

**DRAFT**

## *Chapter Four*

# **A Long-Lasting Friendship**

*Alexander Dugin and the French Radical Right*

Jean-Yves Camus

**[4.0]**

This chapter assesses the influence of Alexander Dugin on the many different subfamilies of the French radical right. For historical reasons, key leaders and thinkers of the extreme right in Belgium, especially in the French-speaking part of this country, will also be mentioned, although Jean-François Thiriart, the most influential of them, always saw his role as that of a *European* ideologue who stood above the petty contingency of nationality. The French extreme right has been very successful in the polls, with the nationalist, populist, and anti-immigration Front National (FN), led by Marine Le Pen, receiving more than 20 percent of the vote. In order to reach such a high level of support, the party has had to soften its image and move into mainstream politics, but that shift has alienated the most radical activists. Therefore, small movements and groups remain that do not aim to become a potent electoral force but prefer to cling to the “purity” of the extreme right. The most influential are the Bloc Identitaire, the *völkisch* racialists of Terre et Peuple (Land and People) group, and the curious mix of anti-Jewish prejudices, conspiracy theories, and Strasserite social thinking that is known as the Egalité et Réconciliation network, led by the novelist Alain Soral.

**[4.1]**

This is where Dugin’s ideas have been discussed and found somewhat of a following. Some of the perennialists, who have interpreted the works of René Guénon and Julius Evola in a political, extreme-right way, are also keen to promote Dugin, but are more interested in his esotericism and anti-Western ideas than in his geopolitical concepts. This chapter also explores the connection between Dugin and the French Nouvelle Droite (New Right), an informal network of think tanks, periodicals, and intellectuals that heavily drew on the ideas of the German Conservative Revolution. Although histori-

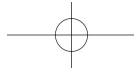
cally the New Right was rooted in the traditional extreme right of the 1960s, it has evolved into a school of thought that promotes anti-egalitarian views and an ethno-differentialist concept of identity. It is definitely not a clever attempt to present fascism in a modern, acceptable form.<sup>1</sup> The New Right, which can hardly be labeled extreme right anymore, is the main conveyor of Dugin's ideas in France.

Dugin has been the most-published foreign radical-right thinker in France since the 1980s. Given the small number of printed publications on the extreme right scene, the rebuttal of the Eurasia theory by hardcore fascist publications (such as the weekly *Rivarol*), and the lack of interest of other nationalist magazines such as *Minute* in geopolitics, Dugin's devoted following is on the Internet, through such websites as the national revolutionary [www.voxnr.com](http://www.voxnr.com); the *völkisch*/new right [www.europemaxima.com](http://www.europemaxima.com), or [www.egaliteetreconciliation.fr](http://www.egaliteetreconciliation.fr). Another explanation for his influence is that he speaks very good French and has a wide knowledge of French authors.<sup>2</sup> However, there are other explanations for his popularity with the French extreme right. After all, Jared Taylor, the ideologue of the think tank American Renaissance, is equally fluent in French, but his concept of Western civilization based on race awareness remains marginal.

The main reason for Dugin's influence in France seems to be the old fascination of the French radical right—and of the mainstream Gaullist, conservative right, for that matter—for Russia. The two countries have been allied since before the French Revolution and since 1945 France has tried to steer an independent course in foreign policy that embodies a “third way” between the Western and Eastern blocs and between the United States and Soviet Russia. To the radical right, Russia is a somewhat mysterious country that clings to values that seem to be losing ground in the rapidly changing, some say decaying, Western Europe: a strong ruler and a strong state, nationalism and patriotism, the perpetuation of the idea of the empire, whatever the regime in Moscow; and an influential Christian church that enjoys a privileged relationship with the executive and shapes the mind-set of many on matters pertaining to morality and ethics. All shades of the French radical right believe that Russia, as the last beacon and stronghold of traditional values, has a mission to oppose the decaying religions and societies of the West and regenerate Europe through its influence and model. This line of thinking dates back to the beginning of the twentieth century, when René Guénon and other esotericists looked at the Hindu, Tibetan, or Chinese civilizations as firm holders of the perennial tradition “against the modern world,” as Evola later wrote. It is the same mind-set that drives the small groups of “anti-system” esotericists who have been promoting Dugin since the 1980s and whose best-known “intellectual” was the late writer Jean Parvulesco (1929–2010).

[4.2]

[4.3]



**DRAFT**

*A Long-Lasting Friendship*

[4.4]

One last reason for Dugin’s positive reception by the French New Right, national revolutionary, and third-way movements is his geopolitics. The word “Eurasia,” in the sense used by Dugin, is a newcomer to the dictionary of the French radical right, but others had previously sensed that the future of Western civilization lay in the immensity of the Russian/Soviet territory. Perhaps the most intriguing assessment of Russia is to be found in the memoirs of French volunteers who fought alongside the German army during World War II. As anti-communist as they were, and as much as their duty was to fight and kill Red Army soldiers, they came back from Russia, Belorussia, and Ukraine impressed with the never-ending landscapes of those countries as well as with the ability of the peasantry to retain its time-honored Slavic character.<sup>3</sup> One former French volunteer, Jean Castrillo, even converted to Orthodoxy and remained active until his death in 2012, promoting the Slavophile movement in his bulletin *Militant*.

[4.5]

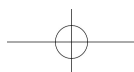
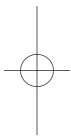
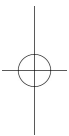
DUGIN’S EARLY CONTACTS IN THE  
FRENCH RADICAL RIGHT (1989–1992)

[4.6]

The Front National became a potent political force in the late 1980s and early 1990s. In its quest for respectability, party leaders thought it wise to tone down the national-revolutionary rhetoric that remained strident among a segment of its radical rank-and-file membership. In his quest to locate reputable sister-parties abroad, Jean-Marie Le Pen chose to ally with Vladimir Zhirinovskiy’s Liberal-Democratic Party of Russia, visiting him in 1996 before traveling a second time to Russia as Sergei Baburin’s guest.<sup>4</sup>

[4.7]

Some national revolutionary members of Front National, however, had a different approach. Gathering around Michel Schneider (Le Pen’s one-time advisor who denounced Le Pen’s alleged “conservative” stand on foreign policy and the economy), they published their own quarterly magazine, *Nationalisme et République*, from June 1990 until 1992. This publication wanted to go further in the fight against President Boris Yeltsin’s “system” and, being obsessed with the possibility of an alliance between radicals from both ends of the political spectrum, took a national-Bolshevik tilt that led Schneider to attend (and possibly set up) a string of meetings that took place in Moscow in August 1992. There he met Dugin, Viktor Alksnis, Geydar Dzhemal, Baburin, Zhirinovskiy, Egor Ligachev, and Alexander Prokhanov. The key figure in the West European delegation was, however, Jean-François Thiriart, the Belgium-born theoretician of the “Greater Europe from Dublin to Vladivostok.” The September 1992 issue of *Nationalisme et République* seems to contain the first mention of Dugin in a French radical right (not New Right) publication of some significance. The same issue featured a short article about “Our Moscow friend Alexander Dugin, a journalist and publish-



er very close to our ideas, who took the opportunity of those meetings to present us the first issue of his magazine *Elementy*.” The article went on to clarify that *Elementy* was not a Russian version of the similarly named French publication and that it drew inspiration from Thiriart, not de Benoist.

Did Schneider, who had left Front National at the time of the 1992 meetings,<sup>5</sup> disseminate some of Dugin’s ideas into the Front National? This is a strong possibility, enhanced by the fact that he lived in Moscow from 1993 until 1997, gaining more firsthand knowledge of Zhirinovskiy’s leftist patriotic opposition. However, one must not exaggerate Dugin’s direct influence on the party, as the first documented meeting between Dugin and Front National leaders only occurred on May 31, 2014.<sup>6</sup>

A few national-revolutionaries within Front National have been interested in Dugin’s political theories since the 1990s, especially Christian Bouchet, but it was in his capacity as leader of several third-way fringe movements before he joined FN in 2002.<sup>7</sup> This interest is perfectly consistent with the fact that the Front National, now a viable political party instead of a fringe movement, does not need a thorough knowledge of the various shades of Russian nationalism. Its first concern is getting political and financial support from President Vladimir Putin and Russian state structures, in return for unabashedly praising Russian domestic and foreign policy, including the armed conflict with Ukraine, and promoting Russia as the main challenger of the “new world order.” *Nationalisme et République* also did not care much about the ideological consistency of the very wide range of their Russian contacts. Like Dugin, they still disliked the United States and “Zionism,” approved of the Islamic awakening in the former USSR, and embraced the notion that Europe was to stretch “from Dublin to Vladivostok.” Bouchet has an eclectic approach, promoting Dugin as the Moscow correspondent of his Front Européen de Libération (ELF), but also meeting with communists like Gennadii Zyuganov and Viktor Anpilov.<sup>8</sup> Today, it is difficult to determine exactly what Jean-Marie Le Pen has adopted from Dugin and his concept of Eurasia. While he says that Europe spans the area from Brest (Brittany) to Vladivostok, he also has said that he stands for “a Boreal Europe,” a concept akin to Guillaume Faye’s Eurosiberia and that strongly opposes the inclusion of any non-white, especially Muslim, region or ethnic group into the future continental state.<sup>9</sup> Marine Le Pen, in her capacity as president of FN, has never publicly quoted Dugin.

Within the French radical right, Dugin’s ideas have resonated among the disciples of Thiriart, the late leader of the transnational movement Young Europe. Although many on the radical right still quote Thiriart’s main work, *Un Empire de 400 millions d’hommes: l’Europe*,<sup>10</sup> Young Europe’s French militant base was very small. Thiriart was nonetheless influential in leading some French militants to rethink their ideology and move from a narrow-minded worship of the nation-state to the idea of a supranational European

nation-state that would have included the then-communist bloc and the entire former USSR. Young Europe was a political failure, but its legacy must be understood in order to properly assess Dugin's reception in France.<sup>11</sup>

[4.11]

The French radical right underwent a fundamental change in the early 1960s. Young nationalists who were born during or after World War II basically split into two opposite factions. The neofascist faction was first and foremost anti-communist and affirmed the supremacy of the White peoples in the West (including the United States) against those of the Third World. The second faction, which became the New Right in 1968–1969, understood that the era of the colonial empire had passed and quickly adjusted its agenda by redefining the enemy not as the communist bloc, but as “the empire”; that is, the United States and its allies, which sought to rule the world through military power and promoting multiculturalism, free-market economics, and materialism. This faction predicted that U.S. domination would eventually cause the complete downfall of European civilization, both through race mixing and the domination of big finance.

[4.12]

The new right and many national-revolutionaries wanted to promote a totally different *Weltanschauung*—one that would look at the history of the world as a fight between the center and the periphery. Using the geopolitics of Mackinder and Haushofer, the new right, the disciples of Thiriart, and the *völkisch* and identitarian movements discovered the central role of Russia in fighting U.S. and Western values, regenerating Europe, and supporting all the people and countries outside of Europe that oppose U.S. “imperialism.” After 1982, when he revived the Belgian magazine *Conscience européenne*, Thiriart re-evaluated his previous writings, shunning anti-communism and focusing on anti-Americanism. In the early 1990s, he realized that the collapse of the USSR could give a new start to his project, a conclusion similar to those of the New Right. Robert Steuckers claims he introduced Thiriart to *Nationalisme et République* and told Dugin, in March 1992, that Thiriart would agree to lecture in Moscow the following summer.<sup>12</sup>

[4.13]

Another indication of the convergence between the New Right and Thiriartites is that former Young Europe militants and individuals influenced by Thiriart have achieved prominent positions in new right circles. This includes Steuckers; Luc Pauwels, head of the Flemish Stichting Deltapers and new right *Tekos* magazine; and Jean-Claude Jacquard, a former head of the French branch of Young Europe who in 1992 became president of GRECE (Groupement de recherche et d'études sur la civilisation européenne). Thiriart's legacy includes his theory of the “necessary outside lung”; that is, a foreign country or secessionist area that can be used as a political, financial, or logistical base; a refuge from repression in the militants' native country; or a training ground for future “direct action.”<sup>13</sup> For the European extreme right, the USSR and Russia were the main “outside lung,” until the 1993 anti-Yeltsin putsch ruined their hopes. In line with Dugin, the European

Liberation Front and its Russian branch, the Arktogeia publishing house,<sup>14</sup> also promoted other potential “outside lungs,” such as Libya and Iran.

[4.14]

According to French historian Nicolas Lebourg, Dugin wants to “connect the Third Rome, the Third Reich, and the Third International in a revolt against the Modern world.”<sup>15</sup> This would be consistent with Thiriart’s alleged involvement with the pre-war German National-Bolshevik movement *Fichte Bund* and, later in Belgium, with the pro-Nazi group Amis du Grand Reich Allemand (AGRA). While the common parentage of Dugin’s Fourth Political Theory and Thiriart is obvious, the concept of “Europe from Dublin to Vladivostok” is vague and allows for endless controversies about where the border between Europe and Asia should be drawn. As a consequence, different factions of the French radical right agree that Europe should mean an authoritarian, unified state but they strongly disagree on whether this United Europe should include the Muslim population of the former USSR or, on grounds of Aryan racial purity, exclude all non-Caucasian ethnic groups.

[4.15]

In France, this has become the topic of heated debates within radical right circles, especially after the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States and because of the debate over Muslim immigration. There are French followers of Dugin who still promote his and Thiriart’s theory that all the Soviet successor states are part of Eurasia, regardless of the fact that their population is not ethnically European. Led by Bouchet and de Benoist, they cling to the Eurasia concept because they think Islam is a “traditional” religion in the sense of Guénon and Evola. Yet, other individuals who were influenced by Thiriart, most notably Steuckers and Guillaume Faye, support the idea of an Imperial Europe stretching far beyond Moscow (generally the Ural Mountains are the border), but they stick to an ethnic definition of Eurasia that excludes the Caucasus and Central Asia. Those are the promoters of the Eurosiberia theory, including small *völkisch* groups like Pierre Vial’s *Terre et Peuple* and Richard Roudier’s *Réseau identités*.<sup>16</sup>

#### DUGIN AND THE FRENCH NEW RIGHT

[4.16]

The national-revolutionary, the National-Bolshevik and the new right sub-families of the radical right promote a distinct political or metapolitical agenda. However, many prominent militants within those subgroups have migrated from one movement to another, written for publications that belong to one or the other faction, or spoken at events that draw attendees from all segments of the spectrum. Bouchet was a member of GRECE in the early 1990s; Steuckers joined in 1973, became assistant editor of *Nouvelle École* in 1981, and then left in 1992; Guillaume Faye belonged to GRECE between 1971 and 1987 and was one of the group’s key thinkers in the 1980s. GRECE and the New Right focus on metapolitics, not party politics. De Benoist’s indefat-

[4.17]

igable intellectual curiosity, together with his relentless search for new allies in his fight against “the Empire,” naturally propelled him toward Dugin’s works. Thus, the New Right was the first French movement that attracted Dugin’s interest and the first to disseminate his ideas.

**[4.18]**

There are conflicting accounts about how and when Dugin first met de Benoist, as Anton Shekhovtsov showed in his chapter. Vera Nikolski, relying on Dugin’s own account, dates this to 1989, yet it is unclear whether Dugin came on his own and met with de Benoist after finding him by chance, or if Yuri Mamleev’s network of Russian émigrés in Paris introduced the young Pamyat member to New Right circles.<sup>17</sup> Alain de Benoist states his first encounter with Dugin took place on June 28, 1990, in the Paris area, while the Russian activist was on his first European tour.<sup>18</sup> He says they met “through an Italian friend,” probably Claudio Mutti. The main thinker of the French New Right admits that he then knew “almost nothing” about Dugin and “not much more” about the Eurasianist movement, except the writings of one of its founding fathers, Nikolai Trubetzkoy (1890-1938). Eurasianism is not even mentioned in de Benoist’s magnum opus *Vu de droite*, which nevertheless had an entry on geopolitics, with a reference to Sir Halford John Mackinder’s Heartland theory and Karl Haushofer’s Raumsinn concept.<sup>19</sup> De Benoist’s only knowledge of the Russian nationalist movement came, he said, from reading Alexander Yanov’s *Russian New Right*, and John B. Dunlop’s *Faces of Contemporary Russian Nationalism*.<sup>20</sup> Yet in the early 1980s de Benoist was much more ready to receive Dugin’s ideas than the rest of the French far right, simply because he was much more an anti-egalitarian and anti-American than a reactionary anti-communist. For example, since 1982 he has been attacked for writing, “There are people who do not give up to the idea of wearing the Red Army cap one day. True, this is not a pleasant future. This being said, we cannot think about spending the rest of our lives eating hamburgers in the Brooklyn area.”<sup>21</sup>

**[4.19]**

Soon after their first meeting, de Benoist invited Dugin to speak at the annual conference of GRECE on March 24, 1991.<sup>22</sup> Next, de Benoist and Steuckers visited Moscow from March 25 to April 3, 1992. The trip was arranged by Dugin and enabled the New Right leaders to meet Egor Ligachev, Vladimir Ossipov, Zyuganov, members of the Moscow Duma, and General Nikolai Klokotov in the offices of the Russian Military Academy, ending with a press conference in the offices of Prokhanov’s magazine, *Den’*. Such a wide range of contacts is the consequence of de Benoist’s personal curiosity and pursuit of lively dialogue. The main differences between de Benoist and Dugin mostly lie in the realm of religion, as de Benoist is a pagan and a critic of all monotheistic religions. What unites the two men however, is a profound disgust for materialism and capitalism, disdain for the bourgeois way of thinking, and a belief that Europe can be revitalized only by a spiritual influx from civilizations that reject the decay of the West.

De Benoist shares Dugin's geopolitical concept of Eurasia. Following Carl Schmitt, he believes that Eurasia is a land power (Heartland) that historically has opposed naval powers such as Great Britain and the United States.<sup>23</sup> He believes that Russian identity "was born out of an original blend between Slavs of Turks-Muslims." He likes the fact that Eurasianists "positively re-evaluate the legacy of Gengis Khan and the Golden Horde"; that is, "the Turanian heritage" mixed with Russian Orthodoxy. He furthermore adds that Dugin's ideology is particularly interesting because "unlike the mainstream Nationalists and the Slavophiles, [he] looks at the Soviet legacy as the continuation of the Imperial idea in another form." Furthermore, Dugin "confronts the rise of postmodernity by proposing an anti-Western geopolicy, grounded in the culturalist idea and the principle of Identity which applies to all people alike."

[4.20]

That is why, when Dugin launched *Elementy* in 1992, de Benoist, Mutti, and Steuckers joined the editorial board. It was obvious from the first issue that the magazine presented itself as part of the New Right pan-European network. Page three of the first issue prominently featured the covers of the two major publications of the French New Right, *Éléments* and *Nouvelle École*, alongside Steuckers's *Orientations* and *Punto y Coma*, published in Spain by José Javier Esparza.<sup>24</sup> The first issue included an article by Charles Champetier, then the young rising star of the French New Right, as well as a transcript of a debate on "Russia, Germany, and the Others," held in Moscow among de Benoist, Nikolai Klokotov, Nikolai Pitsev, and Jean Laloux, editor of the New Right magazine *Krisis*, which sought to be a forum for dialogue with anti-liberal leftist intellectuals. Other French-speaking contributors later appeared: the traditionalist Christophe Levalois (number 2)<sup>25</sup>; Jean Parvulesco (number 3); Luc Michel (number 4); Trystan Mordrelle (number 5);<sup>26</sup> Ange Sampieru (number 7),<sup>27</sup> and Jean-Marc Vivenza (number 7).<sup>28</sup> The contribution of French-speaking authors to *Milyi Angel* was less visible, probably because of its heavy focus on esotericism. The magazine featured interviews or articles with Jean Biès, a disciple of Guénon; Philippe Baillet, a former member of GRECE and the leading Evola specialist in France.

[4.21]

A close look at *Elementy* suggests that de Benoist distanced himself from Dugin and the magazine after 1993, probably because he was disenchanted by the narrow-mindedness of the Russian nationalists he met in Moscow and because of the content of the magazine. The first issue had the Celtic cross flag on its cover, and subsequent issues heavily borrowed from Nazi iconography, which could have been used against the New Right and himself at a time when the media was already presenting GRECE and de Benoist as fascists in disguise that the left should avoid. The campaign in *Le Monde* against the so-called red-brown alliance came at a time when *Krisis* began to receive contributions from politicians and intellectuals associated with the alternative left.<sup>29</sup> At the same time (May 1993) the newspaper *L'Idiot inter-*

[4.22]



**DRAFT**

*A Long-Lasting Friendship*

*national*, led by the novelist Jean-Edern Hallier,<sup>30</sup> published a “Manifesto for a National Front” that was seen as grounds for cooperation among hardline communists; the New Right, supporters of Le Pen’s Front National, and militants of the alternative left. The success of such an attempt could only be possible if de Benoist stayed away from his most radical friends. Although he did sever his ties with Dugin, the red-brown attempt failed, leaving the new right more isolated than before.

[4.23] Steuckers chose another path.<sup>31</sup> After leaving GRECE in December 1992, he set up a network named Synergies européennes, whose publications were *Vouloir* (founded in 1983) and *Nouvelles de Synergies européennes* (founded in 1994). His group rallied former followers of the Front européen de libération, among them Marco Battarra, and dissidents from GRECE. Both magazines retained a strong interest in geopolitics and Russia, occasionally quoting Dugin and his publications. However, the Russian correspondents of the Synergies network, Pavel Tulaev and Vladimir Avdeev, had a periodical, *Nasledie Predkov*, with a neo-pagan, racist ideology that was closer to the Eurosiberia concept than to Dugin’s Eurasia.

[4.24]

DUGIN’S REVIVED FRENCH NETWORKS

[4.25]

Since the early 2010s Russia has become a reference point for the French extreme right, a model country that opposes liberalism, the unipolar world, materialism, and almost every aspect of democracy. Since the Socialist-Green coalition came to power in May 2012, the nationalist right has considered it mandatory to be received in Russia or at least get some kind of recognition and support from various circles close to the Putin regime. At the fringes of the extreme right, the world is increasingly seen as divided between the “system” (liberal democracy) and the “outcasts” (anyone that opposes liberal democracy). The system is the center, while its opponents are the periphery. The extreme right, and even part of the anti-liberal right (the so-called *souverainistes*) identify with the periphery, where they locate Russia as well as other countries hostile toward the United States. However, there is another explanation for the revival of contacts between Dugin and the French far right; namely, the growing personal and political isolation of Bouchet and de Benoist. The activists Dugin meets while touring France are being pushed even further to the political margins, consigned to the realm of insignificant grouplets that mostly exist through the Internet and social networks. He also seems to enjoy a new popularity within perennialist circles whose functioning and world outlook are in many ways reminiscent of what Dugin learned in his days with the Yuzhinsky Circle.

[4.26]

Dugin reconnected with the New Right in 2005. He has very few contacts with orthodox followers of Thiriart, who today belong to the very small and

almost dormant Parti Communautaire National-Européen (PCN) led by Luc Michel in Belgium. The movement used to have a French branch, run by former militants of Bouchet's Nouvelle Résistance, but they parted ways in 1996. The PCN, which sees itself as a national-communist movement and objects to the extreme-right label, agrees with Dugin on the geopolitical concept of Eurasia but it has no interest in theosophy, religion, or tradition. It is a small pressure group that has promoted various regimes seen as part of the "Axis of Evil," such as Saddam Hussein's Iraq and Muammar Gaddafi's Libya. It is now acting on behalf of Belarus, supporting the policies of President Aliaksandr Lukashenka, and has ties with the secessionist authorities of Transnistria.<sup>32</sup> Michel also organized an unofficial observer team to monitor the March 2014 elections in Crimea. Although Dugin's texts could still be found on the party's pitiful website as of late 2014, it appears that there are no personal contacts.

Christian Bouchet remains the most faithful French follower of Dugin. He has been active in many extreme-right movements since the 1970s, starting with the Royalist Action Française, continuing with GRECE, and finally leading the national revolutionary groups Alternative tercériste, Nouvelle résistance, Unité radicale, and Réseau radical. He is very close to Avatar éditions, which publishes Dugin in French, and is the founder of Ars Magna, which published Dugin's *La Quatrième théorie politique* in 2012 and *Pour une théorie du monde multipolaire* in 2013. However, Bouchet has been in and out of Front National since the mid-1990s. Since Marine Le Pen became FN president in 2011, he has held various mid-level positions in the party; in March 2014 he topped the party list for the mayoral election of Nantes, a city of 400,000, but collected less than 10 percent of the votes. The failure of the last group he led, Unité radicale, which was banned by the French authorities in 2002, caused him to return to FN, while trying to continue his own New Right activity on a low-key basis, through the now-defunct newsletter *Résistance!*, the Ars Magna and Avatar publishing houses, and the Réseau Géopolitique Européen. Bouchet and Dugin have co-sponsored many events, including one in Paris in January 2011 on the topic "Why we should love Vladimir Putin." It was organized by the now defunct *Flash* magazine, an anticonformist bimonthly whose leading contributors were de Benoist, Bouchet, and Alain Soral. The "conference" was held in a Paris pub owned by Charles-Alban Schepens, from the neofascist *Renouveau français* and the anti-Jewish Parti Antisioniste. On October 29, 2012, Bouchet and Dugin held another public meeting in Bordeaux on "Eurasia as an alternative to Liberal Democracy." That conference was convened by Soral and his group, Egalité et Réconciliation (EandR).

Alain Soral is an active new member of Dugin's network. A novelist of some fame and a former rank-and-file member of the Communist Party, this self-described former Marxist switched allegiance to the Front National in

[4.27]

[4.28]

2005 and was a member of its Central Committee from 2007 until he left in 2009. He became a close advisor to the Le Pen family during the 2007 presidential campaign, convincing them to reach out to Muslim voters who were disillusioned with the left and whose “Anti-Zionism” and conservative moral values might draw them to the nationalist right. Soral also coined the New Right’s new motto: “We are the Left of Labor and the Right of Values.”

[4.29]

After he was dropped from the FN party list for the 2009 regional election in Paris, Soral turned his attention to Egalité et Réconciliation and joined the Parti Antisioniste along with the convicted anti-Semite comedian, Dieudonné M’Bala M’Bala. Soral gained fame as a theoretician of geopolitics with his best-seller *Comprendre l’Empire*,<sup>33</sup> which is ridden with conspiracy theories aiming to show that globalization is a Jewish attempt at controlling the world through U.S. domination. This obsession with the United States and Israel explains why Soral has praised Dugin on the Egalité et Réconciliation website, where he also posted videos from him and reprinted several of his articles. Both Dugin and Soral see themselves as the only voices of dissent against the capitalist system and the despised new world order.

[4.30]

Across Europe, regular transnational events are held where dissenters voice their alternative theories on history (about revisionism and World War II), race and ethnicity, or geopolitics. For example Bouchet, Dugin, and Soral spoke in Madrid at the “Day of the Dissidents,” organized by neo-Falangist circles on November 9–11, 2007. Soral has praised Dugin’s work, calling *The Fourth Political Theory* “a true warfare manual . . . [it] is complementary to my own book *Comprendre l’Empire*. It shows that building a multipolar world, built upon genuine values, will only be possible by turning our back against this pro-NATO West and its fake values.”<sup>34</sup>

[4.31]

However, there are clear differences between the two men. For example, while in France, Dugin spoke alongside Jewish Orthodox rabbis who are into Kabbalah teaching and belong either to the Haredi or to the Zionist-religious movement. On January 9, 2011, on the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of Guénon’s death, the Tikkoun Olam Center, led by Rav Leo Guez from Nice, convened a conference whose main speakers were Dugin; Bouchet; Avigdor Eskin, a militant of the Israeli extreme right Kahana Haï movement; and the renowned Jerusalem Kabbalist, Rav Mordekhai Chriqui. The goal of the meeting was to bring together Jews and Christians who aim at countering modernity. The dialogue was flawed, though, because Dugin’s vision of Judaism falsely opposes what he calls exoteric Judaism (which he opposes because of its “materialistic” spirit) and esoteric Judaism (that is, Kabbalah), which he praises as being part of Guénon’s primordial tradition. The rabidly anti-Jewish Soral would never have attended such a meeting and, based on what was said that day, Dugin, at least when he was speaking before a French audience, appeared to have toned down his anti-Semitism.

De Benoist still disseminates Dugin's works through his publications: *Éléments*, *Nouvelle École*, and *Krisis*. However, GRECE lost most of its membership and visibility in the late 1990s after its key ideologues on ethnic matters, those who were the most dedicated to promoting the actual Indo-European heritage of today's Europe, defected to the Front National, where they thought they would be able to efficiently put their ideas into political action. With Jean-Yves Le Gallou, Jean Haudry, and Pierre Vial following their own path, de Benoist has been free to focus on his two major ideological concerns: fighting the domination of free-market values and the hegemony of the United States and NATO on the reunified European continent. Dugin remains the Russian correspondent for *Nouvelle École*, the thick annual theoretical publication of the New Right, with Moscow State University Professor Vladimir Dobrenkov the only Russian scholar on the editorial board. That may explain why in November 2008, de Benoist was invited to speak in Moscow at an international gathering of the Eurasianist Movement. In September 2009, Dugin invited de Benoist to St. Petersburg, where he presented the translation of his book *Protiv liberalism* (a collection of de Benoist's papers compiled for the Russian audience) and gave a lecture on Carl Schmitt's concept of "Nomos of the Earth."

[4.32]

Dugin and the New Right have also attracted a new generation of esotericists who have a very radical reading of Guénon and place their hope for the regeneration of Europe in Dugin's vision of Orthodoxy. A good example is the conference that took place in Paris on May 25, 2013, to spread the word about "The Eurasian Way." Dugin spoke on the topic of "Eurasia yesterday and today"; de Benoist's speech was on "Eurasia against Liberalism"; and novelist Laurent James talked about "Eurasia and Spirituality." A quick look at James' ramblings on his blog<sup>35</sup> show an obsessive concern with the Jews (he is close to the Parti Antisioniste and Egalité et Réconciliation)<sup>36</sup> as well as a very confused ideology. The mainstream *guénoniens* and the small group of Evola's followers (the most notorious of whom is Philippe Baillet) have no connections with Dugin. Instead, some of Dugin's contacts refer to the writings of a self-styled traditionalist and proponent of the "hidden hand in history" theory: Jean Parvulesco. Dugin paid tribute to this Romanian-born exile at a ceremony at his grave in Boulogne-Billancourt near Paris on November 23, 2012. Parvulesco is the author of many abstruse novels influenced by Raymond Abellio's *Gnosis* and by national revolutionary ideas. Keen on suggesting that he was influential within the intelligence community, presenting himself as a self-proclaimed prophet of a non-orthodox Gaullist foreign policy that would have included an alliance with Russia and China, Parvulesco is the author of a 2005 book entitled *Vladimir Poutine et l'Eurasie*.

[4.33]

Dugin seems to go wherever he is invited, regardless of the ideological affiliation of the organizers and his fellow panelists. For example, after the

[4.34]

Parvulesco ceremony (which was performed by a traditionalist Roman Catholic priest, Father Guillaume de Tanouarn), Dugin spoke at another tribute alongside Arnaud Guyot-Jeannin and Laurent James, who belong to the small circle of Guénon's disciples within the New Right; Michel Marmin, who is aligned with the neo-pagan faction of GRECE; the Italian neo-Nazi turned Muslim convert Claudio Mutti; and Arnaud Bordes, an underground novelist who is close to both the New Right and the national-revolutionaries.

[4.35]

On November 24, 2012, Dugin spoke at Center Saint-Paul, the Paris-based headquarters of Father de Tanouarn's Institut du Bon Pasteur. The topic was "The Greater Europe and the West: Perspectives for a Spiritual Revolution." The speakers were David Mascré and Philippe Darentière, both traditionalist Catholics. The former, a low-level employee at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was a member of the Front National leadership until he was thrown out in July 2012 on charges of being untrustworthy. The latter was a key figure in the Printemps français, the anti-gay-rights movement that emerged in autumn 2012 as an umbrella organization for Catholics, identitaires, and other far rightists opposed to the law on same-sex marriage passed in 2013 by the Socialist government.

[4.36]

What conclusion can be reached from this seemingly incoherent string of conferences that increasingly involve second-rank players on the extreme-right scene? It may simply be that Dugin is guaranteed to draw (small) crowds to events that would otherwise have a miniscule turnout.<sup>37</sup> Others will certainly draw the opposite conclusion and say that Dugin is the key organizer of the Russian PR network within the radical-right milieu. They will point to Darentière's background as an army intelligence officer or to the existence of pro-Kremlin groups in France that stand at the crossroads between politics and underground activities, such as the Novopole movement and Collectif France-Russie, both led by André Chanclu, a former paramilitary activist from the neofascist Ordre Nouveau movement in the 1970s. Chanclu writes: "One Russian thinker has shown us which path to follow, that is Dugin. He reminds us that the development of this new ideology he named the Fourth Theory will not be the work of a single individual. We have decided to answer this call in order to feed this ideological ground."<sup>38</sup> When Novopole and the Collectif demonstrated in Paris on February 16, 2013, against Pussy Riot, a feminist Russian punk rock group, they claimed that "members of the Russian embassy staff were there with us," which is true.<sup>39</sup> This looks closer to a propaganda statement than to an assessment of Dugin's works by someone who has carefully read his books and developed a coherent ideology.

[4.37]

It may be more accurate to say that instead of being true Dugin devotees, extreme rightists in France may drop Dugin's name to court circles within the Russian state apparatus in exchange for some kind of status, funding, and access to Putin and his administration. Finally, the exponential growth in the

number of French extreme-right-related websites and blogs is definitely connected to the pro-Russian lobbying of this ideological family, especially since the Crimea and Ukraine conflicts broke out. Two of these websites propagate and support Dugin's theories and have a following that goes beyond the narrow confines of extreme-right fringe groups. The most interesting one is Georges Feltin-Tracol's *Europamaxima*,<sup>40</sup> while *Dissonances*, Alexandre Latsa's blog, has echoed Dugin's view in a positive way.<sup>41</sup> Living in Russia, Latsa is somewhat of a "rising star" among the French journalists who report from Russia and stands halfway between the mainstream conservatives and the more radical right.

#### EURO-SIBERIA: OPPOSING DUGIN'S THEORIES ON RACIALIST GROUNDS

[4.38]

Dugin's main impact on the French extreme right has been to popularize the concept of "Eurasia," mostly with the constant help of de Benoist and Bouchet. He also stirs the most strident controversy within the extreme-right family over his concept of Eurasia and, sometimes, his personality. According to Robert Spieler, leader of the *Nouvelle Droite Populaire*:

[4.39]

The fact that there are people among us who promote his ideas looks like a fantasy to me. They have probably paid too much attention to the (fascinating, at that) biography of Baron Ungern, especially the one by Jean Mabire. I spent two days with Dugin in Antwerp and Brussels, five or six years ago, on the occasion of a meeting organized by *Tekos*, a magazine more or less akin to *Terre et Peuple*. The magazine is run by my friend Hilde de Lobel, formerly a *Vlaams Belang* MP. Dugin has a pope's beard and made the sign of the cross five or six times before drinking a beer. He's an interesting fellow, with a very vivid intelligence. At least we have a common interest in science fiction. I made him discover that Jean Ray, whom he loves very much, and John Flanders (Harry Dickson) are the same person.<sup>42</sup>

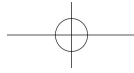
[4.40]

Others have a less scornful—but no less negative—attitude toward Dugin. The concept of Eurasia has been challenged by another French ideologue, Guillaume Faye, who was the number two man at *GRECE* during the 1980s. For Faye, as well as Pierre Vial and the *Bloc identitaire*,<sup>43</sup> Eurasia must be fought against because it includes Muslim people who have no right whatsoever to claim any say in the future of Europe.

[4.41]

Faye's rival concept, *Eurosiberia*, has gained ground within the French extreme right and what remains of *Steuckers'* following, simply because it is easy to understand: *Eurosiberia* means a White Europe that would include only the portion of Russia inhabited primarily by White people. Muslims, thus the Caucasus and Central Asia, are to be excluded from any alliance between Russia and Europe, on the grounds that today, Europe is fighting for

[4.42]



**DRAFT**

*A Long-Lasting Friendship*

its very soul and ethnic stock against the “Muslim invasion” brought by immigration. Faye has disseminated his concept in Russia through Pavel Tulaev’s website, Ateney.<sup>44</sup> In his 2004 book, *Le coup d’État mondial*, Faye suggested another name for his concept—Septentrion, which appeals more clearly to those racialists who believe in the true historical existence of Hyperborea and the circumpolar origin of the Indo-Europeans.

[4.43]

The “intellectual” segment of the French extreme right contains both fans and foes of Dugin. When we look at the militant segment, however, given the strength of the Bloc identitaire (by far the most consistent group, with between 1,000 and 2,000 affiliated members), there is no doubt the Eurosiberia concept has an edge. Philippe Vardon, one of the leaders of the identitaires, summed up the topic of Dugin’s influence this way: “Neither Fabrice Robert [the other key figure in the party] nor myself are very reliable on, or great fans of Dugin. His thinking remains rather unknown here, and many people do not care that much about him, after all.”<sup>45</sup>

[4.44]

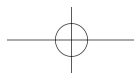
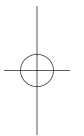
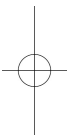
CONCLUSION

[4.45]

Dugin’s influence is strongest on the ideological *avant-garde* of the French Radical Right; that is, the National-Revolutionaries and the New Right. The latter has distanced itself from its fringe political roots, however it still keeps an interest in the National-Revolutionaries because, in its opinion, they remain innovative. Robert Steuckers once stated, “I think that the National-Revolutionary fringe groups are interesting because they are buzzing with new ideas that stand at the margin of the conformist political world, as do the Leftists, the Radical Environmentalists, or the Anarchists, or even the literary and artistic avant-gardes. That is why I have always taken part in their activities and will continue to do so.”<sup>46</sup>

[4.46]

This kind of thinking is certainly good for those whose main interest is in metapolitics, but it is a problem for Dugin, who wants to influence decision-makers in Russia and Europe, not the lunatic fringe on the far-right scene. Dugin’s reputation on the radical right is that he has an influence on President Putin and his foreign policy. But does he, really? When it comes to influencing policymakers in France and lobbying for Russian interests, the Kremlin seems to rely more on a Paris-based think tank, the Institut de la Démocratie et de la Coopération (IDC), led by a former member of the State Duma (Rodina faction), Natalia Narochnitskaya, than on Dugin’s networks. This is because the IDC, which heavily draws its idea from Rogozin’s political agenda, can speak to a broader spectrum of elected officials, Catholic traditionalists, Slavophile academics, entrepreneurs and right-wing politicians like Yvan Blot—a GRECE member, then Gaullist, and later FN MP.



The key concept of a Paris-Berlin-Moscow axis against U.S. influence is also more effectively promoted by IDC than by Dugin.<sup>47</sup>

Also, when the Kremlin approved a €9 million loan granted by the First Czech Russian Bank in 2014, the money went to a party, the Front National, which polls more than 20 percent nationwide and aims at ruling the country. Whatever financial support some radical-right groups and publications may receive from Russian sources—that are yet to be precisely identified—comes in much smaller amounts and does not raise the same expectations for a political reward. In return, FN leaders try to speak with Russian officials as equals and up to now, have shunned Dugin, thus depriving him of any influence in the only radical-right political party in France that might rise to power in the years to come.

[4.47]

## NOTES

[4.48]

1. This interpretation is supported by Roger Griffin and Tamir Bar-On. See Roger Griffin, “Between Metapolitics and Apoliteia: The Nouvelle Droite’s Strategy for Conserving the Fascist Vision in the ‘Interregnum,’” in *Modern and Contemporary France* 8 (2000): 35–53 and Tamir Bar-On, *Rethinking the French New Right: Alternatives to Modernity* (New York: Routledge, 2013).

[4n1]

2. For example, in Dugin’s 2010 book, *Golos i mifos. Glubinnoe regionovedenie*, the bibliography includes more than two hundred titles in a language other than Russian; eighty-seven of these are French. French authors whose works published in Russian are in the bibliography include Raymond Aron, Alain de Benoist, Jean Bodin, Louis Dumont, Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, and Michel Foucault. René Guénon is, of course, given a prominent place in both the Russian and foreign-language bibliographies.

[4n2]

3. Pierre Ruscone, a French Waffen-SS volunteer, writes: “We have to admit we fell under Russia’s spell. It is a country without limits, with neverending horizons, thus giving us the illusion of a conqueror’s life.” *Pierre Rusco: Stoï* (Paris: Dualpha, 2006), 307. Another SS volunteer, Marc Augier, who under the pen name of Saint Loup became the leading postwar writer of the French *völkisch* movement, declared: “The Russian people will be able to accomplish great things, at least the peasants. They are not mellowed, they have not become complete morons. They are hard-working, uncomplicated, brave in front of death and imbued with the ancient virtue of humility.” *Les partisans* (Paris: Denoel, 1943), 121.

[4n3]

4. See Le Pen’s interview with: *L’Observateur du monde russe*, August 12, 2014. Accessed February 1, 2015, <http://lemonderusse.canalblog.com/archives/2014/08/12/30398282.html>.

[4n4]

5. Schneider returned to the FN as a middle-level executive in 1994–1998, quit again, then returned yet again between 2002 and 2004.

[4n5]

6. Marion Le Pen, the junior member of parliament for FN, and Aymeric Chauprade, FN’s MEP, represented the party. The May 31, 2014, meeting took place in Vienna under the aegis of Konstantin Malofeev’s St. Basil’s Foundation. It was convened in order to commemorate the two hundredth anniversary of the Holy Alliance. It was first reported in the Swiss daily *Tages Anzeiger* on June 3, 2014.

[4n6]

7. On Bouchet’s ideology in the 1990s, see J.Y. Camus, “Une avant-garde populiste: ‘peuple’ et ‘nation’ dans le discours de Nouvelle résistance,” *Mots*, no 55 (June 1998): 128–38.

[4n7]

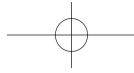
8. See Christian Bouchet, *Les Nouveau nationalistes* (Paris: Déterna, 2001). In 1998, Bouchet’s publishing house, Ars Magna, devoted a small brochure to exposing the ideas of Pamyat: *Pamyat parle: le Natsional-Patrioticheski Front*. The brochure does not mention Dugin.

[4n8]

9. Interview with *Observateur du monde russe*.

[4n9]

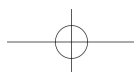




**DRAFT**

*A Long-Lasting Friendship*

- [4n10] 10. Jean Thiriart, *Un Empire de 400 millions d'hommes: l'Europe* (1964; repr., Paris: Avatar, 2004).
- [4n11] 11. The movement was originally named Jeune Europe, then changed its name to *La Nation européenne* in 1967 before dissolving in 1969.
- [4n12] 12. Robert Steuckers, "Hommage à Jean Thiriart," *Voxnr*, July 4, 2002. Accessed February 14, 2015, [http://www.voxnr.com/cc/d\\_thiriart/EpkyVAElkVXDVMELnk.shtml](http://www.voxnr.com/cc/d_thiriart/EpkyVAElkVXDVMELnk.shtml).
- [4n13] 13. Here the support of the Unité continentale, a pro-Eurasianist group of volunteers fighting for Novorossiia, a secessionist portion of Ukraine, obviously comes to mind. The group refers to Dugin and explains, "His ideas are heard among all factions of the Nationalist scene." Posted on the group's Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/unite.continentale> on April 24, 2014.
- [4n14] 14. See *Lutte du peuple*, no. 20 (February 1994). This was the magazine of the Nouvelle résistance movement, led by Bouchet.
- [4n15] 15. "Moscou-Paris-Vienne: les rencontres d'Aymeric Chauprade, conseiller de Marine Le Pen," *Droite(s) Extreme(s)*, June 4, 2014. Accessed February 14, 2015, <http://droites-extrêmes.blog.lemonde.fr/2014/06/04/moscou-paris-vienne-les-rencontres-daymeric-chauprade-conseiller-de-marine-le-pen/>.
- [4n16] 16. In his speech at the Bloc identitaire convention on immigration, which took place in Paris on November 15, 2014 (Assises de la Remigration), Faye explained that Russian citizens should be among those foreigners who would be allowed to immigrate to France, were his policies to be implemented by the state. This is quite contradictory to his stand that only Caucasians would be eligible for a visa.
- [4n17] 17. Vera Nikolski, *National-bolchevisme et néo- Eurasisme dans la Russie contemporaine* (Paris: Mare et Martin, 2013), 221–22.
- [4n18] 18. Alain de Benoist, "Preface," in Alexander Dugin, *L'appel de l'Eurasie* (Paris: Avatar, 2013).
- [4n19] 19. Alain de Benoist, *Vu de droite* (Paris: Editions du Labyrinthe, 1977).
- [4n20] 20. De Benoist wrote about the book in *Le Figaro Magazine*, October 6, 1979. Alexander Yanov, *Russian New Right* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978); John B. Dunlop, *Faces of Contemporary Russian Nationalism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983).
- [4n21] 21. *Orientations pour des années décisives* (Paris: Le Labyrinthe, 1982), 76.
- [4n22] 22. *Nation et Empire. Histoire et Concept*. Proceedings of the Twenty-fourth National Colloquium of GRECE, Paris, March 24, 1991 (GRECE, 1991).
- [4n23] 23. De Benoist, "Preface."
- [4n24] 24. In issue number 3 (1993), the same technique was used, showing *Orion, Nouvelle école, Milyi Angel*, Steuckers's magazine *Vouloir*, and the German magazine *Criticon*, a more mainstream national-conservative publication led by Caspar Von Schrenck-Notzing.
- [4n25] 25. Levalois was a Catholic esotericist and published the *Sol invictus* magazine. He has converted to Orthodoxy and has been ordained by the Patriarchal Exarchate for Orthodox Parishes of Russian Tradition in Western Europe.
- [4n26] 26. He is the son of Olier Mordrelle, leader of the interwar autonomist movement in Brittany, who sought support for the independence of his province from the Nazis, although he was himself influenced by the Conservative Revolution. Trystan Mordrelle launched a revisionist magazine, *L'autre histoire*, but is now close to the Identitaires.
- [4n27] 27. Probably an alias, using a name from Corsica. Sampieru was a frequent contributor to Steuckers' *Vouloir*.
- [4n28] 28. Vivenza is best known as a musicologist and composer of industrial music. He is also a traditionalist inspired by Guénon, Evola, and traditional Masonry.
- [4n29] 29. On May 12, 1992, de Benoist spoke at a meeting of the Institut de Recherches Marxistes, a think tank of the Communist Party.
- [4n30] 30. Limonov contributed, as did Alain Soral, another Dugin supporter.
- [4n31] 31. He now posts regularly at: <http://euro-synergies.hautetfort.com/>.
- [4n32] 32. On the PCN and Russia, see "Interview de Luc Michel par Fabrice Beur," *Justice Sociale* blog, September 26, 2012. Accessed February 14, 2015, <http://europeunitairedemocrat-socialiste.over-blog.com/article-pcn-tv-moscou-interview-de-luc-michel-pa-110558556.html>.



33. Alain Soral, *Comprendre l'Empire* (Paris: Editions Blanche, 2011). [4n33]
34. "Il faut lire Alexandre Douguine," *Egalité et Reconciliation*, October 14, 2012. Accessed February 14, 2015, <http://www.eraquitaine.fr/il-faut-lire-alexandre-douguine/>. [4n34]
35. <http://parousia-parousia.blogspot.fr>. [4n35]
36. See : <http://www.egaliteetreconciliation.fr/Entretien-avec-Laurent-James-3018.html>. [4n36]
37. Author's observation at the Guénon Memorial event in January 2011. [4n37]
38. "Pourquoi Novopole?," *Novopole*, January 20, 2013, <http://novopole.org/?p=18>. The website does not work anymore. [4n38]
39. See <http://novopole.org/?p=76>. [4n39]
40. See "La Russie aux temps postmodernes par Georges Feltin-Tracol," *Europe Maxima*, February 24, 2013. Accessed February 16, 2015, <http://www.europemaxima.com/?p=2958>. [4n40]
41. <http://alexandrelatsa.blogspot.fr/2009/03/alexandre-douguine-par-alexandre-latsa.html>. [4n41]
42. Author's interview with Robert Spieler, September 27, 2013. [4n42]
43. Philippe Vardon, co-leader of the Bloc identitaire, explains: "Neither Fabrice Robert nor myself really know much about Dugin, nor are we real fans of him. One could say that within our political family, most people simply do not care." E-mail to the author, October 4, 2013. [4n43]
44. See <http://www.ateney.ru>. [4n44]
45. Author's interview with Philippe Vardon, October 4, 2013. [4n45]
46. Correspondence with the author, March 13, 2002. [4n46]
47. The Association Paris-Berlin-Moscou, led by Henri de Grossouvre, is another minor player in this field and stands at the crossroads between the New Right, neo-Gaullist circles, and the conservative right. [4n47]