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Aleksander Dugin: Heidegger's Dubious Disciple

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Prologue

In a 2018 interview with the German news magazine *Der Spiegel*, Steve Bannon – Donald Trump's former campaign manager and chief political strategist, who, in 2016, quipped that he wanted to make Breitbart News a “platform for the Alt-Right” – exalted Martin Heidegger as an intellectual inspiration and role model. The journalist who conducted the interview, Christoph Scheuermann, described the encounter as follows: “We sit down at the dining room table and [Bannon] picks up a book, a biography of the philosopher Martin Heidegger. ‘That’s my guy!’, Bannon says. Heidegger, says Bannon, had some good ideas on the subject of Being, which fascinates him . . . [Bannon] jumps from the depths of politics to the heights of philosophy, from the swamp to Heidegger in five seconds. What sets us apart from animals or rocks, Bannon asks? What does it mean to be human? How far should digital progress go?” [1]

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Logos

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In a 2018 interview with the German news magazine *Der Spiegel*, Steve Bannon – Donald Trump's former campaign manager and chief political strategist, who, in 2016, quipped that he wanted to make Breitbart News a “platform for the Alt-Right” – exalted Martin Heidegger as an intellectual inspiration and role model. The journalist who conducted the interview, Christoph Scheuermann, described the encounter as follows: “We sit down at the dining room table and [Bannon] picks up a book, a biography of the philosopher Martin Heidegger. ‘*That’s my guy!*’, Bannon says. Heidegger, says Bannon, had some good ideas on the subject of Being, which fascinates him . . . [Bannon] jumps from the depths of politics to the heights of philosophy, from the swamp to Heidegger in five seconds. What sets us apart from animals or rocks, Bannon asks? What does it mean to be human? How far should digital progress go?” [\[1\]](#)

It is doubtful whether Bannon ever read a single word written by Heidegger. It is even more doubtful whether, in the unlikely event that Bannon *did* actually read Heidegger, he understood what he was reading. Be that as it may, Bannon's remarks illustrate the immense political caché that Heidegger's thought has acquired among representatives of the transatlantic New Right (*Nouvelle Droite*, *Neue Rechte*), an intellectual current that has contributed significantly to the erosion of democratic norms – principles that, by their own admission, New Right ideologues seek to supplant with an authoritarian, racially pure, white ethno-state. As Alt-Right impresario Richard Spencer – who, along with fellow white nationalist, Paul Gottfried, coined the “Alternative Right” moniker in 2008 – recounted his intellectual odyssey to the promised land of Aryan exclusivity:

When I was thinking about the new standpoint, it was one that had a different philosophical basis than the kind of quaint Anglo-American conservatism outlined in, say, Russell Kirk's *The Conservative Mind*. I was thinking about something like the French New Right, something like the Traditionalism of [Julius] Evola, something like Nietzsche, German idealism, and Heidegger. I just wanted to go to all these places that conservatives resisted. It was kind of a joke between Paul Gottfried and I [sic] that conservatives considered all these people to be liberal. They were liberal fascists because they didn't believe in free markets and family values or something. ^[2]

The self-professed white nationalist and Alt-Right blogger, Greg Johnson, has also highlighted Heidegger's invaluable contribution to the New Right's "metapolitical" struggle against what Johnson characterizes, in a revealing turn of phrase, as the "existing Jewish/Leftist hegemony." Thus, according to Johnson, "It should come as no surprise that Heidegger, a life-long man of the Right, is also an important thinker for the New Right in Europe and North America. Heidegger[']s . . . encounter with National Socialism, and his postwar thinking on modernity, technology, and the possibility of a New Dispensation, are of enduring relevance to the New Right project of defining a post-totalitarian alternative to both the Old Right and the existing Jewish/Leftist hegemony." ^[3]

Johnson remains deliberately vague about the ideological content of this Heidegger-inspired, "New Dispensation." However, to judge by Johnson's numerous contributions to Alt-Right doctrinal orthodoxy – for example, his blunt assertion in the *White Identity Manifesto* that "White Nationalism is the best political system to end white genocide and restore healthy white communities" – Johnson's political aspirations do not differ significantly from those of like-minded advocates of a racially homogeneous, white ethno-state, such as Richard Spencer, Jared Taylor, or the late Sam Francis. ^[4]

The citations from Spencer and Johnson confirm that, among an influential cohort of far-right activists who seek to supplant the precepts of egalitarian democracy by appealing to the ethos of white separatism, Heidegger's thought has remained an indispensable ideological touchstone. Hence, increasingly, Heidegger's celebration of existential "rootedness" – "the flourishing of any genuine, creative work," claimed Heidegger, "depends on its rootedness in the native soil of the *Heimat*" – ^[5] and of the "singularity" of German Dasein – "Only someone who is German," observed Heidegger, "is capable of poetically articulating Being in an originary way" – ^[6] have been enthusiastically received by advocates of the global "New Right," whose doctrines have provided ideological legitimacy for the rise of contemporary authoritarian national populism.

Russian Fascism: "Borderless and Red"

"The twenty-first century, in essence, has not yet begun: that which is around us today in terms of meaning is still the twentieth century. . . . The twenty-first century will start when we truly begin to grasp Heidegger's philosophy. And then we will gain the opportunity to make another decision, a choice in favor of transitioning to another Beginning."

Alexander Dugin, *Heidegger: The Philosophy of Another Beginning*

In contrast to New Right ideologues in Europe and North America, Aleksander Dugin (1962-) has made little effort to mask his fascist political allegiances. Coming of age during Soviet communism's twilight years, Dugin revered Nazism for furnishing a doctrine that provided maximal political leverage to oppose an increasingly senescent and moribund "state socialism" *from the right*. In keeping with these convictions, as a youth, Dugin joined the Black Order of the SS, a secret organization that was affiliated with the esoteric Yuzhinskii Circle. Led by the shaman and polymath, Yevgeny Golowin, the Black Order of the SS was dedicated to exploring the link between Russian nationalism and Aryanism. According to reliable reports, members were obligated to address Golowin as "Reichsführer SS." ^[7]

As Dugin avowed in "Fascism: Borderless and Red" (1997), what the motherland needed, following communism's ignominious collapse during the early 1990s, was a "Russian National Socialism": "*an authentic, real, radically revolutionary and consistent fascism, a fascist fascism.*" Fusing Nietzsche with the Waffen-SS, Dugin characterized

Russian fascism as a "revolutionary, rebellious, romantic, idealistic [form of nationalism] appealing to a great Myth and transcendental Idea . . . [that] gives birth to a society of heroes and supermen . . . The nature of fascism [is] a new hierarchy, a new aristocracy, [that] is based on natural, organic, and clear principles: dignity, honor, courage, and heroism." ^[8]

When the *Black Notebooks* appeared in 2014-15, Dugin must have felt wholly confirmed in his Heidegger-loyalties upon encountering Heidegger's avowal – uttered in the aftermath of the Hitler–Stalin pact – that one must "*try to save Russia through fascism.*" ^[9] It would be difficult to formulate a more felicitous distillation of Dugin's political credo.



Among Heidegger’s New Right acolytes, Dugin occupies a *sui generis* niche. For one, Dugin is a self-professed Heideggerian who has published numerous monographs and commentaries on Heidegger’s work. Among his better-known contributions are: *Heidegger and the Possibility of Russian Philosophy* (2011), *Heidegger: The Philosophy of Another Beginning* (2012), and *Martin Heidegger: The Last God* (2012).

Dugin’s notion of the Fourth Political Theory – which Dugin has promoted as the successor ideology to the politically bankrupt precedents of liberalism, fascism, and communism – is explicitly predicated on the “*völkisch*” and “rooted” inflections of Heidegger’s fundamental ontology. As Joakim Andersen has observed in *Rising from the Ruins: The Right of the 21st Century*: “The Fourth Political Theory’s . . . central category is Heidegger’s *Dasein*. Instead of *abstractions*, it concerns our *real identities*.” ^[10] In a recently published monograph, *Political Platonism: The Philosophy of Politics* (2019), Dugin has reaffirmed the Heideggerian fundament of his political thinking, asserting that, “The construction of the Fourth Political Theory is based . . . on Heidegger’s philosophy and represents the development of its implicit constant.” ^[11]

“Putin’s Brain”

Dugin's exceptional status among New Right Heidegger acolytes is also reflected in his privileged access to an influential coterie of foreign policy advisors surrounding Vladimir Putin. The jacket copy of *Political Platonism* boasts that, "for more than a decade, Dugin has been an advisor to Vladimir Putin and the Kremlin on geopolitical matters." ^[12]

Although the nature and extent of Dugin's influence on Putin has been a matter of dispute, following Russia's annexation of the Crimea in 2014, a spate of commentaries appeared that referred to Dugin as "Putin's Brain" or "Putin's Rasputin." ^[13] The articles reflected the fact that, following Russia's military intervention in the Crimea and the Eastern Ukraine, Putin, on numerous occasions, had cited Dugin's doctrine of "Neo-Eurasianism" as an ideological justification for Russian aggression. (In 2003, with the Kremlin's blessing, Dugin established a Eurasian Party. In 2004, he founded a Eurasian Youth Organization, whose goal was to indoctrinate Russian youth in the ideology of Russian nationalism.)

In the decade that followed his unexpected rise to the presidency of the Russian Federation (1999-), Putin searched for an ideology to replace communism. Putin's growing attraction to Dugin's Neo-Eurasianism reflected his political evolution from reluctant democrat to avowed autocrat. As outlined and promoted by Dugin, Neo-Eurasianism sought to provide post-communist Russia with a *geopolitical raison d'être*: with an orientation that reaffirmed the Russian Empire's expansionist ambitions under Tsardom; hence, a "mission" that would reverse the Soviet Union's extensive territorial losses under Mikhail Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin.

One sign of Dugin's growing influence among Kremlin foreign policy elites emerged in 2011-12, when Putin, in an effort to offset his plummeting standing in national opinion polls, proposed the creation, under Russian leadership, of a "Eurasian Union": thereby, tacitly endorsing the expansionist program that Dugin had advocated since his days as a lecturer at the Academy of the Russian General Staff. ^[14]

As the Ukraine crisis escalated in 2014, Putin repeatedly invoked "Neo-Eurasianism" as a mandate for Russia's geopolitical "push to the South." In May 2014, Russian separatists in the Donetsk and Donbass regions of the Eastern Ukraine brandished the term in order to justify their declaration of a "Union of Novorossiia" or "Greater Russia." In August 2014, Putin once again used the term in a presidential directive that he addressed to the "Insurgents of Novorossiia." ^[15]

Neo-Eurasianism has, undoubtedly, been Dugin's greatest contribution to "Putinism." Claus Leggewie has denounced Dugin as a "desk murder" for his role in furnishing the ideological rationale behind Russia's southern imperial expansion – its geostrategic "push to the Caspian Sea." ^[16]

At the same time, Dugin has also managed to influence Putin's views on a variety of controversial cultural themes: "Limits on personal freedom, a traditional understanding of the family, intolerance of homosexuality, and the centrality of Orthodox Christianity to Russia's rebirth as a great power." ^[17] As Dugin gloated in November 2016 following

Trump's electoral victory: "In contrast with Hillary Clinton, Trump does not view LGBT supporters, feminists, and postmodernists as the be-all and end-all of 'progress.' From now on, the only thing that they can hope for will be to get medical treatment for their perversions." ^[18]

Following Moscow's annexation of the Crimea, Putin's approval ratings skyrocketed. Most Russians agreed with Putin's misleading claim that the Crimea and eastern Ukraine were, historically, part of Russia. Hence, they enthusiastically supported Moscow's reliance on military might to enforce its dubious claim to sovereignty.

Following Russia's military's intervention in the Crimea, Dugin's caché among New Right intellectual circles escalated dramatically. In May 2014, he was one of the featured speakers at a coven of far-right political leaders and ideologues that was held at the Liechtenstein Palace in Vienna. Although the gathering was supposed to be secret, its existence was unmasked by the Austrian journalist, Bernhard Odehnal.

The organizers had billed the conference as a twenty-first century "Congress of Vienna": thereby, alluding to the "Holy Alliance," orchestrated by Prince Metternich, in 1815, to suppress the rising tide of European democracy. Other high-profile attendees included Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ) chairman, Heinz-Christian Strache; Marine Le Pen's leading political advisor, Aymeric Chauprade; and Marion Maréchal-Le Pen, at the time, the National Front's "rising star." Among the themes discussed at the meeting was: "How to save Europe from liberalism and the 'satanic' gay lobby." ^[19]

Dugin, ever a stranger to moderation, became intoxicated with his own celebrity. In support of the Eastern Ukrainian independence movement, he declared: "I believe that one must kill, kill, and kill. I make this claim in my capacity as professor." ^[20] Among the students at Moscow State University, Dugin, by making this pronouncement, had clearly overreached. To protest Dugin's bloodthirsty, exterminationist rhetoric, they organized a petition that was signed by some 10,000 students. Shortly thereafter, Dugin was stripped of his position.

"Dasein's existence is *völkisch*"

In the *Fourth Political Theory* (2013), Dugin took his bearings from Heidegger's reformulation of the *Seinsfrage* during the 1930s in accordance with the "metapolitics of the historical *Volk*." ^[21] Relying on this Heideggerian demarche for conceptual leverage, Dugin asserted that, "Dasein's existence is *völkisch*. To exist in concrete, human terms means . . . to exist as a German, Frenchman, Russian, American, African . . . *Völkisch* existence is the reality that most closely approximates the essence of man." ^[22] During the early 1990s, Dugin's numerous encounters with the Nouvelle Droite proved crucial in his transformation from an avowed neofascist to Russia's leading proponent of "ethno-differentialism," or racism with a "human face." ^[23]

Dugin's fulminations against Western liberalism as the zenith of *Machenschaft* demonstrate the degree to which he had internalized Heidegger's "affect

against logocentrism and rationalism, universalism and humanism.” ^[24] It was in this spirit that, in *Heidegger: The Philosophy of Another Beginning*, Dugin enthusiastically reprised Heidegger’s denigration of “Anglo-Saxon liberalism” in *Die Geschichte des Seyns* (1939) as the zenith of “planetary idiocy.” ^[25] Dugin’s characterization of “liberalism” as a “pandemic” – as a form of political contagion that must be urgently *eradicated* – openly echoed the Nazi lexicon of “virology”:

Calculating reason at the basis of liberalism and its values are the last stage of *degeneration of Western European ontology. It is impossible to go any lower. We must look for the roots of liberalism as a fatal and deadly pandemic in Europe.* But it is in the U.S. that this political phenomenon has acquired its ultimate form. . . . Man of the global world, a “liberal,” accepting and recognizing the normativity of the “American way of life,” is the kind of person who is a *patented idiot* from the philosophical . . . point of view, a *documented idiot, an idiot parading his foolishness above his head like a banner.* ^[26]

In “Donald Trump: The Swamp and the Fire” – an article that he published in 2016, following Donald Trump’s victory in the American presidential elections – Dugin, faithful to New Right’s “negative branding” strategy, added: “*We need a Nuremberg Trial for liberalism.*” Dugin proceeded to characterize liberalism as “*the last totalitarian political ideology of modernity.*” “Let us close this page of history,” he urged. ^[27]

As the foregoing citations attest, rhetorical hyperbole and emotional revulsion are trademarks of Dugin’s discursive idiolect. These traits bespeak a neofascist mindset that denies its opponents’ existential legitimacy.

Dugin has also lowered himself to justifying Heidegger’s Nazism on ideological grounds, claiming that, since Heidegger was justifiably opposed to Bolshevism and Americanism – both of which were dominated by the same “technological frenzy” – ^[28] he had no choice but to embrace the Third Reich as a political bulwark against these complementary political evils. (That Heidegger’s commitment to Nazism meant supporting a regime for which the commission of mass atrocities was a state-sanctioned credo leaves Dugin seemingly unfazed.)

In almost the same breath, Dugin managed, cagily, to vindicate Heidegger’s anti-Semitism. As Dugin explains: following Nietzsche, Heidegger viewed the Old Testament – a text that, Dugin reminds us, was canonized by a “Semitic people” – as incompatible with “Indo-European” traditions. Hence, when viewed from an “ethnopolitist” perspective, Heidegger’s efforts to combat “culturally alien” Jewish influences represented an act of *défense légitime*. ^[29]

According to Dugin, one of Heidegger’s salutary achievements as the philosopher of “another Beginning” concerned his efforts to keep corrosive Jewish intellectual influences at bay. One of the ways that Heidegger achieved this desideratum was through his critique of “logocentrism.” Dugin reminds us that, although the primacy of “logos” may be traced back to the deformations and missteps of the Socratic School, “The same is

true for Judaism, in the case of Philo the Jew and, above all, in Medieval Judaism and the Kabbalah.”^[30] Echoing Heidegger, Dugin explained that, today, we are experiencing the endgame of a process of cultural decomposition that has been abetted by the “unfettered explosion of modern technics.”

The Geopolitical Mission of “Mother Russia”

As Volker Weiß has noted in *The Authoritarian Revolt*, from its inception, Dugin’s understanding of geopolitics has been Heideggerian through-and-through. At nearly every turn, it was informed by the existential imperatives and messianic structure of Heideggerian *Raumpolitik*. As Weiß observes: “The central ideas of Dugin’s ‘cultural theory of space,’ the correlation between *Sein und Raum*, or Being and Space, derive from Heidegger’s writings.”^[31]

However, in adapting the secular eschatology of Heideggerian *Seinsgeschichte* to Russian circumstances, Dugin appended an all-important twist: in light of National Socialism’s “collapse,” “Mother Russia” inherited Germany’s “mission” as world historical “redeemer.” In monographs such as *The Last War of the World Island: the Geopolitics of Contemporary Russia*, Dugin insisted that Russia’s “Eurasian mission” was not merely *regional*, but *planetary*. As Dugin avowed with alarming frankness: “All the powers and states in the world that possess tellurocratic properties depend on whether Russia will cope with this historic challenge and preserve and strengthen its sovereignty.”^[32]

Dugin’s allusion to “tellurocratic properties” expressed his understanding of history as a geopolitical struggle between the “tellurocratic” – or land-based – powers of the Neo-Eurasian “heartland” versus the “thalassocratic” – or maritime – powers of England and the United States. In Dugin’s view, the struggle for “world mastery” between Russia and the United States represented a “struggle-unto-death” or *Vernichtungskampf*.

Dugin portrayed this battle – the “Last War of the World Island” – as an *eschatological struggle*: an apocalyptic conflict between “good” and “evil.” Since the Western “thalassocracies” – Great Britain and the United States – were exclusively focused on *material gain*, they were the main carriers of “European nihilism” and “planetary *Machenschaften*.” Conversely, Russia embodied what Dugin called a “heroic civilization” of the “land-based type.” According to Dugin, Russia championed a “vertical, hierarchical, Messianic structure of government.” Hence, Russia was the only “planetary” power capable of reanimating the “traditionalist” values of “*faithfulness, asceticism, honor, and loyalty*.”^[33]

In the *Last War of the World Island*, Dugin consistently portrayed the struggle between the Neo-Eurasian “heartland” and the seafaring “thalassocracies” as *Armageddon*. As Dugin observes:

The Eurasian civilization, established around the Heartland with its core in the Russian *narod* [people], is much broader than contemporary Russia . . . To guarantee its

territorial security, Russia must take military control over the zones attached in the south and the west, and in the sphere of the northern Arctic Ocean. Moreover, if we consider Russia a *planetary-tellurocratic pole*, then it becomes apparent that its direct interests extend *throughout the Earth and touch all the continents, seas, and oceans*. Hence, it becomes necessary to elaborate a *global geopolitical strategy for Russia*, describing in detail the specific interests relating to each country and each region. ^[34]

Muscovite Metapolitics: Dugin and the Nouvelle Droite

In solidarity with his Nouvelle Droite *compagnons de route*, Dugin defined success in “metapolitical” terms: as winning the battle for “ideological hegemony.” In 2008, when he was appointed Director of the Center for Conservative Research at Moscow State University, Dugin announced that his top priority was to acquaint Russian youth with conservative revolutionary thinkers such as Heidegger, Carl Schmitt, and Ernst Jünger. Consequently, under Dugin’s tutelage,

a large portion of the Center’s activities involved the clarification, reinterpretation, and adaptation of the ideas of the Counter-Enlightenment and the Conservative Revolution as they apply to Russian politics, global affairs, and international relations. Especially important in the agenda of Dugin’s Center was the legacy and ideas of René Guénon, Julius Evola, Carl Schmitt, Martin Heidegger, and Oswald Spengler. ^[35]

As Stephen Shenfield has observed in *Russian Fascism: Traditions, Tendencies, and Movements*, Dugin’s eschatological enthusiasm for the “conservative revolution” offers a telltale ideological clue: the “smoking gun” that “identifies Dugin unequivocally as a fascist.” “For Dugin,” continues Shenfield, the “conservative revolution is ‘the Last Revolution,’ ‘the Greatest Revolution in history . . . the Return of the Angels, the Resurrection of the Heroes, and the uprising of the heart against the dictatorship of reason.’” ^[36]

Since his youthful dalliances in Yevgeny Golovin’s Yuzhinskii Circle, Dugin had been attracted to mysticism as an intellectual counterweight to the epistemological rigidity of dialectical materialist orthodoxy. Dugin’s aversion to the methodological constraints of “scientific socialism” inspired his veneration of fascism as an effective means of combating the ideology of “state socialism.”

Dugin’s youthful attraction to Julius Evola’s “spiritual fascism” – during the 1980s, he translated Evola’s *Pagan Imperialism* into Russian – helps to explain his fascination with the esoteric dimensions of Heidegger’s thought: Heidegger’s veneration of “secret Germany” (*verheimlichtes Deutschland*) and, at a later point, the “Fourfold” (*Geviert*): gods and mortals, heaven and earth. Dugin’s propagation of “spiritual racism” – an epithet that is often used in conjunction with Evola’s “Traditionalism” – emerged unambiguously in his early monograph, *Hyperborean Theory* (1993): “The Aryan,” observes Dugin, “according to his essence, is not defined by *biology*, but instead by his *metaphysical mission*... *Aryans are a race . . . of Nordic Warrior-Priests.*” ^[37]

Dugin's background as a Heidegger-initiate played an important role in his efforts to endow Russian geostrategic thinking with a *higher sense of purpose*: with a "calling" that, in the words of Anton Barbashin and Hannah Thoburn, was simultaneously "*mystical, spiritual, emotional, and messianic*"; hence, with an orientation toward "transcendence" that fused politics and the mystical longings of a revived Russian Orthodoxy. ^[38]

Dugin found additional "spiritual" inspiration for his steadily evolving Neo-Eurasian worldview in Heidegger's *Philosophy of Another Beginning* – the subtitle of Dugin's most important Heidegger commentary, which was published in 2011. ^[39]

The Heideggerian theme that Dugin found most congenial for his "Hyperborean," neo-Aryan designs was the "Fourfold" (*das Geviert*): Heidegger's speculative appellation for the presencing or interplay between "heaven and earth, mortals and divinities." In later essays such as "Building, Dwelling, Thinking," the Fourfold provided the foundation or ground for Heidegger's postmodern pagan cosmology. It proffered a vision or world-picture that offered "mortals" a respite from "modernity" as an age of total and unremitting "*Gottesverlassenheit*" (abandonment by gods). The Fourfold harbored an esoteric redemptive promise: "hints" concerning the advent of the "god to come." ^[40]

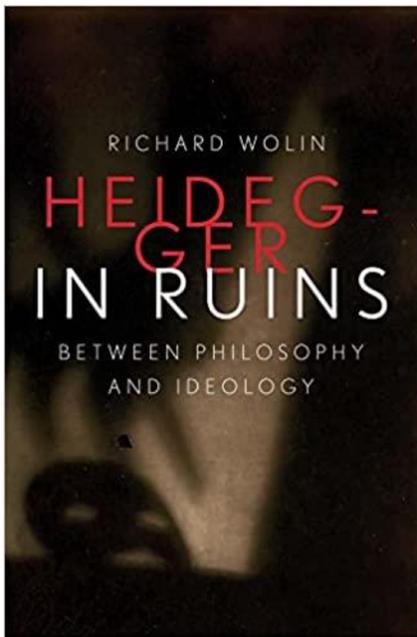
Heidegger's treatment of "dwelling" (*Wohnen*) reprised his endorsement, during the Nazi era, of "rootedness-in-soil" as a normative touchstone. On these grounds, Julian Young, in one of the few scholarly articles on "The Fourfold," interprets Heidegger's understanding of "Earth" as providing a warrant for the New Right's "ethno-pluralism." According to Young: "Heidegger always thought within the unspoken presupposition of a one-to-one correspondence between *ethnic communities* and *natural places* . . . He viewed modernity's mingling of populations as simply *the destruction of dwelling* . . . The idea of different communities of dwellers sharing the same 'earth' and 'sky' *simply does not cross his mind*." Young concludes with a dig at Heidegger's gratuitous obscurantism: "Among the many 'mysteries' surrounding 'the Fourfold' is the almost total absence of any attempt by Heidegger scholars to explain what it is." ^[41]

What mesmerized Dugin about the Fourfold was Heidegger's "geo-metaphysics" or "earth-mysticism": its anti-positivist, *mystical* conception of "Earth," an approach that supported Dugin's efforts to endow geopolitics with a *higher, spiritual mission*. As Dugin observes in *The Rise of the Fourth Political Theory* (2017): "I agree with Heidegger that the Earth (*Erde*) in *das Geviert* (Fourfold) is a philosophical Idea, as is world (*Welt*) (or heaven [*Himmel*]). Germany is an Idea, as is Russia. Earth is dialectically linked with the sky. Their battle forms the Dasein of a concrete *Volk*. Heidegger founded an existential understanding of the *Volk* . . . This point is the basis of the Fourth Political Theory." ^[42]

The Fourfold provided support for Dugin's view of the *mystical, salvific* role that "Mother Russia" was destined to play in the drama of world history. According to Dugin, however, it was the Russian *narod* or *Volk*, rather than Germany, that was the ontological-historical key to realizing "another Beginning." For Dugin, the narrative

structure of Heideggerian *Seinsgeschichte* remained intact. Heidegger had merely wagered on the wrong *Volk* or *narod*.

Dugin sought to rectify Heidegger's "error" by envisioning Russia as a "Third Rome": as the rightful heir to the Roman Empire. According to Dugin, twenty-first century Russia was a land-based "Behemoth," whose "Eurasian Mission" was to annihilate the Anglo-American "Leviathan" as the "New Carthage."



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NOTES

[1] Christoph Scheuermann, „The Steve Bannon Project: Searching in Europe for Glory Days Gone by,” *Der Spiegel*, 29 October 2018, <http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/stephen-bannon-tries-rightwing-revolution-in-europe-a-1235297.html> [spiegel.de]. Bannon's claim that he wanted to turn Breitbart into the "platform of the alt-right," was quoted by Sarah Posner in, "How Donald Trump's New Campaign Chief Created an Online Haven for White Nationalists," *Mother Jones*, 22 August 2016.

[2] Hawley, *Making Sense of the Alt-Right* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2018), 61. For an account of Spencer's and Gottfried's formulation of the "Alternative Right" epithet, see Jacob Siegel, "The Alt-Right's Jewish Godfather: How Paul Gottfried—

willing or reluctant—became the mentor of Richard Spencer and a philosophical lodestone for white nationalists,” *Tablet* 29, November 2018.

^[3] <https://www.counter-currents.com/2014/11/dugin-on-heidegger/>; *Counter-Currents* is a leading Alt-Right website. Accessed on 4 July 2020.

^[4] Johnson, “What is the Alternative Right?” *The Alternative Right*, Johnson, ed. (San Francisco: Counter-Currents, 2018), 22. In “Beyond the Alt-Right: Toward a New Nationalism,” Johnson asserts that “the one issue that White Nationalists most urgently need to destroy [is] the moral taboo against white identity politics. . . . Our movement must prefigure the hegemony we want to create in the broader society, encompassing the full diversity of whites, united only by the central principle of white identity politics”; *The Alternative Right*, 288-89, 292-93.

^[5] Heidegger, „Gelassenheit,“ GA 16, 521.

^[6] Heidegger, *Überlegungen II-VI*, GA 94, 7. In *Politische Philosophie in Deutschland: Studien zu ihrer Geschichte* (Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1974), Hermann Lübke describes the emergence of a dogmatic „Deutschland Metaphysik“ as an integral component of the „Ideas of 1914.“ As the epitome of this mentality, Lübke cites Marburg neo-Kantian Paul Natorp’s (1854 – 1924) dictum: “The German aims to conquer the world, not for his own sake, but instead for that of humanity; not in order, thereby, to gain something, but instead as an act of generosity” (194). Lübke traces the development of this „Deutschland Metaphysik“ back to J. G. Fichte’s *Addresses to the German Nation* (1807-08). He explains that, by elevating “German thinking, German philosophy, and German science” to the status of a metaphysical *summum bonum*, Fichte endowed “what was merely factual with the character of necessity.” Hence, Fichte’s demarche is only “comprehensible as the metaphysical doubling of what is merely factual, thereby transforming it into an inner essence” (196 – 97).

^[7] Andreas Umland, “Aleksander Dugin’s Transformation from a Lunatic Fringe Figure to a Mainstream Political Publicist, 1890-1998: A Case Study in the Rise of Late and Post-Soviet Russian Fascism,” *Journal of Eurasian Studies* I (2010), 146.

^[8] Dugin, “Fascism – Borderless and Red,” <http://anticompromat.ru/dugin/fashizm.html>; accessed on 9 November 2019.

^[9] Heidegger, *Überlegungen XII-XV*, GA 96 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2014), 82.

^[10] Andersen, *Rising from the Ruins: The Right of the 21st Century*, 93.

^[11] Dugin, *Political Platonism*, trans. M. Millerman and C. Ó Conaill (London: Arktos, 2019), 87-88.

^[12] *Political Platonism* is littered with Heidegger references, including extended discussions of “The Volk as Dasein,” “The Existential Structure of the Volk,” and “The Project of Authentic Society: The Existential Empire.”

^[13] See, for example, Anton Shekhovtsov’s article, “Putin’s Brain,” *Eurozine* (September 2014); see also, Robert Zubrin, “Putin’s Rasputin: Meet Aleksandr Dugin, the Mystical High Priest of Russian Fascism Who Wants to Bring About the End of the World,” *The Skeptic* 20 (2015), 21; Julia Smirnova, “Putins Vordenker: ein rechtsradialer Guru,” *Die Welt*, 11 July 2014; and Jens Siegert, “Was bewegt Wladimir Putin? Etwa Alexander Dugin?” <http://russland.boelblog.org/2014/06/02> ; accessed 2 September 2020. As Veronika Dorman pointed out in *Libération*, «Alexandre Douguine: chantre de l’eurasisme anti-américain en Russie,» (27 April 2014), during the Ukraine crisis, Dugin’s influence was especially noticeable in the case of two key Putin advisors: the economist Sergei Glazyov and the president of the Russian Duma Sergei Narychkin.

^[14] See John Dunlop, “Aleksander Dugin’s *Foundations of Geopolitics*,” *Demokratizatsiya* 12 (2004), 43-44.

^[15] Marlene Laruelle, “The Three Colors of Novorossiia, or the Russian Nationalist Mythmaking of the Ukrainian Crisis,” *Post-Soviet Affairs* 32 (2016): 55–74.

^[16] Claus Leggewie, *Anti-Europäer*, 62.

^[17] *Ibid.*

^[18] Douguine, “La Victoire de Donald Trump,” *Katechon*, 10 November 2016.

^[19] Bernhard Odehnal, “Gipfel treffen mit Putins fünfter Kolonne,” *Der Tagesanzeiger*, June 3, 2014. See the useful discussion in Shekhovtsov, *Russia and the Western Far Right* (New York: Routledge, 2018), 199.

^[20] Quoted in *Eurasianism and the European Far Right: Reshaping the Europe-Russia Relationship*, Marlene Laruelle, ed. (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2015), vii.

^[21] Heidegger, *Überlegungen II-VI*, GA 94 ,124.

^[22] Dugin, *Heidegger: The Possibility of Russian Philosophy* (Moscow, 2011), 115; cited in M. Brumlik, “Das alte Denken der neuen Rechten,” *Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik* 3 (2016). For a complete list of Dugin’s books on Heidegger, see <http://evrasia-books.ru>.

^[23] See Alexander Shekhovtsov, “Alexander Dugin and the West European New Right, 1989-1994,” in *Eurasianism and the European Far Right*, 35-54.

^[24] Leggewie, *Die Anti-Europäer*, 73-74.

- [25] Heidegger, *Die Geschichte des Seyns*, GA 69 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1998), 74.
- [26] Dugin, *Heidegger: The Philosophy of Another Beginning* (London: Arktos, 2014), 162-164; emphasis added.
- [27] Dugin, “Donald Trump: The Swamp and the Fire,” <http://www.4pt.su/en/content/donald-trump-swamp-and-fire>; accessed on 9 November 2018.
- [28] Heidegger, *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, GA 40 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1983), 40-41; *Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. Ralph Manheim (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959), 37.
- [29] Dugin, *Heidegger: Die Möglichkeit der Russischen Philosophie* (Moscow, 2011), 115, quoted in Brumlik, “Das alte Denken der neuen Rechten,” 110-111. Also see J. Backman, “Radical Conservatism and the Heideggerian Right: Heidegger, de Benoist, Dugin,” *Frontiers in Political Science* (September 2022) : “The notion of an end of the metaphysics of subjectivity that, for Heidegger, dominates modernity and culminates with Nietzsche, and of an emerging postmodern ‘other beginning ‘centered around a hermeneutics of historical and cultural finitude *underpin an ethnocultural particularism and relativism and a pluralistic geopolitical theory sharply opposed to all forms of liberal universalism*” (4).
- [30] Dugin, *The Fourth Political Theory*, trans. M. G. Selboda (London: Arktos, 2012), 234.
- [31] Weiß, *Der autoritäre Revolte*, 200.
- [32] Dugin, *The Last War of the World Island: The Geopolitics of Contemporary Russia*, trans. J. Bryant (London: Arktos, 2015), 10.
- [33] *Ibid.*, 8.
- [34] *Ibid.* 13.
- [35] See Rossman, “Moscow State University’s Department of Sociology and the Climate of Opinion in Post-Soviet Russia,” in *Eurasianism and the European Far Right*, 66.
- [36] Shenfield, *Russian Fascism: Traditions, Tendencies and Movements* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 194.
- [37] Cited by Andreas Umland, „Faschismus à la Dugin,“ *Blätter für Deutsche und Internationale Politik* 12 (2007), 1432.
- [38] Anton Barbashin and Hannah Thoburn, “Alexander Dugin and the Philosophy Behind Putin’s Invasion of Crimea,” *Foreign Affairs*, 31 March 2014.

^[39] An English translation by Nina Kouprianova appeared in 2014, under the imprint of Alt-Right impresario Richard Spencer's Washington Summit Institute. At the time, Kouprianova and Spencer were husband and wife. The preface to the English translation was written by Paul Gottfried, the doyen of American paleo-conservatism, who, in 2007, along with Spencer, coined the term "Alternative Right." See, Jacob Siegel, "The Alt-Right's Jewish Godfather: How Paul Gottfried—Willing or Reluctant—Became the Mentor of Richard Spencer and a Philosophical Lodestone for White Nationalists," *Tablet*, 29 November 2016.

^[40] Heidegger, "Building, Dwelling, Thinking," in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. A. Hofstadter (New York: Harper Row, 1977), 143 – 161.

^[41] Young, "The Fourfold," in the *Cambridge Companion to Heidegger*, C. Guignon, ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 273; Frederick Olafson, "The Unity of Heidegger's Thought," *Cambridge Companion to Heidegger*, 117. See also, Matthew Sharpe, "In the Crosshairs of the Fourfold: Critical Thoughts on Alexander Dugin's Heidegger Interpretation," *Critical Horizons* 21 (2020), 167 – 187.

^[42] Dugin, *Rise of the Fourth Political Theory*, trans. M. Millerman (London: Arktos, 2017), 212.