

Opinions on Nuno Morgado PhD Thesis:

Towards the New World Order? A Geopolitical Study of Neo-Eurasionism and Meridionalism

First of all, I have to state that Nuno Morgado's presented PhD Thesis final version meets all the requirements of a PhD Thesis and could be enter to the stage of defending process.

Since it is an extremely large and well-constructed Dissertation, I would highlight only some of my opinions and advises, however none of the mentioned critics are jeopardizing the positive judgement of the Thesis. More detailed comments were made by me in the previous level, and here I also will evaluate the changes and corrections of my advises.

The first issue, what I would like to mention is the two dimensions of the Thesis.

One is that it is precisely collects all major information, data and authors on Geopolitics as a new phenomena or new direction or new field of concepts or new way of observing international relations among sciences. The work also uses and structurally organizes all kind of information on Russian and Brazilian Geopolitical theories, schools, key authors and their answers to the challenges of our world and actual problems. However the theoretical and methodological introduction parts not really connected to the main cases of Russian and South American Geopolitical theories, namely we can not find enough Russian, Brazilian cases, examples, theorists. And therefore in these chapters between pages 26 and 110 are no tight link towards the two world region (Eurasia and South America). So it does not helping to build a regional frame completely.

The second dimension is the novelty of the Thesis. What we can consider as new scientific result or results and actuality of the work?

For the first dimension, the theoretical description and explanation is extremely wide and relevant. This parts of the work could be understood as an individual handbook or University level



educational material on Geopolitics and some specific segments (e.g. Russian and Brazilian schools) and periods.

But this is a two sided coin, even if it is made of pure gold. For audience who is not familiar with Geopolitics it is really a goldmine, a source of pure information, of historical and regional approaches. But the danger is also coming from this fact. The first part and also some segments of later chapters are only narrative ones in their nature, summarizing scientific works, theories and scientists' ideas. It is a very impressive work. But because of the nature of these descriptive chapters, there is no new scientific results in the theoretic chapters as the part dealing with the birth and definition of Geopolitics as one concept and as one key theoretical part of International Relations, or in the part dealing with the Russian Geopolitical concepts between pages 110-167. Or mostly descriptive information in parts summarizing Brazilian schools, between pages 168 and 216. The contents mentioned between those pages -as I mentioned before- could be used as a handbook or University Geopolitical Textbook, but there is not so many new information or statement, result which are deeply required as a part of PhD Thesis. So this scientific summary could be understood as an introduction to the Eurasianism/Neo-Eurasianism and Meridionalism chapters. Therefore what I feel is that they have too big role and size in the structure. And I wrote it for the first version and I have to express it for the second, final version as well, however the author successfully reduced those chapters as it was advised. Some parts could be still embedded into appendix part or summarized only and left out from the main body of the text. Because they could be concerned as possibly known information for someone who focusing study on Geopolitics. As a theoretical introduction in the main body of a Dissertation these chapters should not be longer than 40-80 pages in total. For example I was enjoying the pages from page 34 onwards, on the accurate descriptions and comparing of Political Geography and Geopolitics (I wrote myself about the topic too), but as it is essential for a textbook, here this information could be used as an appendix page/chapter or table. A structural problem, that the author talks first about classical and critical Geopolitics and only later focusing on the definition of Geopolitical studies.

For the second dimension concerning new scientific elements, the answer could be deducted from the previous critics above: the descriptive, narrative, historic parts were 'eating up' too many pages and they did not left enough breathing space for the new elements, results. It was drastically reduced, so the structure get closer to the optimal balance but still too long theoretical chapters provided.

One of the most new and scientifically revolutionary result is the comparative analysis of the Russian and Brazilian schools. Here it would be more useful to compare them in the length of entire chapters. Because they seems to be rather separated in the isolated chapters, still after the first version it was deeply criticised. And if they mixed and compared within one chapter's text, then it is not really mentioned in the relevant chapter's title. The only exception is the last Cavalho versus



Dugin chapter (Part V) however the sub chapters title mentioning Cavalho's name and not the 'Russian Connection' as titles of 9.1 and 9.2. chapter titles did not mentioning that they have relevant Russian content, but they do have Russian related information.

And the conclusion where the entire exceptionally impressive work should be blossoming, using all the collected information is only 5 pages. I recommended to enlarge this part, but it is significantly still could be larger. Because here is the place for new results, comparing of Russian and Brazilian theorists and we all would be more than happy to read the Author's recommendations, visions, critics, words, pointing out dangers and solutions (a kind of SWOT analyses). An other problem, that Brazilian Geopolitical schools are described by several famous scholars, while we can not find similar part for the Russian side. Several Russian theorists are missing as Trenin, Kolossov who have relevant theories, explanations adding value to this work (as I mention below later).

Russian and Brazilian ideas, schools should be compared in some chapter in details, because there are individual chapters and there is no strong cohesion/comparism/dialogie/discourse between Russian and Brazilian chapters.

As a missed opportunity of the work: we should ask what is the main message of the Thesis regionally? What is the future possible lesson for Czech Republic or in a wider regional perspective for Central Europe or for Portugal as a homeland of the Author? Because it is clear that Nuno Morgado talks about Russia and Brazil, but it is also clear that Central Europe and Portugal is deeply influenced both regionally and because of the Author's personality, his life and study experience.

The structure as I mentioned have the major problem not properly balancing basic known introduction parts and facts and parts adding new scientific information, results. It is endangering the cohesion of the work if we consider it as a PhD thesis.

The second problem with structure is another danger of other type of wrong balancing. This problem was successfully solved after the first version. The third problem with the structure is already mentioned. Sometimes the title of a chapter is not equivalent with the content of the chapter. In appendix 3 there are terms to explain. As possibilism. But if we explain possibilism, we shall give definition of nihilism and determinism for the reader too.

I liked very much the author's Figures. They helping, supporting the text very well. They are well selected and well made and well embedded to the text.

Hypotheses should be an individual chapter or sub chapter, definitely with number. If the reader search for the Hypotheses part, it should be found by the Content page as a numbered key part.



The Hypotheses are also relevant, well described and the entire work is going to the direction to answer the asked questions. However as I wrote later in this text, the Author simplifying Russia, Brazil or USA. If the Hypothesis 1 mentions Russian Élites or Hypothesis 2 talks about Russian National Interest, we should add that there could be different Russian élites (some in emigration, some in jails, some silent ones) or it is maybe the 'national interest' of the ruling political party and system and personalities, but other intellectuals could bring other Russian national interest perspectives.

Actuality: the work referring the recent dynamics of geopolitical earthquake zones, especially Ukraine. It has relevant content on the issue. So it could be used to help us understanding recent international relations dynamics.

The Author is using several related and well selected maps. It is great. A Geographic work should have maps. Sometimes in some similar works there are no maps at all. But there are a mistakes with numbering them.

The size of the work is impressive. Quite big to meet the general requirements of a PhD Thesis.

Also very-very impressive the quoted, well and relevantly quoted sources quantity (over 800 referred works!). And the quality of the sources is also exceptional! Mainstream and less known works in a colorful variety of languages. The only missing link is the list of some recent Russian thinkers.

The language itself is brilliant, excellent terminology, great English descriptions, colorful correct language. Easy to follow. Because of the chosen English language and because of the self-confidence of diverse language knowledge of the Author he uses sources in many-many languages. This is great but sometimes confusing. There are great portion of footnotes almost in every pages, but would be useful, to translate at least once the title of the referred works, to see and show relevancy and satisfy curiosity of the reader (also maybe there are sometimes English translations of a work which would be useful to know). Also the motto on the beginning of the entire work is in Latin, but there is no English translation provided. However other mottos as from Thucydides are generously supported with translated English meaning in the footnote also all other mottos were supported with English translations for example on pages 27, 36, 50, 51, but Bonaparte's letter on page 338 is still only in French..

Missing parts: I would recommend more critical analysis. In the author's theoretical structure there is one homogenous Russia, Brazil, United States. For example if Dugin is Putin's brain as quoted in the text, are there recent opposite side, critical Geopoliticians, critical élite in the Russian political or scientific life? I have a half shelf full with books of recent Russian Geopoliticians, but they are not mentioned. Kolossov and many others are not mentioned, but if we mention recent Russian schools and waves, we shall mention some of them too. Also when the author talks about USA,



quoting Brazilian or Russian sources, he states, that it is one monolite country. Since the recent US presidential election it is very clear that there is no one single USA, but a Republican and a Democrat stream, foreign policy, scientific work, or even Democrat-Russian and Republican-Russian international relations approach, interest, rhetoric. Or a multipolar world could mean also that there are various actors in various pan-regions, continents. As in Asia there are breaking lines, actors and alliance systems of several key countries, Japan is a world pole (in Asia, Europe and in USA too) if we mentioning multipolar world etc.

All in all I consider Nuno Morgado's work as an excellent milestone in the field of Classical Geopolitical Science.

I would accept it as a PhD Thesis with a very good (the best) mark and I am very happy to see it as a sign of a rising new professional generation on this field of Political Sciences, Geopolitics and International relations.

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