
EURASIAN UNION ON THE VIEWPOINT OF CHINA: GEOPOLITICAL PERSPECTIVE

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This article is about geopolitical strategic analyze of Russian President Vladimir Putin's "Eurasian Union" strategy from Chinese viewpoint. The article describes historical background of Eurasian Union, its geopolitical purposes, achievements and weakness, particularly from China's national strategic design and stance of Central Asia in Eurasian Continent. The geopolitical analysis of possibility for Sino-Russian Alliance and realistic difficulties of it are provided.

Different point of Chinese experts on Russia-West relations are given. Some of them believe that he Warsaw Pact and the Cold War revival in the CIS, its purpose is to play as geopolitical blunders against the Western countries under the leadership of NATO, IMF and the United States. While others, take into consideration the US-Russian Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, and Russia's actively participation in the former Group of Eight, accession to WTO and other initiatives that indicates the current Moscow is not the Soviet Union, and does not exclude cooperation with existing international system dominated by the Western world.

And finally, China's own Eurasian strategy design is represented, especially China's foreign policy options on Central Asia as solutions to some current existing geopolitical differences between China and Russia's own Eurasian Strategy in order to achieve mutual win-set goal.

Key words: Eurasian Union, China, Central Asian Strategy, geopolitics.

A Historical Overview and Today's Change

There are five major civilizations, with most of the world's population, the countries that concentrated on the world 3/4 energy is the main battlefield in the history of power on the Eurasian continent compete in the world. But so far, only a few countries, such as Russia and the U.S. have their own distinct and lasting Eurasian strategy, might have been involved in this fight for the other, either in themselves had been vanished into history, such as the Ottoman, Austro-Hungarian, the Mongol Empire, such as Germany or Japan, Britain and other regional powers, limited strength competence and geographical limitations, only a temporary impact on the historical process of the Eurasian continent, after the failure that never quit compete for Eurasian strategy [1].

But the all the things have taken progress as time goes by. After 21st century, in order to continue consolidating geographic and geopolitical advantage in the CIS, expanding strategic influence in Western Pacific region to accelerate integration into the Asian-Pacific Economic Circle, Russia has proposed a "Eurasian Union" integrated vision, causing widespread focusing in international community [2]. Eurasian alliance with the

western and northern perimeter of directly adjacent to, and is the main push of Russian diplomacy in the coming period, it is China's point of view.

Chinese scholars have made several deeply analyzes of "Eurasian Union" definition and its background due to historical and geopolitical reasons.

Post World War II Period

At the end of World War II, the soviet Red Army had a great strategic opportunity to advance in Western Europe. According to the British General Staff's assessment, once the Red Army has crossed the Rhine, the Anglo-American coalition forces would not stop, only to retreat to Dunkirk again. Stalin lived timely constraint military impulse, calm acceptance of the Eurasian and Anglo-American division of spheres of influence Yalta system. This would be a wise choice at that time. But Stalin saw only the balance of power on the Eurasian continent, the United States would not expect to mobilize more than half of the world's resources against the Soviet-controlled "World Island" (70 years ago, the famous American geopolitician Mackinder first proposed the theory of the "World Island") Eurasian strategy of Moscow, was abruptly pulled into the struggle for world hegemony of the United States, which is resource endowments and history are not affordable. Eventually, the Soviet Union lost the Cold War, Moscow lost all her geopolitical positions in World War II to get back to the First World War is also the situation when the most debilitating. And the other republics of the Soviet Union obtained by different national independence, Russia considers themselves to be separated and dismembered after surviving the most part, this is a painful experience to understand the basic background of Putin's Eurasian geopolitical alliances.

"Eurasian Union" Made By Russia

The idea of the Eurasian Union began in 1994, after several adjustments of Russian Foreign gravity, until recently Putin's re-institution with great fanfare. The intention is clearly visible, that is, through the CIS Collective Security Treaty Organization, the Eurasian Economic Community and the CIS free trade zone, set up a ring led by Moscow in political, military, economic sector, shape of the Eurasian land within the core strength of the Group. Its latest step was:

1. The establishment of Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan Customs Union;
2. The formation of the CIS Collective Security Treaty Organization rapid reaction force;
3. The establishment of the scale of \$ 10 billion stabilization fund of the Eurasian Economic Community [3].

Some Chinese commentators believe that this is the Warsaw Pact and the Cold War revival in the CIS, its purpose is to play as geopolitical blunders against the Western countries under the leadership of NATO, IMF and the United States.

However, from the US-Russian Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, and Russia's actively participation in the former Group of Eight, accession to WTO and other initi-

atives indicate the current Moscow as the Soviet Union, does not exclude cooperation with existing international system dominated by the Western world (Hereby we don't even mention Ukraine Crisis issue because it's a complexity involved with US hand with aggressively provocation and Russia is not the country caused the Ukraine Crisis basically). China believes that the Eurasian Union should be a rebound in the Russian geopolitical thinking 20 years ago as "too Westernized" for. Regardless of the performance of this "Westernized" or backward Western confrontation with the West, behind all major Western diplomatic and even strategic tendencies single object, which is the Russian double-headed eagle of both the Eastern and Western diplomatic tradition is clearly inconsistent. Thus, Putin needs to open up new oriental, at least with the same new component of Westernization diplomatic game. Putin will be raised to the level of development of the Russian Far East as one of the major national strategic priority, could also reflect this consideration [4].

In Chinese's viewpoint, Putin's Eurasian Union in the design, is to make more effective use overall natural, economic and human resources of Member States, is a deeper level, a higher level of integration, aim to build the world's political and economic of a strong and independent force in the future, to achieve Russia's "Eurasian Giant" dream. Eurasian Union's priority is to invite the CIS countries to participate into the economic alliance, the future this may become a political alliance and the military alliance [5].

Chinese scholars believe that the development prospect of the Eurasian Union is not yet clear, there are many variables that China should "be understood without opposition, careful but not to ignore, rather than reading too much attention".

Main reasons are:

1. The Eurasian Union is the integration reaction region deepening globalization process under the background is a natural historical process;
2. Deeper level Eurasian integration, security and stable economic environment foundation by taking a unified foreign economic policy, will help standardize the law and order and improve efficiency, reduce procedure costs and expand complementary economic interests of China;
3. The Eurasian Union is not necessarily in case to contain China, which is fundamentally different to the U.S. Asian-Pacific "rebalance" or "pivot" containment strategy.

In contrast Eurasian Union is a major event in China's western periphery, should be fully valued and forward thinking. In the eastern part of china's growing tension surrounding by pacific ocean caused potential crisis, the importance of self-evident around the western interior land will be highly focused. Heading to the east, China faces to the traditional security dilemma, and need to develop the military strength and capability; heading to the west, China has confidence by demonstrating her economic force to response non-traditional security issues. At this stage, China's military strength is still a short board, but economic force is her advantage. China should avoid weaknesses, stabilize the situation and relationships with neighboring countries to provide secured external situation and ensure homeland security, in order to achieve "Land and Sea Power Complex" goal.

Sino-Russian Alliance on the Viewpoint of China

Subject to the separation of Taiwan, such as the Cold War legacy of the Korean peninsula split constraints, as well as the United States, Japan, Australia and ASEAN countries strong suppression of sea power in the direction of China's territorial waters will remain firmly based on defense strategy, for a long period of time is immune to a large breakthrough and change. Thus, at the moment the most important strategy for China is what we call "narrowly" Eurasian strategy, that is, how to develop the land border diplomacy to the direction of the new independent central Asian countries of the Eurasian continent. Russia plays the most important role for China's Eurasian strategy. Sino-Russian coordination is a very strong strategic combination as a "major negotiator" on many key international issues.

Sino-Russia's "back to back" strategy against the United States and the Western Countries geopolitically in recent years among Chinese and Russian scholar officials has been even upgraded to the idea of Sino-Russian military alliance against the West. The first step is to jointly maintain the stability and security of the Eurasian continent, the ultimate goal is to build a major league open to all countries in the Eurasian continent. The common criticism between China and Russia of the attitude of American values also make the Western commentators believe that confrontation between the liberalism based united Anglo-American Commonwealth and under authoritarian mode with the two Eurasian giants China and Russia, will become the main content of the geopolitical struggle in the 21st century.

China and Russia on many of the principles of world order is indeed consistent with or close to each other, which makes the strategic cooperation between the two countries becomes possible. But this is mainly determined by the same status of the two countries at international level (both are required to change the status quo of the country), rather than the two countries own geopolitical position, the nature and demands of the decision. Such cooperation is more temporary, rather than long-term nature, in particular the level of implementation will also create a lot of realistic difficulties. For example as bellow:

1. Unequal of Sino-Russian bilateral economic strength and population;
2. Different direction in economic structures and foreign economic cooperation between China and Russia;
3. Both sides, on issues concerning each other's core interests always avoid too deep reluctance to intervene or take detached position;
4. Competition in Central Asia and South Asia between China and Russia, which more like a zero-sum game;
5. Short-term tasks of economic development for both countries, before their real rise, both sides apparently may not artificially establish any military alliance directed against any third country [6].

China's Eurasian Strategic Design

Among all the world's major countries, Russia is the only country without a deep political conflict with China, under its influence, Eurasia region is also the only region

that stand with China side on sensitive issues related to Taiwan, Tibet and other areas. Chinese investment in Eurasia region, in addition to Russia, also focused on Kazakhstan, Belarus, Turkmenistan and former soviet countries which have close ties with Russia. Russia has a great influence on China of Chinese Eurasian diplomacy. Thus, while China and Russia do not have an alliance yet, but China's Eurasian strategy must be “leveraging” of Russia, not “bypassing” Russia, and not “confrontation against” Russia.

From a practical perspective during the recent years, many bottleneck problems that China faced to on Eurasian diplomacy are also closely associated with Russia. Both sides tend to Central Asian energy output and upstream share fierce; China is to expand energy cooperation with Central Asia and the Middle East in the Eurasian continent, always facing possible potential pressure from Russia; both sides have different directions on the economic integration of Central Asia; Russia's policy of integration of the Central Asian countries of the CIS is considered by some of the Chinese strategic thinkers as strategic limitation of economic cooperation between China and Central Asian countries; and issues such as separation regional security mechanisms; and SCO has been marginalized trend; bilateral policy of China and Russia towards the Central Asian countries are diametrically opposed, Russia as its own backyard repeatedly interfered with China insists the position of non-interference, are all geopolitical and technical issues that intend to be resolved.

Competitive relations between China and Russia in Central Asia have lasted for a long time, influenced history and culture, geopolitical and other structural factors, it will not change soon. For the moment, may buffer by the following ways:

1. A “division of task” in Central Asia. China and Russia should reach some kind of understanding if there is not a clear division of spheres of influence, Russia focuses on regional security, China focuses on economic and trade cooperation, investment and transport fields. This is consistent with the current actual situation in Central Asia, but the policies implemented by both countries see both sides of Central Asia are the two wheels of the economy and security, it is difficult to make the initiative to the other alienation [7].

2. Mutual integration of combination of the Eurasian Economic Community and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. This will not only prevent the mutual constraints between the two mechanisms (essentially members of the two organizations overlap), but also to avoid a clear division of responsibilities between the two organizations in Central Asia and the division of task. Some Chinese scholars have been discussing the idea for China to join the Eurasian Union in 2018 to 2020. But it seems more a technical compromise [8].

3. The buffer state system: Kazakhstan's role. As a leading country in Central Asia, Kazakhstan will undoubtedly be the choice for such a system. Currently, Sino-Russia and Russia-Kazakhstan strategic partnership have been upgraded to the level of comprehensive strategic cooperation, high-level visits and strategic consultation mechanism has also been established, cooperation in security, energy, economic and other functional areas have developed effectively, the only lacking is the three multilateral affairs at the

regional communication and coordination. Compensate for this “short board”. The best approach is to take the initiative to “upgrade” the status of Kazakhstan as important role in China’s Eurasian strategy.

Due to Kazakhstan's current strength and influence, this idea may be subject to numerous objections and doubts that it is still far from reaching the degree to enter China's diplomatic priorities. But in practice these years in the point of view of relations with Kazakhstan, doing so will be able to resolve the future of the Chinese Eurasian diplomacy challenges. China, Russia and Kazakhstan’s “Triangular Axis” Strategy, is more reasonable and more flexible than once hot Eurasian Trinity Strategy “(the axis of the Sino-Russian strategic partnership, strategic partnership between China and Kazakhstan and Ukraine as a pillar)”. After China and Uzbekistan have established a “strategic partnership” in 2012, Trinity Strategy has been unable to operate in practice. “China, Russia and Kazakhstan Triangular Axis” provides plenty of space for new “strategic partnerships”, two “U” (Uzbekistan, Ukraine) can be used as the axis of the auxiliary, two U’s foreign policies even still volatile, will not bring big impact to the “Triangular Axis”.

Big country has been called a big country, because in a complex international politics it always retains its own unique history, cultural experience and geopolitical property, which determines its unique strategic concept. China, as the latest “big country” to join the global system of power, in the design of the Eurasian Strategy as the national strategy this time, should emphasize it’s own subjectivity, while not forgetting the lessons learned from other countries, the maximum extent to avoid falling into the Western World War II as a geopolitical catastrophe. Such thinking should be implemented and reflected in other specific national diplomacy.

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ЕВРАЗИЙСКИЙ СОЮЗ С ТОЧКИ ЗРЕНИЯ КНР: ГЕОПОЛИТИЧЕСКАЯ ПЕРСПЕКТИВА

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В статье проводится анализ геополитической стратегии Евразийского союза президента России Владимира Путина с китайской точки зрения. Авторы рассматривают исторические предпосылки создания Евразийского союза, геополитические цели проекта, достижения и слабые стороны, в основном сквозь призму китайского национального стратегического проектирования и позиции Центральной Азии на Евразийском континенте. Также в статье анализируются возможности для российско-китайского союза и вероятные трудности.

Авторы приводят различные точки китайских специалистов, специализирующихся на отношениях России и Запада. Некоторые из них полагают, что в странах СНГ возрождается Варшавский договор и «холодная война» и цель проекта — геополитическое противостояние западным странам под руководством НАТО, МВФ и США. В то время как другие считают, что российско-американский Договор по сокращению стратегических наступательных вооружений, а также активное участие России в деятельности бывшей Группы восьми, вступление в ВТО и другие инициативы указывают на то, что современная Россия — не Советский Союз, и проект не исключает сотрудничества России в рамках существующей международной системы, где доминирует западный мир.

И, наконец, в статье представлен проект Евразийской стратегии Китая, включая варианты внешней политики Китая в Центральной Азии, благодаря которым, вероятно, появится возможность преодолеть некоторые текущие геополитические различия в стратегиях КНР и РФ в целях достижения взаимовыгодных результатов.

Ключевые слова: Евразийский союз, Китай, Стратегия в Центральной Азии, геополитика.