

*ALMANACH VIA EVRASIA, 2013, 2**Nina Dyulgerova**Professor of International Relations, Dr. Habil**Varna Free University,**Eurasia center VIA EVRASIA***THE PROBLEM BORDER AND/OR FRONTIER?**

The collapse of the bipolar model updates accents and problems which to a great extent determine the essential characteristic of the contemporary international relations. The issue of borders and their legal construction and regulation turns into a base for the processes which determine the specifics of the post-Soviet space. The last decade and a half convincingly proves that the problems connected with territorial and ethnic dissensions are a serious potential for the creation of sharp crisis situations and the rising of armed conflicts. The territorial-ethnic arguments turn into a permanent element of the border division. The attempts to review or change the existing borders and territories are grounds for the local conflicts to escalate to international confrontations. The stormy clashes on territorial-ethnic basis are a constant parameter mostly in the Caucasian region.

Border in the post-Soviet space is one of the main segments in international regulation. It is in direct relation to the question to what extent the frontier as a term and essence is part of the dynamic processes in the Caucasian region and whether the similarity or the difference between them determines the specifics of the processes in the Caucasian area. Each of these terms has its own characteristic and specific parameters, which applied to the object of study, create possibilities for adequate vision of the geopolitical and internationally-legal aspects of the issue.

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Border is a cognitively related term to geopolitics, which in the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> and in the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century turns into one of the leading directions in the theory of international relations. The land bound to the numerous and various communication networks transforms into geopolitical space which forms as an active subject and object of the social and political relations. The policy of the space in which the political processes take place creates the necessity to describe the space. A result of the modification of the cognitive perception of the world is the perception of geopolitics as a change in the understanding of geographical space and politics.

The dynamic processes of globalization, typical for contemporariness require a new, non-traditional geopolitics<sup>1</sup>, which entirely politicizes the geographical space. The geopolitical space is maximally filled up in imagery in figurative, mental and conceptual plan.

The contemporary international relations are becoming more and more a battlefield between the most powerful and vivid geopolitical images – the states, regions, political and military blocks<sup>2</sup>. A new global geopolitical space is being created in which permanently changing key geopolitical images of the world are crossing, interacting and competing with each other. The most effective of them create their own geopolitical contexts, their own visual zones of influence and auxiliary buffer geopolitical images. The specific geographical/geopolitical space is the natural cover of the foreign policy issues and international relations<sup>3</sup>.

Each culture creates its own images of the geographical space. Traditional cultures offer their own codes for their deciphering and understanding. The dominant and universal ways for their representation determines the development of the cartographic projection as early as in the beginning of the New Era. The further development of these images is connected with their autonomization in the culture. Beside that some independent types of geographic spaces appear (politically-geographical, culturally-geographical, economic-geographical, and socio-geographical) which are represented and interpreted by through the respective specific types of images<sup>4</sup>.

In the traditional physical-geographical space the numerous ‘layers’ of its images which differ by origin, structure and ways of functioning and specializations exist in parallel. Construction of geographical images is in direct connection to the processes of formalization and in the same time concentration of certain geographical notions. The geographical image is a combination vivid, concentrated signs, symbols, key visions, describing real spaces (territories, places, regions, countries, landscape, etc.) and is in direct dependence on the objectives of the task and the conditions of their creation. In most cases they are result of two

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<sup>1</sup> Agnew, J. Corbridge, S. *Mastering space. Hegemony, territory and international political economy* (London, New York: Routledge, 1995), pp. 214–227.

<sup>2</sup> Ó Tuathail, Gearóid *Critical Geopolitics* (Minnesota, 1996), pp. 187–225.

<sup>3</sup> Замятин Д. Геополитика: основные проблемы и итоги развития в XX веке <http://shmyak.nightmail.ru/teproblemgeo.doc>

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

main processes: the process of deliberate construction and the process of reconstruction, identification<sup>5</sup>.

The concept of 'natural borders' of the state, topical in the period of the New time, turns into one of the most substantial resources of geopolitics<sup>6</sup>. It studies political borders and the very concept of borders, using the terms border, line, frontier, etc., which shows the existing fight of the geographical images, constructed and designed outside the different sources of political power<sup>7</sup>.

The specifics of formation and development of the historically-geographic images allow the study of the topical problems of the contemporary geopolitics. Structurally the historical-geographical images are a specific kind of space-time continuum, in which the time and space parameters steadily fit in the respective signs, symbols and images.

The formation of the historical-geographical images of the borders is in continuous contradiction and interrelation with other historical-geographical images – these of the regions, states and nations. This also determines the perception of the historical-geographical images of the borders as a complex conglomerate of various images, some of which are transferred from distant historical-geographical places. The process of formation of such historical-geographical images is the interfusion and interweaving of the different symbols, signs, ideas of border, historical-geographically marking the specific visionary space<sup>8</sup>. The distant historical-geographical spaces are maximally attracted by the historical-geographical images of the border.

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<sup>5</sup> For more details on the concept of geographical images see *Замятин Д.* Моделирование географических образов: Пространство гуманитарной географии. Смоленск: "Ойкумена", 1999; *Замятин Д.* Политико-географические образы и геополитические картины мира (Представление географических знаний в моделях политического мышления). – Политические исследования, 1998, № 6, 80–92; *Замятин Д.* Историко-географические аспекты региональной политики и государственного управления в России. – Регионоведение, 1999, № 1, 163–173; Национальные интересы как система "упакованных" политико-географических образов. – Политические исследования, 2000, № 1, 78–81.

<sup>6</sup> *Бродель, Ф.* Что такое Франция. Кн. Первая. Пространство и история. Москва, 1994, 279–284.

<sup>7</sup> *Фрийдман Т.* Лексус и маслиновото дърво. С. 2001.

<sup>8</sup> *Плигузов А.* Текст-кентавр о сибирских самоедах. Москва, 1993; *Мыльников А.С.* Картина славянского мира: взгляд из Восточной Европы. Санкт-Петербург, 1996.

A typical example is the image of the North-American frontier, combining huge historical-geographical spaces as South America, Africa, Eastern Europe, Siberia, Central Asia and North China<sup>9</sup>.

The historical-geographical images of the border have some typological characteristics the most important amongst which are the 'instability' and 'turnover', related to the distortion of the real historical-geographical space. Perception and/or creation of the historical-geographical images of the border mean to experiment with space, with its quick 'expansion' through visual multiplication. The cultural, political, socio-economic and social events in it concentrate in a historical-geographical point, in the same time expanding the space of the historical-geographical image. This concentration of events (sometimes in different time and space from the point of view of traditional historical geography) allows the research of whole series of historical-geographical borders, directly fixating the dynamic and mobility of the real borders.

The historical-geographical images of borders are images which succeed to expand the real historical-geographical space and in the same time to concentrate different historical eras. This suggests close relation between the interpretation and representation of the historical-geographical images of the border. Representation of the image means that it is presented through adequate to its content combinations or systems of key symbols and signs. Representation is closely connected both to the directly separated border territories and to the outlining of the specific border symbols and signs which in historically-geographical aspect relate to the specific borders and border areas. Interpretation of the historical-geographical images requires choice of position and analysis directed to the already represented images. During interpretation autonomous space is created in which mental 'distances' are defined and 'landscape' of the visual system is formed. The result of interpretation is the creation of meta-space which includes the interpreted images and the key relations between them. Interpretation of the historical-geographical images of borders means research of their dynamics and structural transformations of the mentally-geographical area of the borders. Changes in conjuncture of real borders, their causes and consequences are directly related to the modification of the respective historical-geographical images. In the process of visual interpretation arise additional contexts (civilization, cultural and regional) allowing the assimilation and adoption of these modifications. The most important aspect in the interpretation of the historical-geographical images of borders is the change of symbols and signs, their structure, which are not directly dependent on the changes in the real borders, but change under the influence of indirect or obscure factors. Interpretation allows to catch the influence of these

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<sup>9</sup> Lamb, S. *The American Physical Society* (1970); *Замятин Д.* Моделирование геополитических ситуаций (На примере Центральной Азии во второй половине XIX века). – *Политические исследования*, 1998, № 2, 64–77. № 3, 133–147

factors and to discover the laws of autonomous functioning of the mentally-geographical spaces of the border. There are three ways to expand contexts:

- ✓ Use of historical-geographical images of a specific border in the interpretation of the historical-geographical images of borders in other civilized region. Disadvantage here is the schematic outlining of the contours and 'landscape' in the created mental geographical space.
- ✓ Presentation of a specific border (political, economic, cultural) in its capacity of a border of another type. Political borders can be presented as economic or civilization; cultural – as political. The disadvantage of this kind of interpretation is the risk of substituting one historical-geographical image of the borders with another and confusion of the visual-symbolic order.
- ✓ Interpreting the historical-geographical image of a particular border as a historical-geographical image of a specific region-border, within which specific way of life, territorial communities, visual and sign systems are formed. In reality the territories can be small or huge. The disadvantage here is the loss of the specifics of the historical-geographical images of the particular border, contently 'dissolved' in the researches of the regional historical-geographical image<sup>10</sup>.

Politics is one of the most favorable fields or ranges for visual-geographic research. The specialized geographical spaces which are to great extent autonomous variants of the base ('cartographic') space also suggest a system of specific geographical images. The mechanism of creation and development of geopolitical spaces suggests parallel development of a system of geopolitical images. Various, sometimes contradicting political-geographical images (of local population, military men, political and state activists) are layered on a particular political-, physical-, social- and economic-geographical substrate. This creates a complex system of political-geographical images, reacting to external influences by changing its configuration and structure<sup>11</sup>.

The dynamics of the different geopolitical spaces can be perceived as dynamics of the geopolitical images. The so called political and military duel between Russia and England in Middle Asia during the second half of the 19 century creates a specific geopolitical situation. In the European geopolitical coordinate system Russia is considered an 'Asian' state, whereas in the Middle-Asian coordinate system this contradiction is perceived as a duel between two

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<sup>10</sup> *Замятин Д.* Геополитика: основные проблемы и итоги развития в XX веке <http://shmyak.nightmail.ru/teproblemgeo.doc>

<sup>11</sup> *Замятин Д.* Моделирование геополитических ситуаций..., p. 66.

European states and the geopolitical image of Russia is European<sup>12</sup>. This kind of inversion of the geopolitical spaces leads to ambiguity of the geopolitical images.

The development and interrelation of the geopolitical spaces creates environment for different kinds of buffer and intervenient territorial zones between the power or fighting states. Territories under two powers are not a precedent in both old and new history. A typical example is Bosnia and Herzegovina during the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century – the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century of Austro-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire, as well as Russia, which after the Tatar-Mongol conquests in the Russian annals is presented as part of the Orthodox Christian land of Byzantine and as part of the possessions of the Mongol Khan<sup>13</sup>.

International relations can be viewed as a mobile and always changing network of systems of geopolitical images. The system of genesis and function of the geopolitical images is closely related to the system of the international relations which determines the three directions of usage in this sphere.

- ✓ Ideological formation of favorable or stable systems of geopolitical images, guaranteeing achievement of the set political targets.
- ✓ Technocratic use of geopolitical images oriented towards operatively chosen goal in international negotiations where a compromising environment and systems of geopolitical images working for the achievement of the set goal are created.
- ✓ Such a system, despite the temporary nature and intermediate results can have positive influence on the international negotiations.
- ✓ On a micro-level (interpretation direction) it means adaptation of the international agreements and decisions of the international conferences, different interpretation of the political-geographical map. Such interpretations create a certain distance to the traditional map, a kind of visual space above the map<sup>14</sup>.

Of significant importance for the development of economic and in the same time geopolitical images is the typical for geopolitics high fluency of space and time which is expressed in the process of their increase. All new forms of geopolitical organization traditionally offer new space-time parameters, which geopolitically consolidate the environment and create respective geopolitical images. Trends of closer relations and congestions of the geopolitical spaces lead to circulation of certain forms of geopolitical organization which in the

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p.73.

<sup>13</sup> Цымбурский В. Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Замятин Д. Геополитика: основные проблемы и итоги развития в XX веке <http://shmyak.nightmail.ru/teproblemgeo.doc>

dynamically changing geographical environment naturally change, improve or adapt<sup>15</sup>.

The structure of perceiving fundamental geopolitical images as Eurasia, Europe, heartland, limitrophe, space, etc. depends on the historical, cultural and ideological contexts whose development is directly dependant on the dynamics of the particular language. Moreover, in the process of its evolution the language can dictate different strategies for understanding contexts. It can also have its own geopolitics, interpreting the space, territories and regions<sup>16</sup>.

Geopolitics of the language depends directly on the cultural and civilization substrate on which it develops. It constantly adopts the strong geo-cultural and geo-historical images which are laid for a long time on certain territories. The creation of effective geopolitical images is connected with the development of specific language strategies. They are oriented to the expansion and making more profound the meaning of the traditional geopolitical terms, in their translation, in the new ideological and mythology contexts and also to the formation of language mechanisms producing principally new geopolitical interpretations. The combination of these segments is in the core of the meta-geopolitics. The totality of the most important actions, tactics and strategies in the contemporary visual geopolitical space is meta-geopolitics, whose base is structured upon well thought-through geopolitical PR-actions on the creation, expansion and cultivation of different geopolitical images. The essence of meta-geopolitics is the development of considered actions in the space of the existing geopolitical images and also the construction of new ones, sufficiently powerful and effective. The result is formation of meta-geopolitical space, configuration and landscape which depend on the global aims in the sphere of foreign policy and security<sup>17</sup>.

The possibilities which the geopolitical interpretations give in the historical-geographical and geopolitical space create a solid methodological base for research of this term though the prism of power technologies.

The border is not a mere line on a geographical map, end, border of geographic space or a territory. It is a specific end of the sphere of power, i.e. end of territories, stratified with the help of power technologies, touch zone, crossing,

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<sup>15</sup> Ильин, М. Проблемы и суждения. Обсуждение тезисов „Перспективы интегративной идеологии”. – Политический дискурс, 1997 № 3, p. 31.

<sup>16</sup> Agnew, J. Corbridge, S. *Mastering space. Hegemony, territory and international political economy*, (London, New York: Routledge, 1995), pp. 46–48.

<sup>17</sup> Замятин Д. Национальные интересы как система "упакованных" политико-географических образов. – Политические исследования, 2000, № 1, 78–81.

overlapping different, often of different type spaces and structures of power<sup>18</sup>. Such geopolitical ‘buffers’ create non-standard geopolitical images especially in contact between different political cultures.

Depending on the genesis of space of power and character of interrelation in the power structures several types of borders are formed as a specific segment of the sphere of power. The collapse of the Soviet Union raises the question of internal and external borders and turns them into major subjects of research. Inevitable are the parallels between the expansion of the Russian Empire and the formation of borders in the post-Soviet space.

The Russian historian V.O. Klyuchevski establishes the thesis that the colonization is the ‘major fact’ of the Russian history<sup>19</sup>. This segment is significant for the period of the Russian (Soviet) empire in which the integration processes are crucial part of its development. After the end of the Cold War the collapse of the Soviet Union creates conditions for new accents in the state-political process in the post-Soviet space. Borders turn into a center for establishing new political entities. The problem of unity of the state territory is now an issue of regularity of the state space form. The search for a ‘law’ of the space of a state, based on the integrity of the external space form (geographical place) and internal form (structure of territory) becomes a problem of choice of way and following the existing direction. The big space – this is not a space of big topography, but space of many different parts, not corresponding to each other. This issue is topical for both the successor of the USSR, the Russian Federation and for the rest of the subjects of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), for which the establishing or changing of borders turns into a significant part of their existence.

The functioning of a specific system is implicitly connected to the integrity of the ‘export’ and the restoration of structure<sup>20</sup>. The subjects in the post-Soviet space are products of the Russian state-political development through the centuries. The problem of restoration or establishment of technological (power) structure is related not only to the ‘export’ of power techno-structure, but to its permanent insufficiency. The non-homogeneity of the technological structure, predetermined by the specifics of the Russian colonization, suggests its misbalance. In different spots of the former and present Russian space the power acts with different intensity and pace and has different possibilities for self-reproduction, regeneration and self-restoration. The technical insufficiency,

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<sup>18</sup> For more details see *Королев С.* Бесконечное пространство. Гео- и социографические образы власти в России. Москва, 1997.

<sup>19</sup> *Ключевский В. О.* Сочинения: Т. 1. Москва, 1956, р. 31.

<sup>20</sup> *Очерки методологии познания социальных явлений.* Москва. 1970. С. 286; Sadowski. Y. *The Myth of Global Chaos* (Washington, 1998).

however, does not mean a mere weakness of authorities, although it is a weakness and insufficiency of the power mechanism. This weakness can have different outcomes: from impossibility to stratify the natural geographical space or to re-stratify space of power to endless direct violence, compensating the technological insufficiency, i.e. to establishment of extremely strict macro-technology.

In the same time, certain segments, geographical conjunctions and ‘corridors’ of the Russian space of power are technologically oversaturated. Technological oversaturation, by nature, like technical insufficiency, leads to hypertrophic violence, typical for the huge spaces in the East. The difference is in its kind of crystallization in the Russian space<sup>21</sup>.

In the context of this approach of researching the borders in the post-Soviet space the specific geographical position of the former Soviet empire and its present political subjects in it cannot be eliminated. Russia is a Eurasian state whose territory is on two continents – Asia and Europe. The border between the continents goes over Ural to the Caspian Sea. The geographical parameters are in the core of one of the most stable ideologies in the Russian social-political sphere during the 20<sup>th</sup> century – the Eurasian. Eurasianism puts the accent on the role of the space in the Russian history and this of cultural-geographical border between Europe and Asia. The contemporary interpretation of Eurasianism is based on the thesis of P. Savitski of Europe as ‘region of certain equality and ‘brotherhood’ of nations with no analogy in international relations in the colonial empires’<sup>22</sup>. The new variant, considered with the accents of 21<sup>st</sup> century is oriented towards Eurasia as a space free from global hierarchy which is not an empire in its classical form, but a multinational society in which there is no political division between privileged and non-privileged nations<sup>23</sup>.

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<sup>21</sup> *Королев С.* Op. cit., pp. 58–59.

<sup>22</sup> *Савицкий, П.* Евразийство. <http://zevs904.chat.ru/book/savitsky/euras2.html>

<sup>23</sup> *Межуев, Б.* Новое евразийство, 2005, № 2.  
<http://www.archipelag.ru/authors/mezhuev/>

Out of the numerous theories on Eurasianism in the context of geopolitical models of border spaces through the prism of the Russian alternative<sup>24</sup>, of interest are the thesis oriented to the pragmatism and evolutionism.

The pragmatism of A. Utkin is based on the ‘resources determine policy’ axiom. Utkin does not adopt the idea of Big Europe (from Vladivostok to San Francisco) nor the possibility Russia to become a full partner of NATO and the EU<sup>25</sup>. D. Trenin shares his views on this matter and is convinced that Russia will develop into a union and not as a member of Europe<sup>26</sup>. It is an East-European civilization which does not consider the external borders of the Russian Federation final. The built in the intellectual layer not only in Russia, but also in Middle Asia Europe-centric conception of the world, is a significant obstacle for the realization of the Eurasian project, enclosed in the capsule of the post-Soviet space. The prediction of Utkin for the future battle is related to the strategic triangle Persian Gulf – Caspian pool – South China Sea, with expected encounter between Russia, China and the USA<sup>27</sup>.

The evolution model of Eurasianism finds a specific development in the Asia-centric geopolitical variant of A.I. Dugin for the axis ‘Land-Water’ which is based on classical geopolitics. Eurasia is a land civilization, in which the leading elements are Russians as the most-Eurasian of all Eurasian nations. The Eurasian (or continental) civilization in duel with the civilization of land determines the so called Atlantic globalization. Dugin establishes the thesis of Eurasianism as the only right foreign policy reference point for Russia<sup>28</sup>.

The religious-philosophical theory of N. Narochnitskaya expands the geopolitical space of the Eurasian model. Her projection for ‘Eurasian geopolitical and energy ellipse’ is based on a ‘new’ Europe and includes the north curve: The Straits – Black Sea – Caucasus – Caspian pool – Middle Asia – Afghanistan – Pakistan – Iran – Iraq – Israel – Turkey. Her prediction is that the control over this territory will determine the ‘ruler of the world’<sup>33</sup> but the big question remains – who will it be – the USA, affirming the monopolar world or one of the two big players – Russia and China<sup>29</sup>?

<sup>24</sup> For more details see *Григорова, Д.* Русия на кръстопът – геополитически модели за бъдещето. – Регионални аспекти на международните отношения. Варна, 2006, 132–142.

<sup>25</sup> *Уткин, А.* Вызов Запада и ответ России. Москва, 2003, p. 557, 560–572; Поле будущей битвы. – Свободная мысль, 2003, № 5, p. 19. *Григорова, Д.* Op. cit., pp. 133–134.

<sup>26</sup> *Тренин, Д.* Россия и конец Евразии. – Pro et Contra. 2005, июль-август, p. 17.

<sup>27</sup> *Уткин, А.* Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> *Дугин, А.* Основы евразийства. Москва, 2002, 544–545.

<sup>29</sup> *Нарочницкая, Н.* Европа „старая” и Европа „новая”. – Международная жизнь, 2003, № 4, 47–48. *Григорова, Д.* Op. cit., p. 136.

The religious-philosophical isolationism is in the core of the suggested by A. Panarin model according to which the collapse of the USSR is a precondition for the crash of Eurasia as ‘bearing planet construction’. Panarin’s Eurasia views

Russia as a particular ‘way for keeping the specific Slavic identity’, ‘the political and cultural hegemony of the Slavdom in Eurasia’. Russia firstly bears the Slavic in Asia and than the European<sup>30</sup>. The winning segments in the Eurasian model of Panarin are the idea of Eurasian Russia formed on the patriotism and integration, but pragmatically oriented to integration of the Byzantine, East-European and Central-European space (Moscow – Minsk – Kiev – Bratislava – Prague – Zagreb – Belgrade – Tirana – Athens – Bucharest – Chisinau – Warsaw – Astana – Dushanbe – Tashkent – Ashgabat – Baku – Yerevan – Tbilisi – Istanbul)<sup>31</sup>. His dichotomy variant is not the standard East-West, North-South, but ‘Time-Space’, ‘Vertical-Horizontal’<sup>32</sup>.

Ideas for saving Russia, not Eurasia as a political and cultural space are also present in the theses of D. Trenin. His position that the phenomenon Russia-Eurasia does no longer exist is categorical. On the west border of the Federation is the more and more closely uniting Europe – a natural space in which Russia can integrate only in its capacity of a European state. On the south is the more and more closely interrelating Asia where Russia either has to establish itself as a state in Asia or to encounter the increasing pressure pushing it west of Ural. On the south Russia encounters Islamic activity whose source is both internal and external. The optimism of Trenin lies in the perception of the end of Eurasia as a real catastrophe but not as a tragedy<sup>33</sup>. The alternative – officially keeping Russia as a state but actually turning it into Euro-China is not to be underestimated. The state entering partly the sphere of the European Union and on the other side – the orbit of China means that the former parent state can have the same destiny as its border areas, but also that the process of fragmentation of Eurasia still continues<sup>34</sup>. The end of one long era is not the end of Russia as a state, regardless of the things to come in the future<sup>35</sup>.

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<sup>30</sup> Григорова, Д. Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Панарин, А. Православная цивилизация в глобальном мире. Москва, 2003, 343–394.

<sup>32</sup> Панарин, И. От Единной России к Евразийской Руси. 12.01.2006 <http://www.km.ru/strategy/index.asp?data=12.01.2006%2019:46:00&archive=on>

<sup>33</sup> Григорова, Д. Op. cit., p. 137.

<sup>34</sup> Тренин, Д. Конец Евразии: Россия на границе между геополитикой и глобализацией. <http://www.carnegie.ru/ru/publ/books/volume/56875.htm>

<sup>35</sup> Тренин, Д. Россия и конец Евразии..., p. 17

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Eurasianism as geopolitical model of border areas extrapolates in the dichotomy 'Europe-Asia' the historical experience, contemporary realities and future alternatives.

Regarding the common classification of the geographical spaces we can talk about whole classes of border areas or area-borders. Classical examples are the

American frontier<sup>36</sup>, geopolitical 'buffer' zones or the states in their role of civilized limitrophes<sup>37</sup>.

Often the role of a buffer zone is played by one or several states and none of them takes part in this choice. They become such as a result of hostile environment which they cannot control. Traditionally the buffer states are weak players surrounded by stronger, ambitious and often aggressive formations which determine the tasks of the buffer state. Actually they are victim elements in a bigger fight and are part of the system of balance of forces but not of the international law. In the process of modifying the model of regional interrelations the buffer states as a rule are the first victims. This is the price they pay for the temporary equilibrium between the stronger states<sup>38</sup>.

The end of the bipolar model in the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and then the end of the Soviet Union destroy the built through the centuries huge buffer zone of friendly countries, including half of Europe and part of Asia, which defends the Russian (Soviet) empire. Russia is now deprived of the buffer shield which leads to opening and vulnerability of its new borders. The buffer zones, which Moscow loses in Eastern Europe and even in the states of CIS, gradually go under the control of NATO and the European integration structures. The former republics bordering the Russian Federation keep their role of buffer states, but now with different military-political priorities. The modifications in the character of the buffer zones and its results do not have a specific geopolitical characteristic.

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<sup>36</sup> Дюлгерова, Н. Бъдещето на Русия – глобално, регионално или невъзможно. – Светът между сътрудничеството и тероризма. Варна. 2005, р. 111.

<sup>37</sup> Бурстин Д. Американцы: демократический опыт. Москва, 1993. Бурстин Д. Американцы: национальный опыт. Москва, 1993; Миронов Б. Н.. Социальная история России. Т. I. СПб. 1999; Turner, F. *The Frontier In American History* (1894) <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/TURNER/>; Source: Thomas R. Berger, Northern Frontier, Northern Homeland: *The Report of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry*, Vol. 1 (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1977), pp. 1–2.; Billington, R. *The Frontier Thesis: Valid Interpretation of American History?* (1997); Billington, R. *Westward Expansion: A History of the American Frontier* (University of New Mexico Press Paperback, 2001).

<sup>38</sup> Ziring, L. *Pakistan in the Twentieth Century. A Political History* (Oxford, 2000).

- ✓ The geopolitical subjects which do not have the necessary efficient possibilities to win and keep territories lose control over the geopolitical space.
- ✓ Loss of control over this space by the geopolitical subject leads to its substitution with another one.
- ✓ Stability and security of the geopolitical subject are achieved through reasonable parameters of the sub-control space. Bigger space leads to weaker control by the subject.
- ✓ Advantage has the subject which controls key (geostrategic) spots and the strength or weakness of the geopolitical subject is derivative of its possibilities and level of control over the key spots.

The battle over the buffer spaces does not end with change in the accents of their presence in the geopolitical space. Yet another attempt to find *modus vivendi* of the problem of restoring the old rulers or neutralizing the new authorities in the buffer zones is the theory of states in their role of civilized limitrophes<sup>39</sup>.

In the core of this theory is the discussion between two researchers of the ‘civilization geopolitics’ S. Huntington and V. Tsimburski on the geopolitical categorization of the world after the Cold War. The famous civilization model of Huntington regarding the ‘oikumen who are not fully divided into civilizations’, Tsimburski opposes with the thesis of ‘space between worlds’<sup>40</sup>, in which ‘nations-marginals’<sup>41</sup> live. These are the western Slavs, Romanians, Moldavians and Hungarians, the nations of Caucasus and also the Turkic ethnoses. Tsimburski announces the territory of these nations for kind of ‘straits’ between the different civilization and not for separate border territory of any one of them<sup>42</sup>. The political-cultural strategy of each of the marginal ethnoses is different.

The nations of the territory-straits (like the Eastern-European ones) are striving to some of the neighboring civilization families but can in the spirit of the Middle-Asian nation stake on nationalism, defending their political independence from all imperial projects of the neighboring civilizations. Despite their tactical advantages related to the geopolitical configuration the nation-marginals are not

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<sup>39</sup> Цымбурский В. Россия – Земля за Великим Лимитрофом: цивилизация и ее ополитика. Москва, 2000.

<sup>40</sup> Ziring, L. Op. cit.

<sup>41</sup> Цымбурский В. Op. cit.

<sup>42</sup> Цымбурский В. Op. cit.

capable of real cultural chauvinism, typical only for the leader-nations appearing as the ‘main population kernel of civilization’<sup>43</sup>.

The explanation of this discrimination aspect of the model is sought in the ‘sacral vertical, projected in the very existence of the particular group of nations with their tradition of state construction in transcendental plan’. The essence of the ‘sacral vertical’ according to Tsimburski is in the ‘religion and ideology which connects their culture, geopolitics and evolving social practice with the transcendental higher reality’<sup>44</sup>.

Like Huntington, Tsimburski uses the term civilizations but with different nuances in the context. The major subject of world history of civilizations according to Tsimburski are the ‘human populations with their clearly outlined geographical borders which are a model containing a certain, very contrasting with another type spirituality and sociality’<sup>45</sup>. According to this model Russia is a huge territory from the Pacific Ocean to its contemporary western borders, separated from the other, neighboring civilizations (Euro-Atlantic, China, Arab-Iranian Muslim world) with the belt of the so called Great Limitrophe, a chain of territories, populated by nations not belonging fully to any of the civilizations mentioned above<sup>46</sup>. The competition between the two models interpreting and assessing on geopolitical level the falling contours of the survived several ages international system, clearly outlines both the common and specific approaches and conclusions in the analysis of the dynamic change of the world.

In the context of the geopolitical parameters of the borders of the Russian Federation with its neighbors – former soviet republics and new subjects of the international relations in the Eurasian space inevitable is the following of the different aspects of the term frontier regarding its dynamic presence in the contemporary political, media and academic spheres.

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The term ‘frontier’ is permanently present in the American literature. Its roots are from the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the border of the populated territories in America constantly changes, state power is lacking and resources are limitless. These unique conditions create a system of self-organizing societies with high level of mobility and independence. On the frontier are concentrated the most active people carrying the ‘American spirit’ (settlers obeying the law, adventurers or bandits, hiding from the law). Author of the concept of frontier with pretensions

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<sup>43</sup> Межуев, Б. (рец.) Цымбурский В. Россия – Земля за Великим Лимитрофом: цивилизация и ее геополитика.

<sup>44</sup> Цымбурский В. Op. cit.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., pp. 9–10.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 60.

for universal recipe for development is F. J. Turner<sup>47</sup>, according to whom the frontier is ‘the spot where the primitive and civilization meet’<sup>48</sup>. One of the main theses of this frontier theory of is that the accent is put not on the physical or geographical area but on the specific psychological and social state of the ‘people from the frontier’. Another particularity of this border is the factual weakness and lack of laws and norms of the normal society which are not suitable for such conditions. The established thesis is that only these conditions of lawlessness give opportunities for the active colonizers of the frontier to act more effectively than their counterparts from the ‘civilized territories’<sup>49</sup>.

According to the frontier theory as a rule two movements arise when populating new territories and strengthening state control over the assimilated lands. The first one defends the thesis that the state is obligated to establish rules and restrictions, already adopted in the other, previously assimilated territories and the second one, known as libertarianism defends the position of minimizing state control and keeping the spirit of the free from external control frontier which creates and keeps the base for the next leap.

The frontier is considered a Promised Land.

This is land of hope for improvement of economic conditions, hope for new life, quite often hope for freedom (physical or spiritual, which is the case with the puritans in the USA, ‘staroobryadtsi’ in Russia and the representatives of other religious movements which are numerous on the frontier). This hopes have nothing in common with the real conditions, which are unknown to the settlers.

This psychological characteristic of the frontier is the base of its nature – uncertainty and instability. It attracts its future inhabitants with the mysteriousness and everyone is free to relate the new lands with his most daring hopes.

The frontier is a complex, multilateral phenomenon with numerous economic, social and political aspects. It is a zone of unstable balance. The frontier exists only by its own, unstable and unwritten laws. It has its own logic and rules and cannot be understood through the stereotypes of the life of the ‘big’ society. The frontier turns into an American national symbol.

The attempts to organize and control the frontier are unsuccessful. The attempt to organize a chain of villages of ‘fighting farmers’ who at the price of tax relief are obliged to safeguard the external territories from the Indians on the border of Pennsylvania in the USA fails. The ‘fighting farmers’ refuse to safeguard other people<sup>50</sup>. The American pioneers are considered also creators-experimenters.

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Turner, F. *The Frontier In American History* (1994).

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p. 18.

The free border population on its own initiative forms the state apparatus of the new states in order not to live ‘in the realm of knife and revolver’ (as it sounds on one of the ‘constituent meetings in the camp of the gold-diggers in the Cordilleras)<sup>51</sup>. The future Americans come to the continent as landlords and most importantly are aware of that. Such system of thinking and behavior corresponds to the conditions of the frontier with its freedom, individualism and equality: the ideals of the new state coincide with the realities of the frontier life.

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In geopolitical (border and its variants) and historical (frontier) plans each of the two terms determines both the parameters of space, which restricts and the different level of unstable balance in and around it. The possibilities for establishing or expansion of the respective borders are directly related to the strength and abilities of the power structure and their positions amongst the border population. The frontier as well as the border creates conditions for the formation of societies with their own laws and rules, which, regarding realities, connected with internal and external factors, manage or fail to achieve the set objectives. A typical example is the Caucasian region in which after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the creation of CIS the attempts to establish, change and confirm the borders become its main characteristic.

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid.