

Marlène Laruelle, *Russian Eurasianism: An Ideology of Empire*. Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2008. 276 pp. ISBN 978-0-8018-9073-4.

The roots and ideological core of inter-war Eurasianism, the development of Eurasianist ideas among post-war Soviet dissent and the upswing of Eurasianism in the period of post-Soviet transformation. Such would be a brief summary of the thematic content of the volume *Russian Eurasianism: An Ideology of Empire* written by Marlène Laruelle, a prominent French specialist on nationalism and political philosophy of contemporary Russia and Central Asia. This work is a revised translated edition of the French original *L'idéologie eurasiiste russe ou comment penser l'empire* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1999).

Political and social transformation in Russia throughout less than the last decade, marking also the publishing of the first French and the second English edition of the book, prompted the author to strongly emphasize that there was no connection whatsoever between the translated study and the ideological background of the officially supported Russian patriotism. Laruelle also prefaced that the aim of her work was to analyze Eurasianism and Neo-Eurasianism on solely intellectual grounds. The author rules out and plays down any impact of Eurasianist ideas on either the internal or foreign policy of the Kremlin as well as on programs of Russia's nationalist parties and groupings. These issues are thus nearly entirely left out.

The first part of the book focuses on the various original theories of Eurasianism among inter-war Russian *émigrés*. The subject of interest of the second part is the work of Lev Gumilev, dubbed as the “last of the Eurasianists”. Based on a very detailed analysis of Gumilev's (pseudo-)scientific work and correspondence, Laruelle convincingly argues that his association with the “Founding Father” of Eurasianism is to a large degree fallacious. The author asserts that it was rather Alexander Panarin and Alexander Dugin, representatives of the incoherent movement known as Neo-Eurasianism, who held ideas similar to the ideological grounds of Eurasianism. While Panarin was well-known mainly for his elaboration on the Eurasianist philosophy of history, the importance of Dugin's work on geopolitical theories lay mainly in his connections with prominent research institutions and political circles. However, Laruelle opines that Neo-Eurasianism intellectually lags behind Eurasianism in every respect. Neo-Eurasianist works are less elaborative, often contradictory with each other and apart from a few exceptional cases lack any literary qualities.

The two final chapters in this volume examine the development of Eurasianist ideas in ethnically non-Russian regions – first in Russia as such and then in Kazakhstan and Turkey. The author holds Eurasianism in Tatarstan and Yakutia-Sakha for “less theoretical and more pragmatic Eurasianism, centered on the search for a political, economic and symbolic balance between center and the periphery” (p. 170). (Neo-) Euroasianism plays a similar role in Central Asia and especially in Kazakhstan. The

relationship between the center and the periphery in this case shifts outside of the borders of current Russia into the post-Soviet region. As for the Turkish intellectual movement of the analyzed concept, the author primarily explores the clashes between Turkism, Pan-Turkism, Turanism and Kemalism. The essential conclusion of this volume is the insistence on a strict differentiation between all existing branches of Neo-Eurasianism and the intellectual heritage of inter-war Eurasianism. Also, the assumption that Neo-Eurasianism is a comprehensive intellectual concept is severely challenged.

Jakub Andrle

Molik Witold, Żaliński Henryk (eds.), **„O nas bez nas”: historia Polski v historiografiach obcojęzycznych**. Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 2007, 258 pp. ISBN 978-83-7177-552-9.

The anthology “O nas bez nas” [About Us Without Us] consists of updated proceedings presented at the XVII General Assembly of Polish Historians in Cracow in September 2004 that among other things dealt with non-Polish historiographical approaches to Polish history. The aim of the volume is to grasp the image of Polish history given by foreign history books (including textbooks); the emphasis is placed especially on the choice of historical topics, usage of myths and stereotypes and the general perception of Polish history abroad. Apart from that, the volume attempts to expound the salience of Polish historiography, its future course, subjects of interest, methods and findings in foreign countries.

The conceptions of Polish history are analyzed in two geographical realms: in the so-called big countries (USA, France, Germany and Russia) and neighbouring countries (or historically neighbouring countries) of Poland (Czech Republic, Lithuania, Ukraine and Hungary). John J. Kulczycki brings an interesting analysis of the historical research on Poland in the USA. He primarily examines American textbooks and comes to the conclusion that Poland is mostly mentioned with relation to Western Europe. Likewise, turning points of Polish history are often misinterpreted or sketchily explained. The only realm that American historiography pays more attention to is the Jewish question. Daniel Beauvois contributed with a study on French historiography. He gives an overview of all prominent historians that have dealt with the topic but also refers to the role of non-historians that for example translated Polish fiction. Małgorzata Willaume in her paper even looked into Daniel Beauvois’s work.

Poland has a much more important place in German historiography. This is shown by Michael G. Müller on the examples of German historical research on