

## A Clash of Civilizations? Revisiting Russian Identity Politics at the 'End of the End of the Cold War'

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### Abstract

In the summer of 1993, the article “The Clash of Civilizations?” (with the question mark) was published by Samuel Huntington in *Foreign Affairs*. Three years later Huntington’s expanded thesis was published in book format. Article and book generated both discussion and controversy, given that the author had posited the idea that civilizations, which may also be read as cultural communities or cultural fault lines posed a great threat to world peace in the New World Order that had emerged from the end of the Cold War. Is his work simply rooted in its own time period as a response to Fukuyama’s *End of History and the Last Man* (1989 and 1992) and the beginning of the War against Terrorism (11 September 2001) – roughly a ten year-long period? Or, does it still resonate today at the ‘End of the End of the Cold War’ in the continuing aftermath of the 2008 Financial Crisis, growing terrorism and the rise of right-wing populism? This chapter will revisit Huntington’s *Clash of Civilizations* with reference to key Russian intellectuals writing in the period, most notably Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Igor Chubais and Alexander Dugin. It will demonstrate how these writers have influenced Russian opinion both during the crisis years of the 1990s and in Vladimir Putin’s resurgent Russia. The focus of this chapter will be on Russia, Europe and the influence and fluid nature of identity politics.

**Keywords:** Identity politics, cultural conflicts, the ‘End of the End of the Cold War’ contested pasts, sub-state nationalisms, core states, ‘fault-line wars’ Eurasia and thalassocracy.

## Introduction

One of my scholarly activities over the past twenty-five years has been to try and understand Russia in terms of its own sense of identity and its ever-changing and usually ambiguous relationship with Europe. How do Russians perceive themselves; and, how have Russia's relations changed with Europe and the West? This has been driven not just by my scholastic and research-based interests, but also by my teaching. The result has been not just reflections on the contemporary period of Yeltsin's two terms of office (1991 – 1999) – otherwise known as the 'Wild 90s', Putin's two terms (2000 – 2008), Medvedev's single term (2008 – 12) and Putin's current term (2012 -), but also considering the long view of Russian history, going back to the time of Kievan Rus', Muscovy, the 300 year-long Romanov dynasty and 75 years of Soviet history.

The original intention of this chapter had been to view Russia through the prism of Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations*, given that it is now twenty-five years since the first publication of his ideas in *Foreign Affairs* and that, although highly critical of his work, I had nevertheless been stimulated by his thoughts on core and cleft societies and also comments that he had made on Russian identity and Russia's relations with Ukraine. However, I also wanted to revisit this work and put it into a more solid context, with references to other writers from the 1990s, most notably Alexander Solzhenitsyn and his 1995 publication *The Russian Question at the End of the Twentieth Century* and Igor Chubais' *From the Russian Idea to a New Idea for Russia*. I felt that putting this work together would resolve questions which had arisen from two earlier papers I had written in this series on relations between Russia, Ukraine and Europe and, indeed the actual introduction to my PhD thesis, some fifteen years ago. In the process of putting this work together, I was introduced to the recent translations into English of Alexander Dugin, one-time advisor to President Putin. The works are: *Eurasian Mission* (2014) and *Last War of the World-Island: The Geopolitics of Contemporary Russia* (2015). So, in this chapter, I will be referring to four key writers: Samuel Huntington, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Igor Chubais, and Alexander Dugin. Needless to say, this is still very much work in progress, but I would like to share some of my observations.

### Situating *The Clash of Civilizations* in Its Own Time

In the summer of 1993, "The Clash of Civilizations?" was published by Samuel Huntington in *Foreign Affairs*. Huntington's thesis was developed into a book and published by Simon and Schuster in 1997. Article and book generated both

discussion and controversy given that the author posited the idea that civilizations, which may also be read as cultures or cultural difference posed a great threat to world peace in the New World Order that had emerged from the end of the Cold War.

It would be easy to just dismiss *Clash of Civilizations* as a response to Fukuyama's *End of History* (1989 and 1992); yet, it was very much a product of the time in which it was being written. They were certainly heady days, with the end of the Cold War, the birth of a New World Order, the emergence of the European Union and new nations rising. On the down-side, we witnessed the rise of nationalism and inter-ethnic conflict which impacted so heavily upon the Western Balkans and the former Soviet Union. Huntington's work certainly opened up a huge and often vitriolic debate in the fields of International Relations and Identity Politics. Particularly, from scholars working in the field of post-colonial studies, who objected to his treatment of 'civilisations' as an agglomeration of lower-level cultures, and as some sort of mega-culture concept. Also, from scholars working in much more clearly-defined areas of regional studies, such as the Balkans and South Eastern Europe.

At first sight *The Clash of Civilizations* seemed to replace one paradigm with another; the struggle between two competing ideologies was replaced by a clash between seven competing civilisations. The question was, did we need yet another paradigm (exactly my reflections on Alexander Dugin today!)? The book was a product of its time, but it was also rejected by many scholars who were also writing at the time, much as some have been rejecting Edward Lucas' ideas on 'The New Cold War' more recently (2008, 2014). Yet, Huntington was basically trying to understand and explain the inter-ethnic conflicts that were taking place in the 1990s and predict what might take place in the not too distant future.

He produced a "master plan" which drew from many other writings of the day. Huntington's work was very much a synthesis of ideas that were already predominant among Western thinkers and academic writers in the early 1990s. Indeed, one can easily find similarity in other works written at the time, though written on a much smaller scale, such as Misha Glenny's book *The Fall of Yugoslavia* which was published in September 1992.

To be kind, perhaps the key criticism was that Huntington painted too broad a canvas and missed out on the detail. The result was an apparent drift into essentialism at a time when there was a real crisis in the representation of local conflicts, and one was left with the feeling that he avoided local identities on the ground because he was looking at the bigger picture by trying to trace global connections. So that the more deeply that one understood and experienced a society, the more one found holes in

Huntington's argument. I, for one particularly found his depiction of the Western Balkans irritating and made much of this in the introduction to my PhD thesis (2002).

There was considerable confusion over 'Slavonic identities'. I will cite just one paragraph adapted from the abstract to my thesis:

...whereas Huntington's ideas on 'torn societies' and 'civilizational fault lines' might seem feasible on the grand scale, the overriding architecture of his theories seemed to crumble, the more one paid closer attention to the detail. Herein lies one of many contradictions to be found in Huntington's work. For example, in his original *Foreign Affairs* article (p. 15 in the 1996 edition) within one page, he has consigned Yugoslavia to the dustbin of history because of religious difference (completely ignoring other cultural markers of ethnic identity, such as language, culture, ethnicity, and a shared, common history). Yet, in the same breath, by reference to the then current tension and the risk of potential armed conflict between Ukraine and Russia in 1991 and 1992 over the Crimea, the Black Sea Fleet and nuclear weapons, he argues that conflict will not only break out between the two states because of that self-same Slavonic ethnic identity (without mentioning Orthodoxy), and one assumes a common history, that he has denied the Serbs, Croats and Bosnians above. (Hudson, 2002, p. 23)

Perhaps, what causes one 'civilization' to go to war with another can also cause another 'civilization' to refrain from conflict.

But, we should not dwell too much on past criticisms. Some of what Huntington wrote in 1993 and 1997 still holds water today. First and foremost, he helped to put culture firmly onto the map of various disciplines, such as International Relations and Politics. Though historians had been doing that for some time, going back to Marc Bloch and his *Annales* school of history. Furthermore, Huntington's work helped us to understand sub-state nationalisms, lingering conflicts and ripple effects, long before we even called them that.

Now, twenty-five years on, the post war settlement (1945) has been exhausted (Furedi, *Spiked*, November 2016) whilst the post Cold War 'new world order' has more recently come to an end. We now find ourselves at the 'End of the end of the Cold War.' So, maybe it is time to revisit, revise and reappraise Huntington's work alongside other works on identity politics in the light of the 2008 financial crisis, the shift towards populism and the rise of demagogic leaders.

### **What *The Clash of Civilizations* Said about Russia and Ukraine**

Perhaps the best way to provide a flavour of Huntington's take on Russia and Ukraine is simply to reflect on one or two quotations taken from his *Clash of Civilizations*. For example, when discussing to the role of language politics from the perspective of communication rather than identity, Huntington comments that: "Throughout history the distribution of languages in the world has reflected the distribution of power in the world" (p. 62). He then goes on to add that: "The decline of Russian power is accompanied by a parallel decline in the use of Russian as a second language" (p. 63). This was reflected in the retreat of the Soviet/Russian military presence from the whole of Eastern and Central Europe after 1989, from former East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Bulgaria and Hungary, then later from the Baltic States of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, and then from western Ukraine. More recently, since the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century the resurgence of Russia has been prominent especially in Eastern Ukraine and Crimea. This has had a ripple effect throughout Eastern Europe and the Western Balkans. Indeed, Russian influence is clearly expanding at a time when public support for EU membership in the Western Balkans is declining as the UK's influence seems to be fading after the outcome of the so-called 'Brexit vote' on 23 June 2016 (Wintour, 2018). The situation has no doubt been exacerbated since Jean-Claude Juncker announced that EU membership is off the agenda for the Balkans "until some distant date in the future". In the meantime, Russia has clearly been playing on its Orthodox and Slavonic ties in countries such as Serbia and Macedonia and among those sub-state nationalities to be found in Republika Srpska and the northern, predominantly Serbian entity of Kosovo and Metohija around Mitrovica. Witness for example Russian cultural initiatives in Macedonia today with regard to encouraging the study of Russian culture, language and literature. But, if Russian soft power and the siren calls of Sputnik are having any effect in the Western Balkans it may be noted that the BBC World Service will soon be returning to the region in digitised format, following its demise under the Cameron government in 2011. We can only look to the Western Balkans summit planned for London in 2018 and also to an ending of the 'name dispute' being negotiated between Macedonia and Greece through the auspices of Matthew Nimetz. In the interim, Macedonia must join NATO.

Twenty-five years ago, and with regard to Ukraine, Huntington added this rather interesting piece of foresight, quoting a comment made by a Russian general: "Ukraine or rather eastern Ukraine will come back in five, ten or fifteen years. Western Ukraine can go to hell" (p. 167). It would in fact take twenty years for this to happen with the occupation of Crimea and the conflict over eastern Ukraine which

erupted in 2014. Huntington adds that a rump western-oriented Ukraine would only be viable if it had strong and effective Western support: “Such support is, in turn, likely to be forthcoming only if relations between the West and Russia deteriorated so seriously and came to resemble those of the Cold War” (pp. 167-168).

This last statement might appear to resemble the situation we find ourselves in today, twenty-five years on, especially if one follows the line advocated by Edward Lucas in his book *The New Cold War: Putin’s Threat to Russia and the West* (2008 and 2014). Personally, I still prefer to refer to the current climate between Russia and the West as “The End of the End of the Cold War” rather than “The New Cold War”.

Huntington sees Russia as a ‘torn’ country since the reign of Peter ‘The Great’ in that it is “divided over the issue of whether it is a part of Western civilisation or is a core of a distinct Eurasian Orthodox civilization” (p. 138). This is an understanding of the conundrum of Russian identity, which takes us straight back to the divide between Westernisers and Slavophiles, to say nothing of the *Narodniki* in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, all nicely illustrated in a recent close reading of Turgenev’s *Fathers and Sons* (1860), written on the eve of the Emancipation of the Serfs, or indeed one of the overriding intellectual themes of Tolstoy’s great novel *War and Peace* (1869). One could even take this all back to the Normanist versus Slavacist controversy over the origins of the Kievan Rus’ state in the 9<sup>th</sup> century.

Finally, on this there is Huntington’s most useful interpretation of how Russian identity differs so much from that of Europe:

Russia’s relations with Western civilization have evolved through four phases. In the first phase, which lasted down to the reign of Peter the Great (1689 – 1725), Kievan Rus’ and Muscovy existed separately from the West and had little contact with Western European societies. Russian civilization developed as an offspring of Byzantine civilization and then for two hundred years, from the mid-thirteenth to the mid-fifteenth centuries, Russia was under Mongol suzerainty. Russia had no or little exposure to the defining historical phenomena of Western civilization: Roman Catholicism, feudalism, the Renaissance, the Reformation, overseas expansion and colonization – religion, languages, separation of church and state, rule of law, social pluralism, representative bodies, individualism – were almost totally absent from the Russian experience. The only possible exception is the Classical legacy, which, however, came to Russia via Byzantium and hence was quite different from that which came to the West directly from Rome. Russian civilization was a product of its indigenous roots in Kievan Rus’ and Muscovy, and the

substantial impact, and prolonged Mongol rule. These influences shaped a society and a culture which had little resemblance to those developed in Western Europe under the influence of very different forces (Huntington, pp. 139-140).

If Huntington was trying to explain Russia to a western audience in the period of the New World Order, what were Russian writers making of Russian identity at the same time? For this we need turn to two key Russian thinkers in the 1990s, Alexander Solzhenitsyn and Igor Chubais.

### **An Idea of Russia: Solzhenitsyn and Chubais**

The collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s led Russians once again to attempt to explain themselves, not unlike their forbears, the Slavophiles and the Westernizers in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. What were the Russians? What was Russia? Although these questions and the literature that stemmed from them pre-dated *Glasnost* and could be found in a proto-nationalist literature of the 1970s, and were obviously predated by writings in the nineteenth century, it was Solzhenitsyn who became the main mouthpiece in the 1990s of this essentially Russian question of seeking their own identity.

A new literature built upon Russian soul-searching had emerged in the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union. This particularly focussed upon the writings of Alexander Solzhenitsyn and Igor Chubais. In this interplay between literature, history and politics one is confronted with a return to an old issue of identity, that of the *Russian Idea* which first appeared at the end of the nineteenth century. This begged the following question, were Russian intellectuals working in the tradition of their late nineteenth century predecessors, especially the *Vekhi*, or Landmarks of 1909, in an attempt to find genuine solutions to the Russian problem, usually by rejecting western values, or were they instead involved in some sort of self-centred, navel-gazing, or Russian collective solipsism, that fed off the eternal sufferings of the Russian soul?

Clearly, Russia had experienced a difficult period of transition. Russians perceived themselves to have been in an ideological vacuum, lost at sea and trying to find themselves again after the collapse of the Soviet Union. At the end of the millennium it seemed as though Russian *imperium* had been passed on the 'sick man's baton' from the Ottoman Empire in the continual European relay of the 'powers'.

The three books, which had a great impact upon that debate, were Igor Chubais' *From the Russian Idea to a New Idea for Russia* (1995) and Alexander Solzhenitsyn's *Rebuilding Russia: Reflections and Tentative Proposals* (1991) and his *The Russian Question at the End of the Twentieth Century* (1995). Both writers were to influence Boris Yeltsin, who had organised a committee of writers and intellectuals with the task of coming up with a new 'Russian idea' with the aim of creating a 'normal society' within two to three decades from the then perspective of Russia's difficult transition. Interestingly, the UK edition of Solzhenitsyn's *Rebuilding Russia* has the sub-title *Manifesto for a New Russia*.

Igor Chubais argued that there was a need for the creation of civic organisations to act as channels for the people to express their opinions and that the idea of a new Russia should be based upon a connection with Russia's historical roots. The reason for this was his belief that Russia had suffered from a collective memory loss and the problem of self-identification. At the heart of the affair was the fact that in the past Russian national identity had always gravitated around the idea of imperialism and expansion and had never really centred upon its own specific sense of identity. Russians therefore saw themselves as belonging to a country that had torn itself away from the European mainstream, but that it had been desperately trying to return to Europe. Chubais feared that the dangers of developing a national Russian idea might easily be abused in the hands of fascists, extremists and nationalists whose activities had been so widely reported in the early 1990s (Zhirinovskiy, Limonov and Dugin among them!) For Chubais, Russia was a sick state; a sick society and its only salvation in his eyes lay upon the three pillars of Orthodoxy, communalism and the acquisition of territory. It is fascinating how these things often tend to be expressed in triads... and here one thinks of Count Sergei Uvarov, advisor to Tsar Nicholas I on the development of the Russian Empire with his policy of Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Nationality (1833).

For Solzhenitsyn, the real problem for Russia had been western civilisation. He argued, like Chubais, for a regeneration of traditional Russian values, backed by constant criticism of the West. In his *Rebuilding Russia: Reflections and Tentative Proposals* (1991), also known as *Manifesto for a Rebirth of Russia*, Solzhenitsyn advocated that Russia should give up its empire and look into the essence of Russianness. This might lead us to interpret Solzhenitsyn as a cultural nationalist, whilst relegating those believers in a 'greater Russia'. Which could regain its so-called 'near abroad' to the ranks of imperialists: Zhirinovskiy, Zyuganov, Limonov, Dugin et al., since Solzhenitsyn identified the Russian nation with the Russian state and



ridiculed Zhirinovskiy for his empire-building and 'near abroad' demands in *The Russian Question* (1995) and in his eyes empire-building was contrary to the Russian national interest. This tied in well with a statement by Chubais that eighty-five per cent of Russians were actually against the idea of Russia 'lording it over others.' Although Solzhenitsyn advocated the fundamental unity of the Belarussian, Ukrainian and Russian peoples, as three Slavonic branches that had been historically separated by "The Mongol Invasion and Polish colonisation" (Coalson, 2014). That was the 1990s.

Alexander Solzhenitsyn strongly criticised the influence of what he perceived as having been 'failed' western models imposed on Russia, both in the past, with regard to adopting western bureaucratic absolutism (under Peter 'The Great' and Catherine 'The Great') in the eighteenth century and the adoption of socialism in the twentieth century. Likewise, clearly a writer who had managed to avoid the post-modernist approaches of his western intellectual peers and epigones, Solzhenitsyn described contemporary western mass popular culture as: "The liquid manure of western culture" (p. 94). Otherwise, he was highly critical of elected, representative government since he believed that: "Democracy is a means whereby a well organised minority holds sway over an unorganised majority" (p. 68). By way of solving this problem, Solzhenitsyn advocated choosing respected members of the local community who were known to be of good character and ability. One might detect in this something of the yearning for a strong Russian leader again. A common Russian trait, from Ivan 'The Terrible', through to Peter 'The Great', and from Catherine 'The Great' to Stalin. It had been Catherine who had said: "The Russians love the feel of the whip" and Stalin who had written *Nastavnik* (teacher) in the margin of Eisenstein's script for his iconic film *Ivan the Terrible* (1944). Little did Solzhenitsyn know it at the time, but his wishes for a strong leader would be answered six years later, at the turn of a new millennium, when on 1 January 2000 Vladimir Putin would be installed as Boris Yeltsin's successor. Certainly, when Putin rose to power in 1999 he was admired by Solzhenitsyn for restoring Russia's national pride, whilst Putin's statements on Ukraine since that time have been reflected by Solzhenitsyn in his *Rebuilding Russia* (Coalson, 2014).

In the meantime, for Solzhenitsyn the solutions to Russia's problems in the 1990s seemed to lie in the need to rebuild Russia by using systems that had their roots in solid Russian institutions rather than borrowing from Western models. He advocated building on the Zemstva, set up by the Alexandrine Reforms of 1864 or the Zemski Sobor/Duma (pre-1613).

Whereas Solzhenitsyn argued that Russia's failure might have been traced to the employment of what he perceived to have been the acquisition and implementation of 'failed' ideas from the West, Igor Chubais had advocated that the only solution for Russia was a triune union of Orthodoxy, Communalism and Expansion. The resonance with Uvarov's Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Nationality was not accidental, neither was Solzhenitsyn's reference to the 'liquid manure' of western culture.

Enter Alexander Dugin.

### **Alexander Dugin: Eurasia and Geopolitics**

Nicknamed "Putin's Rasputin", it is said that Alexander Dugin is the articulator of the Kremlin-approved nationalist philosophy. Elsewhere, Dugin is: "...seen as a brilliant philosopher, but brilliance and madness are very close to each other" (Meyer and Ant, 2017). Otherwise, Dugin's detractors describe him as a neo-fascist and he would certainly seem to have had a rather dubious past, joining up with the ultra-nationalist group *Pamyat* in 1988 before taking a leading role in the re-founded Communist Party of the Russian Federation, founded by Gennady Zyuganov.

Apparently, Dugin is an enthusiastic devotee of the Russian Old Believers who had broken away from the official Russian Orthodox Church in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century. A demagogue, he has advocated a retreat from the advance of western modernity, a rejection of western post-modern culture and a return to Russian traditionalism – just like the Slavophiles of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and not unlike Solzhenitsyn with his 'liquid manure' jibe and his Greater Russian, Orthodox nationalism. Dugin seems to disapprove of western liberal democracy, the West in general and American hegemony in particular.

As one of the earliest members of the National Bolshevik Party, Dugin associated with the poet Eduard Limonov. It was Limonov who was once filmed alongside Radovan Karadžić by the cable car on Mt. Trebević above Sarajevo, in 1992, promising Russian paramilitary mercenaries to the Republika Srpska and firing off occasional bursts from a heavy machine gun in the direction of the National Library on the banks of the River Miljacka, just for the effect. The library would later be completely destroyed by Bosnian Serb shell-fire on 25 August 1992 in an act that can be described as being little more than an act of pure cultural genocide, given the destruction of an estimated three million books (80 per cent of its stock) including the loss of 700 Islamic and Sephardic Jewish Ladino manuscripts and incunabula (Huseinović and Arbutina, 2012).

In May 2001, Dugin formed the Eurasia party and the Eurasian movement, the idea being to bring back a successful empire that had existed even before the Soviet Union. Essentially, Eurasia refers to the territory of the former Soviet Union.

Reading through Dugin's works, such as *The Eurasian Mission* (2014) and *Last War of the World-Island: The Geopolitics of Contemporary Russia* (2015) it is clear that Dugin dreams of a Russian strategic alliance with European Middle Eastern states, primarily Iran. Indeed for European, read Western Balkan. The aim being to build a Turkic-Slavonic alliance in the Eurasian sphere with the Commonwealth of Independent states at its heart radiating out from Russia's near abroad to other spheres of former Soviet/Russian influence. In reading his work one is strangely reminded of the writings of Vladimir Zhirinovsky in the early 1990s, who claimed that one day, Russian soldiers would be bathing their feet in the warm waters of the Red Sea, or how Russia would soon be sharing a common frontier with Germany! (Frazer and Lancelle, 1994).

Dugin's writings on Eurasia bear some similarity with the earlier work of Halford John Mckinder, the one-time director of the University of London's LSE, who, in 1904 had written: "Who rules Eastern Europe commands the Heartland; who rules the Heartland commands the World-Island; who rules the World-Island commands the world" (Mckinder, 1919).

Although his core book, *The Foundations of Geopolitics* (1997) which is used in Russian universities and military academies, has not yet been translated into English, Dugin's ideas have been translated elsewhere by Arktos. The following extract is illuminating:

In principle, Eurasia and our space, heartland Russia, remains the staging area of a new anti-bourgeois, anti-American revolution.... The new Eurasian empire will be constructed on the fundamental principle of the common enemy; the rejection of Atlanticism, strategic control of the USA, and the refusal to allow liberal values to dominate us. The common civilizational impulse will be the basis of a political struggle and union (Dugin, 2015).

He therefore advocates a conflict between Atlantis and Eurasia, between the thalassocratic and the telluric powers, so that all history can be interpreted as a battle between states and peoples. Admittedly, he climbs down a bit in a later version of *The Basics of Geopolitics* when he advocates that: "The principal conflict does not automatically mean war or a direct strategic conflict...." And he goes on to add: "Occasionally it can even soften into rivalry and competition, although a forceful

resolution can never be consciously ruled out.” (*Last War of the World Island*, 2015, p. 10). The implicit warning to the West lies there, and to quote Edward Lucas (2014, p.xiv) “Russia fears the West’s soft power, but not its will power.”

Earlier, Dugin had criticised Euro-Atlantic involvement in the 2004 Ukrainian presidential elections. Then, before war broke out between Russia and Georgia in 2008, Dugin visited South Ossetia and predicted: “Our troops will occupy the Georgian capital Tbilisi, the entire country, and perhaps even Ukraine and the Crimean peninsula, which is historically part of the Ukraine anyway” (*Der Spiegel*, 25 August 2008) and indeed they would! Once again one is reminded of some of the predictions of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy.

According to NBC News, Dugin is seen as being one of the authors of Putin’s initiative for the annexation of the Crimea by the Russian Federation. According to *The Financial Times*, in August 2014, Dugin had even called for a “genocide in Ukraine” (Sam Jones *et al.*, 2015). Dugin also described “Euromaidan” as a coup d’état carried out not only by Ukrainians, but also by the United States.

In his *Foundation of Geopolitics*, Dugin’s strategies include destabilization and disinformation campaigns by employing Russian special forces and asymmetric warfare, taking us straight back to the “little green men” who took part in the annexation of Crimea in 2014 (Hudson, 2014) and the way in which the Russian occupation of Georgia and Abkhazia was reported on *Russia Today* in the summer of 2008. To say nothing of: “...encouraging all kinds of separatism and ethnic, social and racial conflicts, actively supporting all dissident groups, thus destabilising internal political processes in the US (Ratner 2017, p.367),.

More recently, he is alleged to have played a key but largely clandestine role in patching up Russia’s relations with Turkey in the aftermath of Turkey’s shooting down of a Russian SU-24 jet fighter on its border with Syria on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2015 (Meyer and Ant, 2017). Then, after the inauguration of the new president of the United States, which Dugin declared to be the ‘happiest day of my life’ and commented that: “America not only isn’t an opponent, it’s a potential ally under Trump.” (ibid.)

There may be some hope for world peace yet; but, at the time of writing, what with the continuing debate over the alleged Russian Internet tampering of the US presidential elections and at a time when Anglo-Russian relations seem to be at an all-time low, as demonstrated by UK Foreign Minister’s recent visit to Moscow in December 2017 (Walker, 2017), and concerns in the UK of potential Russian cyber-

attacks or that a conflict with Russia could be surprisingly close (MacAskill, 2018) one can only keep one's fingers crossed and pray (Walker, 2017).

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has reviewed the changing nature of Russian Identity politics from three perspectives, covering two periods, over a time span of twenty-five years.

The three perspectives included:

1. Representations of Russia to the western world by Samuel Huntington in 1993 and 1997.
2. Parallel with Huntington, the Russian quest for self-identity in the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union as expressed in the works of Igor Chubais and Alexander Solzhenitsyn, as Russia negotiated the crisis years of the 'Wild 1990s', and finally
3. The writings of Aleksander Dugin since Vladimir Putin came to power in 2000.

As with the discipline of history, where interpretations of events past and present are frequently fluid and subject to changing interpretation, so with the field of Identity Politics in which representations of national identity can not only fluctuate, but can also greatly influence the spirit and mood of the times. Identity Politics, as expressed through the published opinions of intellectual authors can frequently impact upon populist public opinion and political leaderships which in turn can affect international relations, security and stability.

Just as students of Russian history in the nineteenth century might well turn to Turgenev, Tolstoy or Chekhov *inter alia* to gain a better understanding of the last fifty years of Tsarist Russia, so they can also turn to writers such as Huntington, Chubais and Solzhenitsyn and the role that they played in helping to define Russian identity in the New World Order that was ushered in at the end of the Cold War. Likewise, Solzhenitsyn and Dugin both provide us with immense insight into understanding the ideas behind the resurgent Russia that have been developing under Vladimir Putin over the past two decades.

In the light of reading these four authors one can denote a sense of continuity between them. Huntington's work demonstrated that whereas international politics had previously focused on relations between sovereign states, one should now consider relations not only between states and sub-state nationalisms, but also between potentially conflicting ethnic identities themselves. This was especially the

case when those ethnic communities were emerging from the collapse of greater multi-national states. *The Clash of Civilizations* therefore laid down the basic foundations of a clearer understanding of identity politics through the perceived lines of fissure between different ethnic entities, providing useful tools with which to understand the inter-ethnic warfare that seemed to dominate the 1990s. This interpretation was taken up in the writings of Chubais and Solzhenitsyn in the new world order that emerged at the end of the Cold War, parallel with the period of crisis ensued in the first decade of post-Soviet Russia. In their works, Chubais and Solzhenitsyn advocated a retreat from western culture and a return to Russian traditionalism. These ideas, not that far removed from the Slavophile tradition of 19<sup>th</sup> century, when mingled with a desire for a new, resurgent Russia at the turn of the century, feed directly into the themes that have been expressed more recently by Dugin at the 'End of the End of the Cold War'.

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