turns out to be a complicated and controversial time. A time in which Russia must make its first steps as a modern state, on the one hand, and on the other, as a consolidating factor for a huge federation.

The 1990s was precisely the time when globalization was happening in Russia, but in a Russian manner: in the beginning it all began with universal optimism and good hope for a simple and painless restructuring of economic and economic activity and easy imposition of the international political scene; ending in the late 90s and early 90s with a general disillusionment and despair in society from the economic crisis. There are no one-way estimates regarding B. Yeltsin's management. It is important to say that, as a statesman and a liberal politician, he deserves recognition for being able to turn the wheel of change into a vast territory, extremely complex in a territorial-administrative division and a multinational state.

#### 4. Beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century – Russia between two worlds

The fact is that Russia today does not have sufficient economic capacity to strengthen its position, and therefore the areas it controls today – both the “internal” (autonomous republics, the Caucasus, etc.) and the “external” (Eurasian Economic Community) and some CIS countries) are extremely volatile spaces. Russia can finally be transformed into something existing by inertia and subject to “decomposition”, as Zbigniew Brzezinski predicts: “If Russia does not become part of Europe, it will become a devastated satellite of China” (see Brzezinski, 2014); or Russia can be integrated, but on the basis of a qualitatively new and as if another “Messianic” idea – a new purpose possessing a specific spirit, will, culture, structures and technology.

“The Putin Era” – as soon as Putin takes over the management of the Federation, he begins following his presidential program, which was published three months earlier as a pre-election campaign in Russian newspaper (“Российская Газета – tr. Rossiyskaya Gazeta”) on 31 December 1999. the Millennium Border”. What does V. Putin say in this word? Contrary to expectations from society, i.e. what he is accustomed to hearing from the Kremlin as an official, albeit populist position on the situation in the country, and Russia’s foreign policy position, V. Putin directly emphasizes that the country is lagging dramatically behind the most underdeveloped countries in Europe, which and deprives it of the opportunity to be a military political leader, to regain its position internationally. V. Putin insists on ending all that is reminiscent of communism and communist marriages of the past, but emphasizes patriotism, the need for normal nationalism in the spirit of Russian and Orthodox values.

The multipolar Russia – as an external political line – was brought up by President V. Putin. This thesis, as well as the idea of emphasizing Russia’s European identity, which has been leading since 1992, has not left the Russian president. In 2004, the world was globalized and globalization itself required this multipolarity. In a multipolar world, the status of large states is self-imposed – i.e. these large countries should not be perceived not only as power, but as centers that give prospects for the development of humanity. The multipolar world narrows the idea of economic and political globalization and integration to the individual far more than it binds the multipolar thesis to political-military cooperation alone, power world centers, confrontation and opposition. It is precisely such multipolarity that Putin has envisioned – to balance the international life with different poles and to guarantee them. In June 2000, defining the concepts and theses in Russia’s foreign policy, Putin gave the following summary: “Russia must strive to create a multipolar system of international relations.”

First, however, Russian experts from the beginning of the century, who are trying to analyze the real geopolitical tendencies, do not agree on the thesis about the multipolar world. For some of the researchers, it is important for Russia, in its attempt to develop its European identity, to focus precisely on Europe's values, by trying to ignore the idea of an international power. Its modernization is important, even if it is to the detriment of its military and political power.

Second, for Russia, the United States could be a model of modernization that would take it and place it among truly modern and developed countries. The world has become multipolar, but multipolarity is asymmetric and unipolarity is multiple. In this sense, Russia is at greater risk with its ambitions regionally than internationally, and if there is anyone truly profitable from this multipolar strategy, it will be China, which on the one hand takes advantage of Russia's mistakes in on a regional scale, and on the other, it is weakening, giving way to China's geopolitical strategy. For others, like the liberal Vladimir Lukin, the multipolar world is real, and in it Russia could find methods and principles to counter US attempts at world hegemony (see Lukin, 2003).

Third, supporters of the socialists, communists, and pro-China pro-Russians support the vision of a bipolar world. For example, the father of the very idea of "perestroika", Alexander Yakovlev launches the idea of the West united around the United States, at the Oriental-Asian pole, in which the three leading countries are Russia, China and India (Yakovlev, 2000: 40).

On the basis of a thorough recapitulation of different opinions and opinions, President Vladimir Putin also draws his conclusions by drawing up a flexible concept that is adequate and adaptable to the diversity of geopolitical perspectives. This concept is expressed in the following: strategic partnership and cooperation with everyone, without any confrontation, even with the USA – a balance between forces and poles leading to balance (Acharia, 1999: 89). The difference in Vladimir Putin's concept from that of E. Primakov is that while the latter emphasized the need for Russia to disregard and expect the United States to recognize it as a great power, V. Putin hoped and expected that with a reasonable geopolitical balance in its dealings with the US, this will still happen. Putin's sensible geopolitical balance suggests that Russia would remain stable on the international scene, both regionally and domestically, if it applied a flexible multipolarity that would prevent it from depending on one geopolitical partner at the expense of another. But to what extent is this Russian altruistic geopolitical vision actually applicable, and does it actually act as a catalyst for Americans to try to impose their unipolar geopolitical model over the world?

The Third Security Conference is being held in Munich on the 10th of February, 2007. At the conference, Putin made the following statement regarding the possibility of a unipolar world: "The unipolar world, in practice, means only one thing: a center of power, a center of power, a center for decision-making. This is a world with only one master, with one sovereign." – News on 14 June 2007. In his speech, Vladimir Putin stresses that as long as a single-pole model is contrary to democracy, it should not be followed or admired. because if the democracy of the multipolar model implies that everyone's interests are heard, then the unipolar model imposes one-sided, final decisions in favor of one sovereign entity at the expense of everyone else. This straightforward and forthright speech, not bordering on diplomatic dialogue, is an attempt to summarize V. Putin's long silence and wait for American behavior aimed at weakening and eliminating Russian influence in the post-Soviet space, as well as the American experience make their own decisions regarding cases related to international life – e.g. Iraq, Kosovo, etc. – Ignoring and violating international agreements, regulations and institutions of general international law. This statement by V. Putin has a wide resonance and support in Russian society, and the press summarizes it in one headline: "Russia said no to the US" – Russian newspaper (*Российская Газета*) on 6 June 2007.

V. Putin, referring to the idea of a multipolar global world, seeks a way to emphasize Americans' attempt to impose a unipolar model in international relations, but at the same time

shows that it is not possible for the world to continue to tolerate such hegemony – globalization itself involves in itself the multipolarity. Although unification, standardization, or centralization are part of the global and require, to some extent, a forceful unipolar structure to radiate them, the qualities listed are also part of a universalization that is not alien to any people, group, or community that could themselves to project multipolarity – it is the equilibrium that could curb America’s quest for world domination.

If, at the beginning of his term in 2000, Putin pursued US recognition of Russia as a great power or equal between equals, then after 2007 and nowadays, the Russian president's policy is oriented toward Asia. or the idea of Eurasian Russia. The idea of the Eurasian fate of Russia has a long, purely ideological, geographical, historical and economic basis and history. For its part, Russian identity is specific in itself, it is a compilation of both European spirituality and Eastern wisdom. As Dmitry Trenin points out: “When Russia demands recognition of its Eurasian identity, it does not mean that it presents itself geopolitically as a specific country as it was during the empire and the USSR, but as a non-European country integrating into Europe and into at the same time as a European country present in Asia and bringing European values and culture to Asia” (Trenin, 2006: 67). Russia is part of Europe and this is beyond doubt – both purely territorial and civilizational – V. Putin reports this fact and it is on the basis of his country’s strategic geographical location that he seeks ways to extract geopolitical benefits to achieve her recognition of great power.

After 2007, Russia is entering a new era in its geopolitical outlook, aware that the world is facing a new Cold War projected into it through extreme opposition to the US-EU-Russia axis - the events of our day confirm this.

#### 4.1 *Aleksandr Dugin – Russia’s idea of the multipolar world*

“I believe that the high idea is at the core of Russian identity – we have always considered ourselves a people endowed with a historical mission. Any reference to this topic always resonates in people’s hearts. Maybe not everyone thinks about it, but it defines our culture. All that is valuable to us has been imbued with this messianic sentiment: both the church, the literature of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and Russian religious philosophy, and the Silver Age. We are a Messianic people. And every time the state or politicians turn to it, they receive a positive response. The liberal elite is very afraid of this topic. Every time she appears in political discourse, liberals try to make fun of her, quench her impulse. In my view, the Messianic fire is our essence – a great, high, and deep thing. Russian Spring – this was the messianic movement of our people. And against it are the representatives of the liberal elite! But, the Messianic fire inevitably ignites again. Throughout history, we have differently shaped our messianic sentiment: in the Orthodox context; in the secular; in the communist. But we have never forgotten our nature. Only totalitarian liberal ideology tried to root out all forms of Russian messianism: both white, red, religious, and communist. But it didn’t give in to it. The Messianic argument is key and fundamental. When political circles in Russia turn to this “instance”, they always do the right thing. They awaken us, bring us back to our essence. We have no vision of the future in the form of formalized concepts. But we carry this image in our souls. It just wasn’t born yet. We are filled with it. This is the image of spirituality and justice. There are two things that determine the identity of the Russian people. This is his quest to tell the spiritually important word – the word for salvation, truth, kindness – in Russia’s historic path. It is important for us that the last word in world history remains with us. And it should be a word about spirit and beauty, not a word about ugliness, not a word on pragmatic issues. That’s one thing. On the other hand, social justice is important to us. Russian society does not perceive itself in the conditions of capitalism, in the position of individualism or the fragmented atoms of society. And we do not understand freedom quite like the Western nations. The subject for us is the collective, our whole people – this is who is bound to be free. That

is why we are ready to sacrifice ourselves in the name of the public good. Freedom without justice is meaningless and incomprehensible to us. New Russia has become for us a symbol of such an image for the future” (see Dugin, 2014).

#### *4.2 Dmitri Trenin – Russia is not obliged to join itself to the West, but to try to transform itself into a kind West*

In his book *Integration and Identity: Russia as a New West*, D. Trenin (2006: 371) writes: “Russia had a long way to go – from Russia, which is European, not Western – to Russia, Western but not European – which is a member of international society (...) Russia is not obliged to join itself to the West, but to try to transform itself into a kind West – not America, not Europe, not as a geographical concept at all, but as a set of norms, values and technologies. In practice, this is synonymous with the concept of international society. Such integration does not pose a threat to identity. (...) From Imperial Russia – through Communist Russia – to today – free Russia – democratic, reasonable and sovereign. Such will be its trajectory of development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.”

#### *4.3 Yevgeny Primakov – Russia’s idea of the multipolar world – Foreign policy vision*

From January 1996 to September 1998, E. Primakov held the post of Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia. In foreign policy, he is the author of a strategy of Russia’s foreign policy called “multipolar” – opposed to the unipolar model of the world, proposed by the United States. leading to stability and sustainability in international relations The multipolarity line shapes Russia’s entire foreign policy, both in the West – the EU and the US, and in the Middle and Far East, E. Primakov (2009: 89-90) writes: “Modern these political theories in the United States, launched in the early 1990s, outline an obvious unipolar world that opposes international diversity and political pluralism, a distorted image of the world with which the United States opposes diverse international political The world is multipolar and diverse, and Russia could find its place in this multipolar world by affirming the values and political will of the diversity and pluralism of multidirectional politics. Russia is pro-Western, pro-Asian, pro-Christian and pro-Islamic.”

## 5. Conclusion

Russia, as a geopolitical entity, has a very active and important role in modern international life. From the analysis made, Russia, as a sovereign, has an internal economic situation. In Russia, there is a specific democratic model of government with hints of authoritarianism. The Federation is undergoing complex but slow economic and political reforms that are leading to a difficult market economy. The Russian Federation does not make sufficient use of the natural resources and raw materials it has. All this is reflected in its potential as a factor in foreign policy and economic terms, as well as its potential to influence the decisive rank in the international organizations of which it is a member. In order for Russia to remain part of the Unities in Europe and to be a bridge between the West and the East, the process of democratization in it must be supported from the outside. This is possible only if it is not forgotten. Let us not forget about the great Russian culture, which is well known thanks to the Russian language.

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