

Opponent review

Emre Can Yılmaz (2019). *Kemalist Eurasianism: A Third Way for Contemporary Turkey in-between the West and East*. Master Thesis, Department of Russian and East European Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University, Prague.

The presented Master thesis represents an attempt to analyze and contextualized so called Kemalist Eurasianism, which is still not researched properly in the Western scientific society. The author clearly shows, that Eurasianism in Turkey did not emerged with its extensive usage in 1990s (in the framework of Turkish politics towards its “Turkic brothers” in the post-Soviet area after the dissolution of the Soviet empire). On the contrary, it rightly connects the roots of this approach with classical Kemalism as well as with different subsequent stages of development with its open publication at least from 1960s with YÖN political philosophy. The author analyze the problem in a critical way, which have to be appreciated regarding the fact that the author himself comes from Turkish environment.

At the same time, I have to also express several critical remarks concerning the author’s thesis. Although, as historian, I positively evaluate the attempt to present the evolution of political thinking in Kemalist and post-Kemalist Turkey, the text sometimes resembles rather the history of Turkey at some parts and does not touch the selected topic of the thesis. Writing the thesis in this mannered, the title should have been change more towards general history of Turkish political thinking balancing between the East and West. Within the title presented by the author, the first two chapter should have been substantially cut. The crucial part of the topic is placed at the beginning of Chapter 3 and slightly earlier (about pp. 50-55). Therefore, it takes only minor part of the thesis. And even in this section the author turns out of the topic into the analysis of the revolution, populism and other aspects of Turkish policy (partly in comparison with Russia) returning back to the topic after several pages (p. 63 onwards). It makes the text of the chapter chaotic and hardly understandable. It seems that author wanted here to capture as many factors and topics of Turkish political thinking as possible. The main line of the thesis is, however, lost and so does the eventual reader of the text.

Deeper analysis of Turkish/Kemalist Eurasianist movement, their principal authors with their distinctive views and impact on the domestic and foreign policy in Turkey as well as the impact on intellectual circles could easily become the most valuable parts of the text. The author, however, did not used this potential.

Paradoxically, Chapter 4 could be considered as the most valuable part with regard to the topic of the thesis. This section comparing and sometimes juxtaposing Turkish and Russian Eurasianism gives the reader more comprehensive picture of how the Kemalist Eurasianism could be analyzed and understood. Nevertheless, I am convinced that these postulates had to be explained in the previous chapter.

The author tried his best to provide us with all necessary information and background and he also proved his ability to collect necessary material and work it out in the form of comprehensive text. In this way, he fulfilled the requirements for the Master level and I allow him to defend his theses at the final exam. At the same time, above mentioned critique is the principal reason for downgrading my evaluation to the **grade C** with eventual upgrade to B in case of successful defense of above-mentioned problems in the thesis.

In addition, the author could comment and answer the following question coming out of the thesis:

- How the Kemalist Eurasianism framework impacts current foreign policy in Turkey under Erdogan?
- Try to analyze, what are the mechanisms to transform theoretical concepts (expressed mostly in *Teori* journal or others) into practical internal and foreign policy.

Tbilisi, June 6, 2019

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