

**Centre for Russian and Central Asian Studies**  
**School of International Studies,**  
**Jawaharlal Nehru University**

Programme:	Ph.D
Course Title:	Contemporary Eurasia: Identity, Politics and Security
Course Teacher:	Prof Archana Upadhyay
Semester:	Monsoon Semester
Course Type:	Optional Course
Course Duration:	One Semester
Contact Hours:	4 hours per week
Credit:	4
Course Code:	SE606

### **Course Objective:**

As a meta-geographical entity across two continents, 'Eurasia' has a powerful meaning in a variety of real-world contexts. Though the term is contested and debated, the concept of 'Eurasianism' along with its political-ideological and philosophical underpinnings remains a dominant narrative in academic and policy-making circles. The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 resulted in the restructuring of the political, social and economic system in the post-Soviet states. Significantly, the transitional experiences in these countries are varied, despite their common political past. Russia occupies a pivotal geopolitical place in Eurasia. Historically, the region has accorded Russia its geopolitical weight. Politically, economically and in strategic terms, Eurasia is critical to Russia's security and prosperity. Psychologically, Eurasia is central to Russia's self-identity as a great power.

This course *aims* to familiarize the students with the basic concepts in the field of Eurasian studies. It will offer a comprehensive conceptualization of the term 'Eurasia' both in a historical context and in the light of contemporary developments in the Eurasian geopolitical space. Using historical and present-day cases from the post-Soviet space, the course will examine the political, economic and strategic developments in the region. State specific studies woven into the course will enable the students to understand the socio-political realities of the Eurasian holistic space from a distinctively Eurasian perspective.

### **Learning Outcome**

By the end of the course, students will:

1. Have a comprehensive understanding of the multiple perspectives on 'Eurasia' as an ideological, ethno-cultural, economic and geopolitical reality.
2. Comprehend 'Eurasianism' as a concept and political practice in domestic, regional and global politics.
3. Understand the economic perspective of 'Eurasianism' in the context of the Eurasian integration process.

## Evaluation Methods

Class performance (10%) /Assignments: Term paper, Book review, Seminar presentation (30%) /End Semester Exam (60%)

## Course Content

### Unit I: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on Eurasia

This unit will provide an overview of the civilisational and geopolitical aspects of the evolution of the concept of 'Eurasia' and 'Eurasianism' as a historical-geographical entity and a system of linkages stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from the Arctic to the Indian Ocean. The interpretations and the policy debates surrounding the concept and its geo-political underpinnings in domestic, regional and global affairs will also be discussed. This Unit will cover:

- Mapping Eurasia
- Early Eurasian discourse, Neo-Eurasianism
- Eurasianism in official policy discourses

### **Essential Readings:**

Bassin, Mark (1991) "Russia between Europe and Asia: The Ideological Construction of Geographical Space", *Slavic Review*, vol. 50, no.1, pp 1-17

————— (2017) "Re-imagining World Spaces: The New Relevance of Eurasia", *Humanities Futures*, 2017. Available at <https://humanitiesfutures.org/papers/re-imagining-world-spaces-new-relevance-eurasia/>

Dugin, Alexander (2014) "Eurasianism" In John B. Morgan, *Eurasian Mission. An Introduction to Neo-Eurasianism*, UK: Arktos Media, pp. 17-100

Duncun, Peter J.S. (2015) "Ideology and Interests in Putin's Construction of Eurasia". In David Lane and Vsevolod Samokhvalov (eds.) *The Eurasian Project and Europe. Regional Discontinuities and Geopolitics*, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 102-116

Frear, Matthew and Honorata Mazepus (2021) "Security, Civilization and Modernisation: Continuity and Change in the Russian Foreign Policy Discourse", *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol.73, no.7, pp. 1215-1235

Gleason, Abbott (2010) "Eurasia: What is it? Is it?" *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, vol. 1, no. 1, January, pp. 26-32

Kalra, Prajakti and Siddharth Saxsena (2015) “The Asiatic Roots and the Rootedness of the Eurasian Project”. In David Lane and Vsevolod Samokhvalov (eds.) *The Eurasian Project and Europe. Regional Discontinuities and Geopolitics*, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 38-52

Lagutina, Maria (2019) “A Concept of Eurasia: From Classical Eurasianism to Pragmatic Eurasianism”. In Maria Lagutina (ed) *Regional Integration and Future Cooperation Initiatives in the Eurasian Economic Union*, Hershey, PA: IGI Global, pp 1-15

Mileski, Toni (2015) “Identifying the new Eurasian orientation in modern Russian geopolitical thought”, *Eastern Journal of European Studies*, vol. 6, no. 2, December, pp. 177-187

Nugraha, Aryanta (2018) “Neo-Eurasianism in Russian Foreign Policy: Echoes from the Past or Compromise with the Future?”, *Journal Global & Strategies*, vol.9, no.1, pp. 95-110

Patnaik, Ajay (2021) “Situating Eurasia, cultural, economic and geopolitical constructs”. In Archana Upadhyay (ed.) *Transitions in Post-Soviet Eurasia, Identity, Polity and Strategic Choices*, London and New York: Routledge, pp. 23-35

Rosenberg, Matt (2019) “What Is Eurasia? Defining the World's Largest Continent”, *ThoughtCo*, January 27 at <https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-eurasia-1435090>

Shakaratan, Ovsey (2015) “The Eurasian Vector of Russia’s Development”. In David Lane and Vsevolod Samokhvalov (eds.) *The Eurasian Project and Europe. Regional Discontinuities and Geopolitics*, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 25-37

## **Unit II: Post-Soviet Eurasia: Transitions and Geopolitical Transformations**

This Unit will highlight the Eurasian orientation in the contemporary geopolitical thinking in the region. It will explore the diverse aspects of the geopolitical environment in post-Soviet Eurasia and the strategic choices of the key regional actors.

- Eurasian strategic landscape, leading players
- Security issues in Eurasia
- Eurasian security architecture

### **Essential Readings:**

Burchill, Richard and Ruta Karpauskaite (2018) “Regional Arrangements and Eurasian Security”. In Piotr Dutkiewicz, Richard Sakwa, Fyodor Lukyanov, Richard Burchill and Timofei Bordachev (eds.), *Eurasia on The Edge, Managing Complexity*, London: Lexington Books, pp. 21-34

Contessi, Nicola P. (2015) “Foreign and Security Policy Diversification in Eurasia: Issue Splitting, Co-alignment, and Relational Power”, *Problems of Post-Communism*, vol. 62, no. 5, September, pp. 299-311

- Karaganov, Sergey (2018) “The new Cold War and the emerging Greater Eurasia”, *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, vol. 9, no 2, July, pp. 85-93
- Pizzolo, Paola (2020) *Eurasianism, an Ideology for the Multipolar World*, Lexington Books: Fortress Academic
- Silaev, Nikolai and Andrei Sushentsov (2018) “Strategic Security in Eurasia”. In Piotr Dutkiewicz, Richard Sakwa, Fyodor Lukyanov, Richard Burchill and Timofei Bordachev (eds.), *Eurasia on The Edge, Managing Complexity*, London: Lexington Books, pp. 7-20
- Loftus, Suzanne and Roger E.Kanet (2015) “Whose Playground Is It, Anyway? Power Rivalries in Post-Soviet Space”. In Kanet, Roger.E, Sussex, Matthew, (eds.) *Power, Politics and Confrontation in Eurasia*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 15-41
- Simao, Licinia (2013) “(In)security in Post-Soviet Eurasia: Contributions from Critical Security Studies”, e-cadernos CES, no.19, at <https://journals.openedition.org/eces/1582>
- Sperling, James (2018) “Eurasian security governance: new threats, institutional adaptations” at <https://www.manchesteropenhive.com/view/9781526137470/9781526137470.00008.xml>
- Tsygankov, Andrei P. (2018) “The sources of Russia’s fear of NATO”, *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, vol. 51, no. 2, June, pp.101-111
- Sakwa, Richard (2015) “Russian- Revisionism and Dilemmas of Eurasian Integration”. In Kanet, Roger.E, Sussex, Matthew, (eds.), *Power, Politics and Confrontation in Eurasia*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 111-134
- Shakhanova, Gaziza G. (2017) “The Architecture of Security in the Eurasian region: Is Russia Still a Guarantor of Regional Security” available at <http://publications.tlu.ee/index.php/eastwest/article/view/644>

### **Unit III: Post-Soviet Conflicts in Eurasia**

This Unit will focus on the transformations in the region and the specific episodes of conflict arising out of inter-state boundary issues, inter-ethnic tensions and associated geo-strategic challenges. The case studies are the following:

- Ukraine; Georgia
- Moldova; Nagorno Karabakh

#### **Essential Readings:**

Askerov, Ali, Stefan Brooks and Lasha Tchantouridze (2020) *Post-Soviet Conflicts, The Thirty Years Crisis*, Lanham, MD & London: Lexington Books

Barkanov, Boris (2015) “Crisis in Ukraine: Clash of Civilizations or Geopolitics?”. In Roger. E

- Kanet and Matthew Sussex (eds.). *Power, Politics and Confrontation in Eurasia*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 210-239
- Dawisha, Karen & Bruce Parrott (1994) *Russia and the New States of Eurasia: The Politics of Upheaval*, New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 1-55
- Demirdirek, Hulya (2008) “In the Minority in Moldova: (Dis) Empowerment through Territorial Conflict”. In Oliver Schmidtke and Serhy Yekelchuk (eds), *Europe’s Last Frontier?: Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine Between Russia and the European Union*, New York: Palgrave MacMillan, pp. 115-131
- Gotz, Elias (ed.) (2019) *Russia, the West, and the Ukraine Crisis*, London: Routledge, pp 1-18
- Geukjian, Ohannes (2016) *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict in the South Caucasus, Nagorno-Karabakh and the Legacy of Soviet Nationalities Policy*, New York: Routledge
- Hill, William. H (2013) *Russia, the Near Abroad, and the West: Lessons from the Moldova-Transdnistria Conflict*, Woodrow Wilson Centre: Johns Hopkins University Press
- Kappeler, Andreas (2014) “Ukraine and Russia: legacies of the imperial past and competing memories”, *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, vol. 5, no. 2, July, pp. 107-115
- Laenen, Ria (2012) “Russia’s ‘Vital and Exclusive’ National Interests in the Near Abroad”. In Maria Freire Raquel and Roger E. Kanet (eds.) *Russia and its Near Neighbours*, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 17-38
- Pallin, Carolina Vendil & Fredrik Westerlund (2009) “Russia’s War in Georgia: lessons and Consequences”, *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, vol. 20, no. 2, June, pp. 400-424
- Svarin, David (2016) “The construction of ‘geopolitical spaces’ in Russian foreign policy discourse before and after the Ukraine crisis”, *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, vol. 7, no. 2, July, pp. 129 -140
- Toal, Gerard (2017) *Near Abroad: Putin, the West and the Contest over Ukraine and the Caucasus*, Oxford UK: Oxford University Press
- Yekelchuk, Serhy (2008) “Out of Russia’s Long Shadow: The Making of Modern Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova”. In Oliver Schmidtke and Serhy Yekelchuk (eds.) *Europe’s Last Frontier: Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine Between Russia and the European Union*, New York: Palgrave MacMillan, pp. 9-29

#### **Unit IV: Eurasia in International Relations**

The focus of this Unit is on the geopolitical environment in Eurasia and the strategic response of the key actors to the transformations in the region. The Unit will critically examine:

- Interstate dynamics in post-Soviet Eurasia
- External players

- Russian strategy in Eurasia; relations with regional powers
- China factor in Eurasia, Eurasian Security and the Belt and Road Initiative

### **Essential Readings:**

- Cau, Enrico (2018) “Geopolitical Implications of the Belt and Road Initiative: The Backbone for a New World Order?,” *Contemporary Chinese Political Economy and Strategic Relations*, vol.4, April, pp. 39-105
- Kazantsev, Andrei, Svetlana Medvedeva, Ivan Safranchuk (2021) “Between Russia and China: Central Asia in Greater Eurasia”, *Journal of Eurasia Studies*, vol. 12, no.1, pp. 57-71
- Krickovic, Andrej & Igor Pellicciari (2021) “From ‘Greater Europe’ to ‘Greater Eurasia’: Status concerns and the evolution of Russia’s approach to alignment and regional integration”, *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, vol.12, no.1, March 15, pp. 86-99
- Kuchins, Andrew. C, (2018) “What is Eurasia to US (the U.S.)?” *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, vol. 9, no. 2, July, pp. 125-133
- Lewis, David (2019) “Strategic Culture and Russia’s ‘Pivot to the East’: Russia, China and ‘Greater Eurasia,’” *Marshall Center Security Insight*, No. 34, July, <https://www.marshallcenter.org/en/publications/security-insights/strategic-culture-and-russians-pivot-east-russia-china-and-greater-eurasia-o>
- Loftus, Suzanne and Roger E. Kanet (2015) “Whose Playground Is It, Anyway? Power Rivalries in Post-Soviet Space”. In Roger E Kanet and Matthew Sussex (eds.) *Power, Politics and Confrontation in Eurasia*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp 15-41
- Lukin, Alexander (2020) “Sino-Russian cooperation as the basis for Greater Eurasia”, *Journal of Human Affairs*, vol. 30, no. 2, pp. 174-188
- Li, Mingling (2020) “The Belt and Road Initiative: geo-economics and Indo-Pacific security Competition”, *International Affairs*, vol. 96, no. 1, pp.169-187
- Pepe, Jacapo Maria (2019) “Eurasia: Playing Field or Battle Field?” *DGAP Analysis* No. 2, November 28, <https://dgap.org/en/research/publications/eurasia-playing-field-or-battle-field>
- Petito, Fabio (2016) “Dialogue of Civilizations in a Multipolar World: Towards a Multi Civilizational - Multiplex World Order”, *International Studies Review*, vol. 18, no.1, pp. 78-91
- Rolland, Nadege (2019) “A China-Russia Condominium over Eurasia”, *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy*, vol. 61, no. 1, pp. 7-22
- Sotiriou, Stylianos A. (2019) *Politics and International Relations in Eurasia*, Lanham MD: Lexington Books
- Zemanek, Ladislav (2020) “Belt & Road initiative and Russia: From mistrust towards cooperation”, *Journal of Human Affairs*, vol. 30, no. 2, pp.199-211
- ZREIK, Mohamed (2022) “Contemporary Geopolitics of Eurasia and the Belt and Road Initiative”, *Eurasian Research Journal, ERJ*, vol. 4, no.1, January, pp.7-26

## **Unit V: Eurasian Integration: Ideology, Politics and Economy**

This Unit will discuss the concepts and ideas of economic integration in the post-Soviet space, highlighting the strategic objectives, challenges and potential prospects of economic integration in Eurasia. The Unit will discuss the following:

- Geopolitics and the emergence of new Eurasian Regionalism
- Economic dimensions of Eurasian Regional Arrangements
- Eurasian Economic Union: Problems and Prospects
- Russia and Asia-Pacific regionalism

### **Essential Readings:**

Aydin, Gulsen Seker (2019) “The Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) from the Perspective of International Relations (IR) Theories”. In Maria Lagutina (ed.) *Regional Integration and Future Cooperation Initiatives in the Eurasian Economic Union*, USA: IGI Global, pp 37-55

Bulatov, Alexander S. (2021) “Russia in the EAEU”. In Natalia A. Piskulova (ed.) *The Economic Dimension of Eurasian Integration*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 227-234

Diesen, Glenn (2018) *Russia’s Geoeconomic Strategy for a Greater Eurasia*, London and New York: Routledge, pp. 11-30, 64-80

Lane, David (2015) “Eurasian Integration as a response to Neo Liberal Globalization”. In David Lane and Vsevolod Samokhvalov (eds.) *The Eurasian Project and Europe. Regional Discontinuities and Geopolitics*, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 3-22

Libman, Alexander (2017) “The Russian Power Politics and the Eurasian Economic Union: The Real and the Imagined”, *The Rising Power Quarterly*, vol.1, no.2, pp. 81-103

Lissovlik, Yaroslav D., Egor V. Pak and Henglong Zhang (2021) “Economic Framework for Eurasian Integration: Theory and Practice”. In Natalia A. Piskulova (ed.) *The Economic Dimension of Eurasian Integration*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 1-26

Makarychev, Andrey (2017) “Russia’s Engagement with Asia Pacific: International Socialization, Multipolarity and Regionalism” *Rising Powers Quarterly*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 105-119

Melvin, Neil (2021) “Russia and the Indo-Pacific Security Concept”, *RUSI*, London at [https://static.rusi.org/277\\_russia\\_ip.pdf](https://static.rusi.org/277_russia_ip.pdf)

Mikhaylenko, Ekaterina (2019) “Eurasian Regionalism: Specifics, Problems and Prospects”. In Maria Lagutina (ed) *Regional Integration and Future Cooperation Initiatives in the Eurasian Economic Union*, USA: IGI Global, pp 16-36

Molchanov, Mikhail A. (2015) "Eurasian Regionalism: Ideas and Practices". In Roger. E Kanet and Matthew Sussex (eds.) *Power, Politics and Confrontation in Eurasia*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 135-157

Mostafa, Golam and Mahmood Monowar (2018) "Eurasian Economic Union: Evolution, challenges and possible future directions", *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, vol. 9, no. 2, July pp. 163-172

Muraviev, Alexey D. (2019) "Understanding Russia's Strategic Engagement with the Indo-Asia-Pacific", *Asia Pacific Bulletin*, No 475, May 6

Sakwa, Richard (2015) "Eurasian Integration: A Project for the 21st century". In David Lane and Vsevolod Samokhvalov (eds.) *The Eurasian Project and Europe. Regional Discontinuities and Geopolitics*, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 53-71

Shagina, Maria (2020) "Russia's Pivot to Asia: Between Rhetoric and Substance", *Orbis*, vol. 64, no. 3, pp. 447-460

The Eurasian Economic Union: Power, Politics and Trade (2016), *Europe and Central Asia Report* No. 240, July at <https://css.ethz.ch/content/dam/ethz/specail-iinterst/gess>

Vinokurov, Evgeny and Alexander Libman (2012) "Eurasia and Eurasian Integration: Beyond the Post-Soviet Borders", *The Economics of the Post-Soviet and Eurasian Integrations*, available at [https://eabr.org/upload/iblock/865/a\\_n5\\_2012](https://eabr.org/upload/iblock/865/a_n5_2012)

Yarashevich, Viachaslau (2019) "Political Economy of the Eurasian Integration", *Interdisciplinary Political Studies*, vol.5, no. 2, pp. 405-442

### **Additional Readings:**

Alimov, Rashid (2018) "The Shanghai Cooperation Organization: Its role and place in the development of Eurasia" *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, vol. 9, no. 2, July, pp.114-124

Bassin, Mark (2016) *The Gumilev Mystique: Biopolitics, Eurasianism and the Construction of Community in Modern Russia*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press

Blackwill, Robert D and Jennifer Harris (2016) *War by other Means: Geoeconomics and Statecraft*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press

Brzezinski, Zbigniew (1997) *The Grand Chessboard, American Primacy and its Geostrategic Imperatives*, New York: Basic Books

Bugajski, Janusz, and Mararita Mssenova (2016) *Eurasian Disunion. Russia's Vulnerable Flanks*. Washington D.C: The Jamestown Foundation

Dugin, Alexander (2000) "From Sacred Geography to Geopolitics" *The Fourth Political Theory*, under Geopolitics as "Intermediate" Science available at <http://www.4pt.su/en/content/sacred-geography-geopolitics>

- (2014) *Eurasian Mission: An Introduction to Neo-Eurasianism*, Moscow: Arktos
- Glebov, Sergey (2017) *From Empire to Eurasia, Politics, Scholarship and Ideology in Russian Eurasianism, 1920s-1930s*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press
- Hampson, Fen Osler and Mikhail Troitskiy (eds.) (2017) *Tug of War: Negotiating Security in Eurasia*, CIGI/McGill: Queen's University Press
- Karaganov, Sergei (2016) "From East to West, or Greater Eurasia", *Russia in Global Affairs*, October 25, at <https://eng.globalaffairs.ru/pubcol/From-East-to-West-or-Greater-Eurasia-18440>
- Laruelle, Marlene (2008) *Russian Eurasianism: An Ideology of Empire*, Woodrow Wilson Center: John Hopkins University Press
- Laruelle, Marlene (ed.) (2018) *China's Belt and Road Initiative and its Impact in Central Asia*, Washington D.C.: The George Washington University, Central Asia Program, 2018
- Laruelle, Marlene and Jean Radvanyi (2018) *Understanding Russia, The Challenges of Transformation*, Lanham, Boulder, New York, London: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers
- Mackinder, Halford J. (2004) "The Geographical Pivot of History", reprinted in *Geographical Journal*, vol.170, no.4, pp. 298-321
- Patnaik, Ajay (2016) *Central Asia: Geopolitics, Security and Stability*, London/New York: Routledge
- Pirchner, Jr, Herman (2005) *Reviving Greater Russia: The Future of Russia's Borders and Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Moldova*, Rowman and Littlefield: University Press of America
- Riasanovsky, Nicholas, V. and Mark D. Steinberg (2018) *A History of Russia*, New York: Oxford University Press
- Richardson, Paul Benjamin (2015) "Putin's Eurasian Dialectic". In David Lane and Vsevolod Samokhvalov (eds.) *The Eurasian Project and Europe: Regional Discontinuities and Geopolitics*, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 89-101
- Starr, Frederick S. & Svante E. Cornell (eds.) (2014) *Putin's Grand Strategy: The Eurasian Union and Its Discontents*, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute Silk Road Studies Program, Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies.
- Tsygankov, Andrei P. (2019) *Russia's Foreign Policy, Change and Continuity in National Identity*, Lanham, Boulder: Rowman & Littlefield
- Upadhyay, Archana (ed.) (2021) *Transitions in Post-Soviet Eurasia, Identity, Polity and Strategic Choices*, London and New York: Routledge.
- Yekelchik, Serhy (2015) *The Conflict in Ukraine, What Everyone Needs to Know*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.