

See discussions, stats, and author profiles for this publication at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/255970590>

# Dugin Not a Fascist? A Debate with A. James Gregor (6 texts)

Article in *Erwägen Wissen Ethik* · January 2005

---

CITATION

1

READS

751

1 author:



**Andreas Umland**

National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy

640 PUBLICATIONS 812 CITATIONS

SEE PROFILE

Some of the authors of this publication are also working on these related projects:



The DSC project "Church and Peace" [View project](#)



Analyzing Ukraine's Decentralization Reform since 2014 [View project](#)

# Erwägen Wissen Ethik

DELIBERATION

KNOWLEDGE

ETHICS

vormals Ethik und Sozialwissenschaften (EuS)  
Streitforum für Erwägungskultur

Herausgegeben von

Frank Benseler, Bettina Blanck, Reinhard Keil-Slawik, Werner Loh

EWE

16

Jg. 16/2005 Heft 4

## Sonderdruck

.....

### Hauptartikel

»Sport« – Einheit und Vielfalt seiner Kulturen, Klaus Heinemann und  
Markus R. Friederici

**Kritik** Armin Ader, Thomas Alkemeyer, Hans Peter Brandl-Bredenbeck, Volker Caysa,  
Rainer T. Cherkeh, Jürgen Court, Gunnar Drexel, Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt,  
Henning Eichberg, Iring Fetscher, Kurt Hammerich, Walter Herzog, Gabriele Klein,  
Antje Klinge, Michael Krüger, Johannes Marx, Jürgen R. Nitsch, Gertrud Pfister,  
Núria Puig, Claus-Artur Scheier, Horst M. Schellhaaß und Michael Coenen,

**Replik** Klaus Heinemann und Markus R. Friederici

.....

### Anhang

**Erwägungsmethoden**, Bettina Blanck

**Überblicke zu EuS/EWE**

**Nachtrag**, Matthias Kettner

**Briefe**

**EWE-Programm**

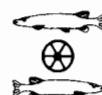
**EWE-Statut**

**Liste der Beiratsmitglieder von EWE**

**Liste der Veröffentlichungsvorhaben für EWE**

**Themenübersicht der lieferbaren EuS/EWE-Hefte**

LUCIUS  
et LUCIUS



## Kritik 2: Anhang Critique 2: Appendix

### Dugin kein Faschist?

#### Eine Erwiderung an Professor A. James Gregor

Andreas Umland

((1)) Eine der, wie unten zu zeigen versucht wird, bedauernswertesten Bemerkungen in der Diskussion um den Artikel Griffins wurde von Professor A. James Gregor, einer der wenigen anglosächsischen radikalen Kritiker Griffins, gemacht. Professor Gregor behauptet mit Nachdruck, dass – neben Julius Evola<sup>1</sup> und anderen – der heutige Führer der russischen „Neourasier“, Aleksandr Dugin, „nach vernünftigen Maßstäben *niemals*“ als Faschist betrachtet werden kann (Gregor (3), kursiv im Original). Diese Beurteilung bedarf aus vier Gründen einer näheren Betrachtung.

Erstens macht Gregor hier durch seine Wortwahl und Verwendung der Kursivschrift eine Aussage, wie sie klarer nicht sein könnte.

Zweitens ist Dugin (geb. 1962) nicht, wie die meisten anderen Objekte der hier geführten Diskussion, darunter Evola, verstorben und/oder für die aktuelle Außen- und Innenpolitik seines Landes irrelevant. Vielmehr ist der Chef-„Neourasier“ sehr lebendig, inzwischen allwöchentlich im zentralen russischen Fernsehen zu sehen und Rundfunk zu hören sowie ein populärer politischer Publizist mit einem rußlandweiten „Fanclub“. Dugin hat seine Fühler weit in den Mainstream der russischen Politik und Zivilgesellschaft ausgestreckt. Dies betrifft nicht nur die Massenmedien, sondern auch solche Institutionen, wie das Militär, Hochschulwesen oder die Ministerialbürokratie der Rußländischen Föderation (RF).<sup>2</sup>

Drittens handelt es sich bei Professor Gregor um einen der produktivsten und – zumindest in den USA – einflussreichsten Faschismusforscher. Darüber hinaus ist er einer der wenigen westlichen Komparativisten, der das postsowjetische politische Spektrum in seine jüngsten vergleichenden Studien zu Faschismus an prominenter Stelle eingearbeitet hat – ein, aus meiner Sicht, sehr löbliches Unterfangen.

Last but not least ist auf die besondere Bedeutung des Faschismusbegriffs im russischen Diskurs allgemein und in vielen postsowjetischen Debatten im Besonderen hinzuweisen. „Faschismus“ war im letzten Jahrzehnt in Russland nicht nur ein Thema aufgeheizter wissenschaftlicher und öffentlicher Debatten.<sup>3</sup> Eine als „faschistisch“ identifizierte Gefahr war 1995 zudem der Anlass für entsprechende parlamentarische Anhörungen sowie einen eigens diesbezüglich erlassenen Ukas des Präsidenten der RF Boris El'cin, der sich in diesem Zusammenhang an die Rußländische Akademie der Wissenschaften mit der Bitte um eine verbindliche Definition von Faschismus wandte.

Mehr noch: was oder wer als „faschistisch“ bezeichnet werden kann, war eine Frage, um die sich im letzten Jahrzehnt eine Reihe prominenter gerichtlicher Auseinandersetzungen in der RF drehten. Derartige Gerichtsprozesse wurden typi-

scherweise von russischen Ultranationalisten angestrengt (und oft von ihnen gewonnen). Als Kläger traten in den Neunzigern zum Beispiel Vladimir Žirinovskij oder der Parlamentsabgeordnete Iona Andronov, als Beklagte unter anderem der Expremierminister Egor Gajdar, Exaußenminister Andrej Kozyrev und damalige Präsident Boris El'cin auf. In der Regel wurden bei diesen Verleumdungsprozessen sozialwissenschaftliche Institute von den Gerichten zur Klärung dessen, was „Faschismus“ ist und ob der Begriff auf den betreffenden Kläger anwendbar sei, hinzugezogen. Dies illustriert, dass im russischen Kontext die Frage, ob Dugin als „Faschist“ klassifiziert werden kann, nicht nur eine akademische ist.<sup>4</sup>

((2)) Letzteres hätte Professor Gregor zu größerer Vorsicht bei der Formulierung seiner Einschätzung Dugins veranlassen können. Es besteht zudem die Vermutung, dass Gregor des Russischen nicht mächtig ist. Insofern wäre es vielleicht günstiger gewesen, wenn Gregor seine spezifische Meinung – zu der er natürlich berechtigt ist – in weniger apodiktischer Form ausgedrückt und zuvor den Rat kompetenter, russischlesender Beobachter eingeholt hätte.

Es mag zwar sein, dass Professor Gregor es sich als „Doyen“ der US-amerikanischen Faschismusforschung leisten kann,<sup>5</sup> den nicht gerade mitgliederstarken westlichen Spezialistenkreis, der Dugin mehrheitlich als Faschisten bezeichnet hat, zu übergehen.<sup>6</sup> Einen Autor, der sich explizit zur Frage, ob Dugin ein Faschist ist oder nicht, geäußert hat, sollte allerdings auch Professor Gregor nicht ignorieren: Aleksandr Dugin selbst. Dies gilt insbesondere für dessen inzwischen zahlreiche Publikationen auf Englisch, Deutsch, Italienisch oder Französisch – Sprachen, die Professor Gregor zu beherrschen scheint.<sup>7</sup>

Dugin wurde als ehemaliges Mitglied des spätsowjetischen geheimen Intellektuellenzirkels „Schwarzer Orden der SS“ sowie damaliger Chefideologe der National-Bolschewistischen Partei (deren Flaggenfarben denen des Nazibanners ähneln)<sup>8</sup> zum Beispiel Ende 1996 befragt, ob er ein Faschist sei. Das hat Dugin in diesem, ins Englische übersetzten Interview zunächst ausdrücklich verneint – was im Lichte der besonders negativen Konnotationen von „Faschismus“ im Russischen nicht überrascht.<sup>9</sup> Er lenkte im Anschluss jedoch ein, dass er „den frühen Italofaschismus mag“ und sich „nicht scheue dies auch zuzugeben“. Zudem gäbe es „eine Periode im [frühen] deutschen Nationalsozialismus“ – Dugin meint dessen sozialrevolutionäre, avantgardistische und ähnliche Tendenzen –, die er „interessant“ fände. Dugin bezeichnet sich in diesem Interview selbst als „konservativen Revolutionär“ und „Nationalbolschewiken“.<sup>10</sup>

Derartige Aussagen – und deren gibt es inzwischen in westlichen Sprachen viele – hätten Professor Gregor behutsamer bei der Klassifizierung Dugins sein lassen müssen. Kurioserweise nähert sich Dugin zudem mit seiner Fixierung auf die „linken“ Elemente im Faschismus in mancher Hinsicht der spezifischen Faschismuskonzeption Zeev Sternhells und Professor Gregors an.<sup>11</sup>

((3)) Hätte Professor Gregor darüber hinaus einen russischlesenden Spezialisten um Hilfe gebeten, wäre er sicherlich auf Dugins programmatischen Artikel „Faschismus – grenzenlos und rot“ aufmerksam gemacht worden.<sup>12</sup> Dort klärt Dugin auf, dass er Faschismus nicht für eine „extrem rechte“ Ideo-

logie hält, was dessen Konzipierung als „konservative Revolution“, zu welcher sich Dugin offen bekennt, zum Ausdruck bringe. Faschismus – so Dugin –

das ist nicht irgendein, sondern ein revolutionärer, rebellischer, romantischer, idealistischer Nationalismus, der an einen großen Mythos und eine transzendente Idee appelliert, der danach strebt, den Unmöglichen [sic] Traum in die Realität umzusetzen, eine Gesellschaft des Helden und Übermenschen [sverščeloveka] zu gebären [rodit’], die Welt zu wandeln und umzuwandeln [preobrazovat’ i preobrazit’ mir]. Auf der ökonomischen Ebene sind für den Faschismus eher sozialistische oder gemäßigt sozialistische Methoden charakteristisch, welche die persönlichen, individuellen ökonomischen Interessen den Prinzipien der Wohlfahrt der Nation, Gerechtigkeit und Brüderlichkeit unterordnen. [...] Genau definiert hat den faschistischen Pathos die berühmte Aussage Mussolinis: „Erhebe Dich faschistisches und proletarisches Italien!“ [...] In der Geschichte hat der reine, ideale Faschismus keine direkte Implementierung erfahren. In der Praxis haben die dringlichen Probleme des Machtantritts und der Herstellung ökonomischer Ordnung die faschistischen Führer – sowohl Mussolini als auch Hitler, Franco und Salazar – dazu gezwungen, Allianzen mit den Konservativen, Nationalkapitalisten, Großeigentümern und Konzernherren einzugehen. Aber dieser Kompromiss endete für die faschistischen Regimes stets kläglich.<sup>13</sup>

Der Faschismus, den Russland heute brauche, sei daher nicht ein unechter „rechter Faschismus“ oder „Nationalkapitalismus“. Gefragt sei kein „Pseudofaschismus“, sondern ein „echter, wirklicher, radikal revolutionärer und folgerichtiger, ein faschistischer Faschismus“. Dies würde für den speziellen Fall Russlands – und hier nähert sich Dugin wieder dem Sternhellschen-Gregorschen Faschismusverständnis an – einen „russischen Sozialismus“ bedeuten. „Russischer Sozialismus – das ist nicht Russen für den Sozialismus, sondern Sozialismus für die Russen“.<sup>14</sup> Dugin schließt seinen Artikel ab:

Der französische faschistische Schriftsteller Robert Brasillach hat vor seinem Tode eine merkwürdige Prophezeiung gemacht: „Ich sehe, wie im Osten, in Russland ein Faschismus aufgeht, ein grenzenloser und roter Faschismus.“ Zur Notiz: kein fahler, bräunlich-zartrosafarbener Nationalkapitalismus, sondern die grelle Morgenröte einer neuen Russischen [sic] Revolution, ein Faschismus so grenzenlos wie unser Territorium [naši zemli] und so rot, wie unser Blut.<sup>15</sup>

((4)) An dieser Stelle wäre einzufügen, dass Dugins Konzipierung seiner eigenen Spielart faschistischer Ideologie nicht nur für eine Korrektur Gregors, sondern auch für die hiesige Diskussion um das Griffinsche Faschismuskonzept insgesamt relevant ist. Trotz Dugins Ablehnung des rechtsextremen Attributs sowie seiner Klassifizierung Francos und Salazars als Faschisten – Aspekte, die von Griffins Faschismuskonzept abweichen –, setzen sich die Überschneidungen der Faschismusbegriffe Dugins und Griffins in weiteren Passagen im zitierten Artikel sowie in anderen Werken, in denen der Chef-„Neoeurasier“ seine Ideologie ausbreitet, fort.<sup>16</sup> Dies ist um so bedeutender, als Dugins Belesenheit und Kenntnisse der westlichen Philosophie und politischen Theorie, nicht zuletzt der westeuropäischen faschistischen und neofaschistischen Literatur auch

von seinen Kritikern anerkannt werden.<sup>17</sup> Dugin bleibt natürlich nichtsdestoweniger ein Objekt und nicht Beiträger der internationalen Faschismusforschung. Dennoch ist die offensichtlich weitgehende Übereinstimmung von Dugins Selbstbeschreibung mit Griffins Formel „paligenetischer Ultrationalismus“ nicht bedeutungslos für die Bewertung letzterer.<sup>18</sup>

((5)) Obwohl Professor Gregor auch im Lichte der obigen Zitate und Literaturverweise womöglich nicht von seiner eingangs zitierten Behauptung abrücken wird, ist für viele Leser – nehme ich an – die Angreifbarkeit seiner Klassifizierung Dugins deutlich geworden. Dies tut mir in gewisser Hinsicht leid – bin ich doch ein interessierter, ja begeisterter Leser von Professor Gregors jüngeren Büchern und Artikeln zu Faschismus (ganz im Gegensatz zu seinen Frühwerken, etwa in Oswald Mosleys „The European“).<sup>19</sup> Insbesondere Professor Gregors nun schon langjähriges Interesse an der Sowjetunion, China und Russland sowie der Anwendbarkeit des Faschismuskonzepts in diesen Kontexten stößt auf meine Sympathie.

Da Dugins sogenannte Internationale Eurasische Bewegung jedoch inzwischen, neben anderen bedeutenden russischen Persönlichkeiten, den stellvertretenden Außenminister der RF Viktor Kaljužnij sowie den Vorsitzenden des Komitees für internationale Angelegenheiten des Föderationsrates der Föderationsversammlung, das heißt des Oberhauses des Parlaments der RF, Michail Margelov, einschließt, muss Fehlinterpretationen des Dugin-Phänomens nicht nur aus forschungspraktischen Gründen vorgebeugt werden. Dies gilt um so mehr, als der Faschismusbegriff in Folge des Zweiten Weltkrieges im ostslawischen Raum eine besondere Bedeutung erlangt hat. Bleibt zu hoffen, dass Professor Gregors eingangs zitierte Bemerkung nicht eines Tages in einem russischen Gerichtsprozess zum Faschismusvorwurf gegen Dugin auftaucht.

## Anmerkungen

1 Hierzu mehr in A. James Gregor: The Problem, in: Roger Griffin in Zusammenarbeit mit Matthew Feldmann, Hg.: *Fascism: Critical Concepts in Political Science*. Bd. 1: The Nature of Fascism. London/New York: Routledge 2004, S. 327-349, hier S. 339-340.

2 Da ich gerade einige frühere Beobachtungen zum Aufstieg der „Neoeurasier“ sowie die allerjüngste Entwicklung des „Dugin-Phänomens“ in einem längeren Aufsatz zusammengefasst habe, muss hier nicht nochmals auf die wachsende Präsenz Dugins im politischen und intellektuellen Leben Russlands eingegangen werden. Andreas Umland: Kulturhegemoniale Strategien der russischen extremen Rechten: Die Verbindung von faschistischer Ideologie und metapolitischer Taktik im „Neoeurasimus“ des Aleksandr Dugin, in: *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Politikwissenschaft*, 33. Jg. (2004), Nr. 2, im Erscheinen.

3 V. Tolstych, A. Galkin, V. Loginov und A. Buzgalin: Der russische Faschismus im Widerstreit, in: *Utopie kreativ: Diskussion sozialistischer Alternativen*, Nr. 52 (1995), S. 65-72; Jurij Galaktionov: *Germanskij fašizm kak fenomen pervoj poloviny XX veka: Otečestvennaja istoriografija 1945-90-ch godov*. Kemerovo: Kemerovskij gosudarstvennyj universitet 1999; Horst Schützler: *Faschismus – ein Thema in der russischen Historiographie der 90er Jahre?*, in: Manfred Weißbecker und Reinhard Kühnl in Zusammenarbeit mit Erika Schwarz, Hg.: *Rassismus, Faschismus, Antifaschismus: Forschungen und Betrachtungen gewidmet Kurt Pätzold zum 70. Geburtstag*. Köln: PapyRossa 2000, S. 231-242.

4 Ausführlichere, wenn auch trotzdem nur bruchstückhafte Informationen zu diesen Vorgängen in Andreas Umland: *Vladimir Zhirinovskii in Russian Politics: Three Approaches to the Emergence of the Liberal-Democratic Party of Russia, 1990-1993*. Phil. Diss. Freie Universität Berlin 1997, Abschn. 5.2.

5 Vgl. die Paperbackausgabe des Buches Stanley G. Payne: *Fascism: Comparison and Definition*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press 1980, Rückumschlag.

6 Um nur die wichtigsten englischsprachigen Veröffentlichungen zu Dugin zu erwähnen, die für Gregor in Berkeley mühelos zugänglich sein dürften: Wayne Allensworth: *The Russian Question: Nationalism, Modernization, and Post-Communist Russia*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield 1998; Stephen D. Shenfield: *Russian Fascism: Traditions, Tendencies, Movements*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe 2001; Alan Ingram: *Alexander Dugin: Geopolitics and Neo-Fascism in Post-Soviet Russia*, in: *Political Geography*, Bd. 20, Nr. 8/2001, S. 1029-1051; Vadim Rossman: *Russian Intellectual Antisemitism in the Post-Communist Era*. Lincoln: The University of Nebraska Press 2002.

7 Auf Englisch: <http://arctogaia.com/public/eng/>; <http://eurasia.com.ru/english.html>; [http://www.geocities.com/eurasia\\_uk/](http://www.geocities.com/eurasia_uk/); auf Deutsch: <http://eurasia.com.ru/deutsche.html>; <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Cyprus/1653/deut1.htm>; auf Italienisch: <http://www.arctogaia.com/public/ital.htm>; <http://utenti.lycos.it/progettoeurasia/>; <http://www.red-vertice.com/didencias/textosdisi25.html>; <http://eurasia.com.ru/italiano.html>; <http://utenti.lycos.it/EurasianWebSite/>. Einige Manuskripte Dugins sind auch regulär als Bücher im Westen verlegt worden, z.B. Aleksandr Dugin: *Continente Russia*. Parma: Edizioni All'insegna del Veltro 1991. In Madrid erschien 1990 Dugins Buch „Rusia: Misterio de Eurasia“. Die Londoner Filiale der European Liberation Front beziehungsweise der Eurasian Movement vertreibt seit 1999 „The Seminal Writings of Alexander Dugin“ in englischer Sprache in drei Bänden, siehe [http://www.geocities.com/eurasia\\_uk/towards.html](http://www.geocities.com/eurasia_uk/towards.html).

8 Markus Mathyl: Hammer und Sichel in der Fahne Hitlers, in: Roland Roth und Dieter Rucht, Hg.: *Jugendkulturen, Politik und Protest: Vom Widerstand zum Kommerz*. Opladen: Leske+Budrich 2000, S. 211-237.

9 Andreas Umland: *Sovremennye ponjatija fašizma v Rossii i na Zapade*, in: *Neprikosnovennyj zapas*, Nr. 5 (31) (2003), S. 116-122, <http://www.nz-online.ru/index.phtml?aid=20010634>.

10 N.N.: *The magic disillusion of a Nationalist Intellectual: Alexander Dugin answers questions from his readers*, <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Cyprus/1653/eng-inter1.htm>, Abschn. 5.

11 Vgl. Zeev Sternhell in Zusammenarbeit mit Mario Sznajder und Maia Asheri: *The Birth of Fascist Ideology: From Cultural Rebellion to Political Revolution*. Übersetzt von David Maisel. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press 1994; Zeev Sternhell: *Neither Right Nor Left: Fascist Ideology in France*. Übersetzt von David Maisel. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press 1996; ders.: *Fascist Ideology*, in: Griffin: *Fascism: Critical Concepts in Political Science*. Bd. 1: *The Nature of Fascism*, S. 81-141; A. James Gregor: *Contemporary Radical Ideologies: Totalitarian Thought in the Twentieth Century*. New York: Random House 1968; ders.: *The Ideology of Fascism: The Rationale for Totalitarianism*. New York: Free Press 1969; ders.: *The Fascist Persuasion in Radical Politics*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press 1974; ders.: *Italian Fascism and Developmental Dictatorship*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press 1979; ders.: *Phoenix: Fascism in Our Time*. With an introduction by Allesandro Campi. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers 1999; ders.: *The Faces of Janus: Fascism and Marxism in the Twentieth Century*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press 2000.

12 Aleksandr Dugin: *Fašizm – bezgraničnyj i krasnyj*, <http://www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/Embassy/8429/fashizm.html> bzw. [http://jesuschrist.ru/forum/121967\\_1.php](http://jesuschrist.ru/forum/121967_1.php). Siehe zu diesem Artikel auch Markus Mathyl: *The National-Bolshevik Party and Arctogaia: Two neo-fascist groupuscules in the post-Soviet political space*, in: Roger Griffin in Zusammenarbeit mit Matthew Feldmann, Hg.: *Fascism: Critical Concepts in Political Science*. Bd. 5: *Post-war Fascisms*. London/New York: Routledge 2004, S.185-200, hier S. 190-191.

13 Dugin: *Fašizm – bezgraničnyj i krasnyj*, Abschn. 1 „Protiv nacional-kapitalizma“.

14 Ebd., Abschn. 2 „Russkij socializm“.

15 Ebd., Abschn. 3 „Novye ljudi“.

16 Am deutlichsten geschieht dies vielleicht in Aleksandr Dugin: *Celi i zadači našej Revoljucii*. Moskau: Arktogeta 1995.

17 Professor Gregor etwa beobachtet zutreffend: „In Moskau liest und übersetzt Alexander Dugin, ein weiteres Mitglied der russischen Intelligenzija, für sein Publikum die Literatur des ‘Neofaschismus’“. Gregor: *The Problem*, S. 328.

18 Man gewinnt aufgrund obiger und vieler weiterer Statements Dugins den Eindruck, daß er – würde er Griffins Werke lesen – sich sowohl mit dessen Konzipierung von Faschismus, als auch einer darauf basierenden Anwendung des Begriffs auf seine eigene Ideologie einverstanden erklären könnte. Auf die Relevanz der Übereinstimmung sozialer Akteure mit ihrer Klassifizierung durch die Sozialwissenschaften wird kurz eingegangen in Anatol Rapoport: *Comments on „The Comparative Method in the Social Sciences“*, in: *Philosophy of Science*, 22. Jg. (1955), Nr. 2, S. 107-122, hier S. 121.

19 Eine kritisch kommentierte, ausführliche Bibliographie zu Gregors Veröffentlichungen bis 1998 findet sich unter <http://www.ferris.edu/isar/bibliography/gregribib.htm>.

#### Adresse

Dr. Andreas Umland, St. Antony's College, Woodstock Road, Oxford OX2 6JF, United Kingdom

## Andreas Umland and the “Fascism” of Alexander Dugin

### A. James Gregor

((1)) I am grateful to Dr Andreas Umland for providing the opportunity to develop my objections to the disposition to define “Fascism/fascism” so loosely that cognitive control over entry criteria into the class is all-but-lost. The dispensation to see fascists, parafascists, protofascists, and/or cryptofascists wherever one finds the suggestion of “palingenetic, populist ultranationalism” fosters the sighting of fascists and variants of fascism everywhere. Not surprisingly, Dr Umland tells us that Russia’s Alexander Dugin must be numbered among the fascists.

((2)) How do we know that Dugin is a fascist? Well, for one thing, Dugin apparently tells us so. For another, a lot of scholars seem to think so. Now, Dr Umland surely knows that neither constitutes compelling evidence for the claim. Self-avowals concerning one’s personal qualities hardly serve as unimpeachable evidence of those qualities—and one hardly takes a poll to determine the truth of an empirical, evidentiary claim. We all appreciate the fact that few among us would lend money to a borrower simply because he insists upon his credit-worthiness. If we are in the least serious, we seek out independent evidence. Jim Jones, a self-proclaimed “minister,” while insisting on his “Christianity,” led his flock to mass suicide and murder—after he had sexually exploited both women and children. Jim Jones may have sincerely believed himself to have been a Christian—as might some others around him—but I think most of us would have persuasive reasons to disagree.

((3)) Dr Umland reports that Dugin speaks of “transcendental ideas,” “impossible dreams,” and a “community of heroes and supermen” (Umland, appendix ((3))) as though that is telling evidence of Dugin’s Fascism. But there is more to the question than that. Dugin, by his own account, is an occult “Traditionalist,” given to epistemological mysticism—as well as a fancy for Tantrism and the satanism of Aleister Crowley—all of which have been deemed compatible not only with National Bolshevism, but “Nazi-Maoism” as well.<sup>1</sup> Fascism?

((4)) One finds very little, if any, of these curiosities in the works of major Fascist theoreticians.<sup>2</sup> Rather, much of it makes up the substance of the work of Julius Evola—a non-Fascist “Traditionalist,” occultist, mystic, one-time Dadaist, and Tantrist, loosely linked to Aleister Crowley—whose “transcendentalism,” unreal idealism, heroes and supermen have absolutely nothing to do with Fascism. The truth of the matter is

that many of the epistemological notions, as well as the peculiar convictions, that make up Dugin's views are borrowed directly from Evola—and Joscelyn Godwin, in the Foreword to the English translation of Evola's *Gli uomini e le rovine*, simply (and correctly) states that Evola's "extreme right-wing views," rather than making him a Fascist, rendered him "a fearless critic of the Fascist regime."<sup>3</sup>

((5)) In his discussion, Dr Umland chooses to dismiss Evola as somehow irrelevant (Umland, appendix ((1))) because he is no longer an actor in contemporary politics. I would argue, however, that Evola is critical to the issue of Dugin's "fascism." There are few things in the informal discipline of intellectual history more certain than that Dugin's "fascism" is, in significant measure, as "fascist" as the ideas of Evola are "fascist."

((6)) With regard to the issue, some of the most prominent commentators on these subjects have spoken not only of the influence of Evola on Dugin's early intellectual development, but of that influence as "critical." It was from Evola that Dugin drew not only his mystic epistemology,<sup>4</sup> but "the central strand of his...worldview—allegiance to the 'Tradition' that supposedly has its origin in a primordial heroic age."<sup>5</sup>

((7)) The real question is whether the ideas so central to Dugin's convictions can be understood to be "fascist" in any cognitive sense. With respect to that, it seems that the first work by Evola that Dugin translated was *Imperialismo pagano*, in which Evola told his readers that nationalism was repugnant, Fascist foot-soldiers, the *squadristi*, were "plebian," the Mussolinian notions of "hierarchy" and "elites" were fraudulent, the attempts at industrial corporativism decadent, and the populism of Mussolini's revolution irretrievably "common" and "bourgeois," devoid of all the elements that would have rendered it truly of the "authentic Right."<sup>6</sup> Evola was never to change any of his opinions. He was never to join the Partito Nazionale Fascista, and in his volume on Fascism, published almost four decades later, he repeated precisely those judgments he had tendered in 1928. Fascism simply was not an expression of the "traditional and authentic Right" and, as such, merited no allegiance. In April 1951, he told the Ufficio Politico della Questura in Rome, which charged him with Fascist sympathies, that he never had sympathy for specifically Fascist ideas. The ideas he defended were "superior and anterior to Fascism."<sup>7</sup> The Court duly acquitted him.

((8)) Dugin acknowledged that Evola extended only "conditional support" to Fascism because he imagined that Mussolini's *dottrina* might be used as a vehicle for his own ideas. Equally clear was the fact that Evola's "sacral metaphysics" had absolutely "no positive echo within Fascism."<sup>8</sup> Exploiting his friendship with members of the then contemporary political and intellectual elite, Evola did publish articles in Fascist journals, but their content was almost always rejected by major Fascist intellectuals. In the first years of the 1930s, Ugo Spirito, who was one of Fascist Italy's foremost spokesmen, identified Evola's notions as a product of "a mania for originality at whatever cost, a vanity for new formulations, and a poorly concealed inability to suffer the moral discipline of an idealism that is adequately understood." Spirito proceeded to unceremoniously dismiss the ideas of the "magic Baron."<sup>9</sup>

((9)) For his part, Mussolini apparently recognized Evola as one among those "hysterical fanatics" who might serve Fascism's political purposes whenever circumstances so required. Evola's "mysteriosophic," pagan, and anti-clerical fanaticism was to be permitted the fullest publicity in the late 1920s, for example, in order to frighten the representatives of the Vatican at a time when Mussolini was negotiating the Concordat. But even at the time when Mussolini was using Evola's writings for his own purposes, Fascist critics identified Evola as an author of "formless and unsophisticated" polemics—the framer of works "every line" of which "conceals a coarse error." Fascist critics identified Evola as the author of publications that were not to be taken seriously, meriting only "to be put aside and thought no more about."<sup>10</sup>

((10)) Only little chastened by the abuse, Evola embarked upon his inquiries into the "race question" by the mid-1930s. Once again, Mussolini, for reasons of his own, found his writings of tactical use. Whatever political purposes they might have served,<sup>11</sup> Fascist intellectuals dismissed Evola's ideas concerning race and racion as "bizarre...occult, anti-scientific fantasies."<sup>12</sup>

((11)) Evola's ideas were almost uniformly rejected by Fascist intellectuals, and they are the ideas embraced by Dugin. There is no doubt that they make up much of the occult foundation of his works. In the 1990s, Dugin founded both a publishing house *Arktogeia*, and his first journal *Giperboreyets*, both alluding to a mystic Hyperborean race and its Arctic homeland, the mythic origins of Evola's conjectural culture-creating Aryans.<sup>13</sup>

((12)) Dugin commits himself to the same occult notions found in Evola's works. He speaks of the centrality of the Hyperboreans—infilled with the gnostic knowledge of "transcendental spirituality"—as the Aryan ancestors of today's Russians. He speaks of their flight from Hyperborea as a consequence of environmental catastrophe and their passage south where they encounter and mate with dark skinned denizens. He speaks of the polarities of the North and the South—and all the threats to true spirituality that entails—all speculations borrowed from Evola's texts.<sup>14</sup> He speaks of "polar imagery" as part of the "metaphysics of politics"—as the inspiration for the Ghibelline resistance to the Roman Catholic Church—all borrowed from Evola's texts.<sup>15</sup> Dugin's rejection of "narrow nationalism" and his call to "Eurasian empire," together with his appeal to the creation of a "traditional state" are, he tells us, all inspired by Evola.<sup>16</sup> Dugin's convictions that world history is shaped by "suprarational forces" and a "transcendental Idea," an "unrealizable dream of a community of heroes and supermen," are all borrowed from Evola. None of it is "fascist" in any meaningful sense of the term.

((13)) Many commentators seem intuitively aware of all this. Some speak hesitantly of a Dugin who can, at best, and only "in certain ways, be considered a neofascist." Others are prepared to speak of Dugin as a neofascist because of Evola's influence on his thought—apparently without knowing that Evola was hardly a Fascist. Still others are convinced Dugin is "unequivocally" a fascist, because he wishes to install "a new order in which the heroic values of [an] almost forgotten

'Tradition' are renewed"<sup>17</sup>—seemingly unaware that Dugin's "Traditional" convictions are those of Evola and have precious little to do with Fascism. In fact, his "palingenetic, populist ultranationalism" does not seem to qualify as Fascist/fascist at all. The features that characterize Dugin's political thought are "Evolian"—those consistently rejected by Fascists throughout the history of their regime. However one chooses to identify those features—as New Right, "rightist extremism," "revolutionary conservatism," or "Traditionalist," they are neither Fascist nor National Socialist. Heinrich Himmler's SS aides perhaps said it best:

The ultimate and secret goal of Evola's theories and projects is most likely an *insurrection of the old aristocracy* against the modern world.... Thus, the first German impression, that he was a "reactionary Roman" was correct.... His learnedness tends toward the dilettante and pseudoscientific. Hence it follows that National Socialism sees nothing to be gained by putting itself at the disposal of Baron Evola.... As Evola has also only been tolerated and hardly supported by Fascism, there is not even a tactical need to assist him....<sup>18</sup>

((14)) Renzo De Felice stated that Evola "was a marginal figure during the entire Fascist period. He never had a role in the Fascist party [and]...was criticized and viewed suspiciously by Fascists. He represented a form of traditionalism....not found in Fascism."<sup>19</sup> He was never a Party member, and when he proposed himself for membership, he was rejected. It seems clear that if Evola could not pass muster as a Fascist to Fascists, Dugin would hardly qualify.

((15)) While there is considerable complexity to Dugin's political convictions—a kind of geopolitics borrowed from a variety of sources ranging from Alfred Mahan to Halford Mackinder,<sup>20</sup> a pseudoracist Eurasianism rooted in the thought of the early Eurasians and teased out of the modern reflections of thinkers such as Lev Gumilev—all of it, ultimately, reduces itself to the "sacral geography" and the "spiritual racism" of the occult and mystic musings of Julius Evola. Dugin may think of himself as a "fascist," but there appears to be little reason why we should. His political notions are certainly quaint, but hardly fascist.<sup>21</sup> If Dr Umland wishes to suppress Alexander Dugin's freedom of political expression, he will have to find more compelling grounds than that he thinks Dugin is a fascist.

### Notes

1 Dugin has provided a candid account of the ideological origins of his work in the writings of Julius Evola in Dugin, "Julius Evola et traditionalisme Russe," available <http://www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/6824/evolrus.htm>. See the comments by Sergio Fritz Roa, "Alexander Dughin o quando la metafisica e la politica si incontrano," <http://www.angelfire.com/zine/BLH>. Dugin has done nothing to conceal his views.

2 See the more ample discussion in A. James Gregor, *Mussolini's Intellectuals: Fascist Social and Political Thought* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

3 Joscelyn Godwin, in the Foreword to Julius Evola, *Men Among the Ruins: Post-War Reflections of a Radical Traditionalist* (Rochester, Vermont: Inner Traditions, 2002), p. viii. In this context, Stephen Shenfield, speaks of the Russian National Union, one of the political organizations in his study of "Russian Fascism," as "not having been influenced by Italian Fascism," but having been influenced by Evola, who was apparently not a "fascist," but a "New Right" thinker. Stephen Shenfield, *Russian Fascism: Traditions and Revolutionary Movements* (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 2001), p. 239.

4 Dugin, everywhere in his works, makes eminently clear that his "truths" are predicated on Evola's mystic "suprational" and "arational" epistemology. See specifically his "Julius Evola et traditionalisme Russe." Griffin, in his own works, acknowledged that Fascist "mysticism" "was not of any religious or occultist variety but a code word for the vitalism and heroism which had supposedly inspired the Fascist revolution." Roger Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism* (New York: Routledge, 1993), p. 69. In fact, there is very little, if any, notion of a mystic epistemology among major Fascist ideologues. Mussolini, himself, insisted that "if one understands by 'mysticism' the ability to apprehend truths independent of intelligence, I would be the first to declare my opposition." He held that human beings were compelled to labor assiduously, meeting the most "rigorous of scientific and rational criteria," in their pursuit of truth. Mussolini, as quoted in Yvon de Begnac, *Palazzo Venezia: Storia di un regime* (Rome: La Rocca, 1950), pp. 186, 644. Works like G. S. Spinetti, *Mistica fascista nel pensiero di Arnaldo Mussolini* (Milan: Hoepli, 1936) have nothing to do with epistemological issues, *per se*, they refer essentially to the role of sentiment in the formulation of normative judgment. Compare, for example, L. E. Gianturco, *Misticismo eroico* (Verona: A. Mondadori, 1941).

5 Walter Laqueur, *Black Hundred: The Rise of the Extreme Right in Russia* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1993), p. 142, n. 43. See Wayne Allensworth, *The Russian Question: Nationalism, Modernization, and Post-Communist Russia* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1998), p. 258; Shenfield, *Russian Fascism*, p. 192; as well as the editorial comments in the Italian translation of Alexander Dugin, *Continente Russia* (Parma: Edizioni all'insegna del Veltro, 1991), pp. 5-7.

6 Julius Evola, *Imperialismo pagano: Il fascismo dinanzi al pericolo eurocristiano* (Rome: Atanor, 1928), p. 11. Dugin's translation is apparently based not on the Italian edition, but its German translation, *Heidnischer Imperialismus* (Leipzig: Armanen Verlag, 1933). That changes very little. If anything, the anti-Fascist sentiments in the German version are even more emphatic; see *Heidnischer Imperialismus*, pp. 97-99.

7 Julius Evola, "Autodifesa," in *Men Among the Ruins*, p. 293.

8 H. T. Hansen, Preface to the American Edition, Evola, *Men Among the Ruins*, p. 39. See Julius Evola, *Il fascismo: Saggio di una analisi critica del punto di vista della Destra* (Rome: Volpe, 1964). In this context, see Evola's account of his intellectual relationship with Fascism in his biography, *Il cammino del Cinabro* (Milan: All'insegna del pesce d'oro, 1963), in which we are told that he never thought that Fascism, as Fascism, could address the problems of his time. Fascism, he said, was a base reaction to the confusion and brutality caused by the Great War. It was nationalistic and totalitarian—both properties to which he objected. It was the product of compromise, fueled by the petty ambitions of petty people. Its entire substance was uncertain, ill-contrived, violent and oppressive. More than that, Mussolini was a primitive who was constitutionally incapable of understanding anything of "the truly spiritual." *Ibid.*, pp. 85, 96-97. For the discussion of Evola's "conditional support" of Fascism, see H. T. Hansen's excellent Preface to the American Edition, Evola, *Men Among the Ruins*, pp. 15, 34.

9 Ugo Spirito, "L'idealismo magico," *L'idealismo italiano e i suoi critici* (Florence: Felice le Monnier, 1930), p. 192, 204-205.

10 See the discussion in Richard Drake, "Julius Evola, Radical Fascism, and the Lateran Accords," *The Catholic Historical Review*, no. 74 (1988), pp. 411, 414. The quotations are to be found in Ugo d'Andrea, "Imperialismo pagano," *Critica fascista*, 6 (15 August 1928), pp. 319-320; Luigi Volpicelli, "Imperialismo fascista," *Educazione fascista* 6 (September 1928), p. 561.

11 It is said that Mussolini "accepted" some of Evola's racial speculations. I have elsewhere argued that if there was any "acceptance," it was very much qualified. Mussolini sought to avoid the biological materialism of National Socialist racism—and Evola's "spiritual racism" certainly served that purpose. It is reasonably certain that Mussolini failed to read Evola's work with any care and that Fascist "racism" was fundamentally different from anything found in the works of Evola. See Gregor, *Mussolini's Intellectuals*, chap. 9 and *The Ideology of Fascism: The Rationale of Totalitarianism* (New York: Free Press, 1969), chap. 6. Evola acknowledged that his ideas on racial matters were being used by Mussolini for tactical purposes. See his comments in Evola, "Autodifesa," p. 292.

12 Mario F. Canella, *Principi di psicologia razziale* (Florence: Sansoni, 1941) pp. 59, 61, n. 1, 203, n. 2. See the similar, but more intense criticism in the official Fascist monthly, *Civiltà fascista*, 9, no. 10 (August 1942), pp. 647-652. During this period, Evola sought protection from Roberto Farinacci who was seeking to ingratiate himself with Italy's German allies—and who eventually attempted to substitute himself for Mussolini. Evola always sought to distance himself from Mussolini's Fascism and during the time of the Social Republic (1943-1945) refused to enter its territories.

13 The notions of the Hyperborean Aryan race and its Arctic homeland are to be found in Evola, *Rivolta contro il mondo moderno* (Milan: Hoepli, 1934); see particularly the discussion concerning the Aryans as a

"Hyperborean race," with its origins in the Arctic, in Evola, *Sintesi di dottrina della razza* (Milan: Hoepli, 1941), pp. 66-77. In 1993, Dugin published materials that clearly reflect Evola's views, among them the volume, *Giperboreiskaia teoriia: opyt arisofakogo issledovaniia* (Moscow: Arktogeia, 1993), together with the essay "Krestovgi pokhod solntsa," in *Milyi Angel*, no. 2 (n.d.), available through <http://www.arctogaia.com/public/pohod.html>. Concerning the Russian material, Dr Umland seems unduly concerned with my proficiency (Umland, appendix ((2))). Other than the fact that most of Dugin's writings are readily available in European languages—Dr Umland surely knows that in research facilities of the quality of the University of California, Berkeley, there is a surfeit of linguistic talent always at the disposal of researchers. Now that I am undertaking comparative work on Hindu nationalism, I hope he will not be too preoccupied that I will have to deal with Urdu and other "exotic" languages of the Indian subcontinent.

14 See the account in Alexander Dugin, *Misterii Evrazii* (Moscow: Arktogeia, 1996).

15 See Dugin, "Le radici metafisiche delle ideologie politiche," in *Continente Russia*, pp. 81-84, which originally was published in Dugin's episodic publication *Milyi Angel*, which can be accessed via <http://www.arctogaia.com/public/pohod.html>.

16 Dugin, "L'Impero sovietico e i nazionalismi nel periodo della perestroika," *Continente Russia*, p. 65.

17 Alan Ingram, "Alexander Dugin: geopolitics and neo-fascism in post-Soviet Russia," *Political Geography* 20 (2001), p. 1029; Allensworth, *The Russian Question*, p. 258; Shenfield, *Russian Fascism*, p. 195.

18 As cited Hansen, Introduction to Evola, *Revolt Against the Modern World* (Rochester, Vermont: Inner Traditions International, 1995), p. xviii.

19 Renzo De Felice, *Intervista sul fascismo* (Rome: Laterza, 1975), p. 99. Philippe Baillet, "I rapporti di Evola con il fascismo ed il nazional-socialismo: Una proposta di lettura," *Futuro Presente*, no. 6 (Spring 1995), p. 134, simply states that Evola "was never a Fascist...and forever remained on the margin of Fascism."

20 Whatever "geopolitics" one finds in Fascist thought is something far different from anything found among Dugin's occult lucubrations. Fascist geopolitics can best be described as gravitating around the relatively specific concept: *spazio vitale*—which dealt essentially with (1) strategic concerns, occupying space that might control the traffic on critical sealines of communication; (2) spaces to which excess population might be transferred; and (3) resource supplements to sustain the drive to industrialization that constituted one of the principal concerns of the Fascist government. None of this has anything to do with the interests of either Evola or Dugin. For a good introduction to Fascist geopolitical thought, see C. Terracciano, G. Roletto, and E. Masi, *Geopolitica fascista: Antologia di scritti* (Milan: Società Editrice Barbarossa, 1993).

21 Dugin tells us that "the last refuge of scoundrels remains national-capitalism, anti-socialist, anti-communist, rightist fascism (as a rule, linked with racism, xenophobia, etc.) It is contradictory and irresponsible. It is absolutely untrue and leads nowhere." Dugin, "Just Bolshevism," p. 3, available through <http://arctogaia.com/public/eng-pol.htm>. In this context, both Ingram and Shenfield recognize that the term "fascism" is particularly difficult to define. We have no idea what Dugin might mean by "fascism"—much less "rightist fascism." What is clear is that we do not know what a "generic definition" of fascism might be. Ingram and Shenfield seem to opt for the "ideal type" proposed by Professor Griffin and Dr Umland. I suggest the reason is that the definition proposed is both sufficiently vague and amply generous to allow a host of candidates into the class of "fascists" who might otherwise have to be classified, and catalogued, on their own individual merits. See Ingram, "Alexander Dugin," p. 1033 and Shenfield, *Russian Fascism*, pp. 4-5, 9, 17-18.

#### Address

Prof. Dr. A. James Gregor, University of California, Department of Political Science, 210 Barrows Hall, Berkeley, CA 94720-1950, USA



## Brief

Dear Editors of *Erwägen Wissen Ethik*,

Within the discussion of Roger Griffin's theory of fascism in *Erwägen Wissen Ethik* 15:3 (2004), I initiated an exchange with A. James Gregor concerning the issue of whether the post-Soviet Russian ultra-nationalist Aleksandr Dugin could be classified as a fascist or not.<sup>1</sup> As I started the debate, it would have been preferable to let Professor Gregor have the last word. However, for two reasons, I would like to continue this discussion. First, as indicated below, the prominence of Dugin in the Russian elite discourse has, during the last months, further risen. Thus the issue of an adequate interpretation of his ideas too has become more relevant. Second, Professor Gregor has chosen to comment not only on Dugin's goals, but also on my intentions. In view of Professor Gregor's below quoted unusual speculation about the purposes of my research, I now regret to have written my previous contributions in German language. Hopefully, the below English-language clarification will set the issue, for Anglophone readers of *Erwägen Wissen Ethik*, straight.

\*\*\*

### Some Addenda on the Relevance of Extremely Right-Wing Ideas in Putin's New Russia

((1)) In general, I found Professor Gregor's rebuttal to my critique of his assessment of Aleksandr Dugin in *Erwägen Wissen Ethik* 15:3 (2004) valuable. I have learnt from his dense description of Julius Evola and the relationship of his ideas to Italian Fascism as well as Dugin's ideology, and found this to be an informative contribution.<sup>2</sup>

I was less intrigued by Professor Gregor's guesswork concerning the motivation of my research in his last sentence. Professor Gregor concluded his article suggesting that

[i]f Dr Umland wishes to suppress Alexander Dugin's freedom of expression, he will have to find more compelling grounds than that he thinks Dugin is a fascist.<sup>3</sup>

As non-German readers of our controversy in *Erwägen Wissen Ethik* 15:3 (2004) might not be able to reconstruct my previous arguments in German-language to which Professor Gregor here refers, I have chosen to respond once again, and to do so now in English.

((2)) I cannot recall to have, either in my critique of Professor Gregor's assessment of Dugin or in my previous publications, indicated that Dugin or any other Russian anti-democrat should be silenced. I do not know where Professor Gregor got this idea from. I did mention, in my critique, briefly some court cases that involved Russian ultranationalists and concerned the issue of whether Vladimir Zhirinovskii, the neo-Nazi Russian National Unity (see below) or other similar actors can be labelled "fascist" or not. Yet, such proceedings were, usually, initiated by these Russian ultranationalists themselves. They specifically targeted those democratic activists or politicians who had dared to call the ultranationalists "fascists." More often than not, the resulting court decisions meant the suppression of the freedom of expression of the activists who had used the fascist label as they were ordered by the courts to publish apologies and, sometimes, to compensate the plaintiffs. It was in view of such circumstances that I found Professor Gregor's categoric statement that Dugin (among some other non-Russian figures) could not "by any reasonable measure, [...] ever count" as a fascist unhelpful.<sup>4</sup>

((3)) I can thus only suspect that Professor Gregor's above quoted speculation about my intentions is rooted in some misunderstanding of why I am interested in Dugin and similar figures in Russia, in the first place. It is uncommon in non-Marxist scholarly controversies to comment on the political agendas that contributors to such debates may have. Yet, as the question of my personal objectives was raised here by a senior professor at a leading political science department, I feel pressed to clarify them.

The foremost reason that a publicist like Dugin or, for instance, a politician like Zhirinovskii should be taken, interpreted, and criticized more seriously than this is usually done in Western assessments of Russian politics lies *not* in the nature of their ideas or the particular category, such as „fascist“ or „non-fascist,“ one chooses to apply to them. The primary rationale for attention to them is, instead, that the impact that these actors may have on the political development of their country (and the Northern hemisphere as a whole) could be deeper than the potential influence of comparable figures in the West. That is not only because the Russian political system – whether one regards it as democratic or not – is far from consolidated. It is also because the positions that some ultra-nationalists occupy on the Russian political and social ladder is relatively high today already. The implications of, for instance, Zhirinovskii's recent electoral success – 11.45% in the 2003 State Duma elections, his second best result in federal-level elections ever – as well as of the simultaneous entry of a new ultra-right-wing grouping, the Motherland Bloc (9.02%), into the Russian parliament's lower house are self-evident. The political relevance of Dugin's bizarre ideas, in contrast, might be, for an outsider, less obvious.

((4)) Professor Gregor would be right if, by suspecting me of an urge to censor Dugin, he meant to highlight an heightened degree of concern, on my part, with regard to the Dugin phenomenon. I have indeed become increasingly interested in, and, perhaps, even worried about, this figure. Yet, the reason for my growing attention is, only in the second instance, the particular content of Dugin's numerous texts, my preference to classify him as a fascist, and some aversion to his ideas.

In fact, I think of Dugin as a publicist with certain talents – though, probably, not quite as eloquent a writer as his one-time brother-in-arms Eduard Limonov, leader of post-Soviet Russia's infamous National-Bolshevik Party.<sup>5</sup> I would go as far as to admit my *agreement* with certain aspects of Dugin's critique (as well as of that of some other figures whom I would regard as fascists too) of contemporary Western civilization. Though Dugin's, Limonov's and other fascist diagnoses of the causes of various defects in modern Western societies are ridiculous, their descriptions and analyses of these ills are not always trivial. Fascist „(final) solutions” to the problems of contemporary societies, to be sure, are reprehensible, frequently dangerous, and, more often than not, would lead to the death of thousands, if not millions of people through war or genocide or both.

((5)) The primary reason why I am more interested in an adequate political classification of Dugin than of, for instance, Limonov is that the latter's (and similar figures') political influence is, in spite of Limonov's outstanding creative writing skills, limited to certain parts of the Russian youth scene, especially its counter-cultural milieu.<sup>6</sup> Dugin, to be sure, reaches these audiences too. But he is, in contrast to Limonov, also read among the Russian elite. To be precise, I am not even so much intrigued by the attention, as such, paid to Dugin's books and articles by a number of Russian politicians, academics, civil society actors, or military men. What puzzles me is the seriousness and respect with which Dugin's esoteric mumblings and fantastic schemes are considered by highly educated and, worse, placed Russians. What is baffling in the Dugin phenomenon are not any of his ideas *per se*, but that his manichean theories are seen as relevant for Russia's domestic affairs, especially her nationality issues, and her foreign policies towards both, the „near“ and „far abroad“ (a terminology that may sound familiar to students of Weimar Germany).

In view of his reception in the elite, it becomes important that Dugin's world view should, as Professor Gregor might agree, not be misunderstood as some kind of abstruse Russian caricature of the universe created in J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*. Dugin's „thalassocracy“ is not „Mordor,“ but refers to the really existing contemporary West. Dugin's most demonized enemy is not some elusive „Sauron,“ but the United States of America. The sympathetic heroes in Dugin's books are no „Hobbits“ of „Middle Earth,“ but the living Russian people occupying the Eurasian „pivot of the world.“ And the final victory over Russia's enemies will not come about through the destruction of some mysterious ring, but as a result of a confrontation that would be nothing less than World War III.

((6)) As I am writing these lines I am forwarded, by one of the West's best informed experts on the Russian extreme right, Robert C. Otto, an article which claims that yet another prominent politician has expressed his readiness to become a member of Dugin's International Eurasian Movement. Allegedly, Aleksandr P. Torshin (b. 1953), one of the four Vice-Speakers of the Federation Council, the upper house of the Russian parliament,<sup>7</sup> has declared he would accept an invitation to enter the governing body of Dugin's Movement, i.e. its Highest Council.<sup>8</sup> According to this article, Torshin would join in the International Eurasian Movement's Highest Council, among others,

- Aslambek Aslakhonov, Advisor to the President of the Russian Federation,
- Mikhail Margelov, Chairman of the Committee on International Affairs of the Federation Council,
- Viktor Kaliuzhnyi, until recently Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the RF,
- Albert Chernishev, Russia's Ambassador to Turkey and Head of the Association of Plenipotentiary and Extraordinary Ambassadors of the RF,
- Apas Dzhamaev, former Prime-Minister of Kyrgyzstan,
- Eduard Sagalaev, Chairman of the National Association of Television and Radio Stations, and others.<sup>9</sup>

In another recent piece sent to me by Otto and titled „It is time the Russians Wake Up!“, Dugin makes known that his newspaper *Evrasiiskoe obozrenie* (Eurasian Review) will henceforth appear as a supplement to *Literaturnaia gazeta* (Literary Newspaper) – once Russia's equivalent of the *The New York Review of Books*, *Die Zeit* or *Times Literary Supplement*.<sup>10</sup> If these two announcements indeed preview real developments, Dugin's status within the Russian political and intellectual elite will be even higher than suggested in my first response to Professor Gregor's critique of Griffin.

((7)) To return to Professor Gregor's reply and his speculation about the intent of my research, I do not wish to suggest the necessity of a suppression of Dugin's freedom of political expression, but, only if that were possible, to

- (a) draw attention to the political impact that Dugin already now has,
- (b) point out that, in view of this impact, the question of how to classify Dugin's ideology in a comparative perspective should be of some interest,
- (c) recall the special meaning the term of fascism has acquired in Russia, and
- (d) caution against as categoric a classification of Dugin as a *non-fascist* as Professor Gregor has done.

While I would admit to a certain pettiness about these issues on my part, the content or style of my critique of Professor Gregor's statements should not give the impression that I am an advocate of censorship.<sup>11</sup>

((8)) It is because of the above issues that I also mentioned Professor Gregor's lack of familiarity with Russian language, a

concern that Professor Gregor described, in his reply, as „undue” (endnote 13). I now regret my remark. Normally, lacking knowledge of Russian would not be something I would see as problematic for adequate research on the Russian extreme right as there have, recently, appeared a number of very good books and articles in, as well as some translations of Russian primary sources into, Western languages (mainly English and German).<sup>12</sup>

In 2002, I have, for example, explicitly quoted Professor Gregor’s recent work as being one of the few, laudable exceptions in post-Cold War comparative research on fascism in which an attempt is made to integrate Soviet and post-Soviet Russian political phenomena.<sup>13</sup> I regard Professor Gregor’s comparative work as more adequate than many other recent Western analyses of contemporary interational ultra-nationalism that tend to mention Russian tendencies only *en passant*. The immense effort spent on describing and theorizing the contemporary West European and North American extreme right in hundreds of books and articles looks somewhat odd against the background of the scant attention that is, at the same time, paid to the Russian equivalent and the potential consequences a further consolidation of ultra-nationalist tendencies in the Russian parliament and society could have. Thus, I would not only like to leave Dugin his freedom of expression, but also wish that Professor Gregor continues to do research the way he does (while also hoping that he will take less of an interest in the political motives of his academic colleagues than he showed towards mine).

It was because of the apodictic tone with which Professor Gregor made a statement regarding a potentially political issue in the interpretation of the post-Soviet Russian extreme right that I did remark upon Professor Gregor’s lack of Russian-language proficiency and his, at that point, apparent failure to consult knowledgeable Russian-reading colleagues. The reason for my indication of a potential inadequacy of Professor Gregor’s sources was that, while he discussed a number of relevant English secondary works in his rebuttal to my critique, he had failed to do so in his previous initial response to Griffin. Had Professor Gregor mentioned that, and detailed why, Russian-reading Western specialists on post-Soviet right-wing extremism tend to classify Dugin as a fascist in his first response to Griffin, and had Professor Gregor formulated his opposing assessment as a reply not only to Griffin (who also does not read Russian), but to these Russianists too, I might, actually, not have bothered to write a response to his classification of Dugin as a non-fascist.

#### Endnotes

1 I replied to Professor Gregor’s critique of Roger Griffin’s theory of fascism „Roger Griffin, Social Science, ‘Fascism,’ and the ‘Extreme Right,’” *Erwägen Wissen Ethik* 15:3 (2004) in „Dugin kein Faschist? Eine Erwiderung an Professor A. James Gregor,” *Erwägen Wissen Ethik* 15:3 (2004).

2 A. James Gregor, „Andreas Umland and the ‘Fascism’ of Alexander Dugin,” *Erwägen Wissen Ethik* 15:3 (2004).

3 *Ibid.*, ((15)).

4 *Idem*, „Roger Griffin, Social Science...,” ((3)), italics in the original.

5 Markus Mathyl, “‘Die offenkundige Nisse und der rassenmäßige Feind:’ Die National-Bolschewistische Partei (NBP) als Beispiel für die Radikalisierung des russischen Nationalismus,” *Halbjahresschrift für südosteuropäische Geschichte, Literatur und Politik* 9:2 (1997): 7-15, & 10:1 (1998): 23-36; *idem*, “Hammer und Sichel in der Fahne Hitlers,” in: Roland Roth and Dieter Rucht, eds., *Jugendkulturen, Politik und Protest: Vom Widerstand zum Kommerz* (Opladen: Leske+Budrich 2000), 211-37; Markus Mathyl, “The National-Bolshevik Party and Arctogaia: Two Neo-fascist Groupuscules in the Post-Soviet Political Space,” *Patterns of Prejudice* 36:3 (2003): 62-76; A. Toporova, “‘Natsboly’ v Sankt-Peterburge: obrazy i povsednevnost’,” in: V.V. Kostyusheva, ed., *Molodezhnye dvizheniya i subkul’tury Sankt-Peterburga (sotsiologicheskii i antropologicheskii analiz)* (Sankt-Peterburg: Norma 1999), 117-127; Andrei Rogachevskii, *Biographical and Critical Study of Russian Writer Eduard Limonov*. Studies in Slavic Language and Literature 20 (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen 2003).

6 Markus Mathyl, “Das Entstehen einer nationalistischen Gegenkultur im Nachperestroika-Rußland,” *Jahrbuch für Antisemitismusforschung* 9 (2000): 68-107.

7 On Torschin, see <http://council.gov.ru/sostav/member/m10699.htm>.

8 Ernst Pliev, „Rukovodiashchie organy Mezhdunarodnogo ‘Evraziiskogo Dvizheniia’ popolnilis’ eshche odnim senatorom,” <http://evrazia.org/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=1898>.

9 *Ibid.* I shortly introduce further relevant Russian civil society actors that were temporarily or are permanently tied to Dugin, including Mikhail Leonte’v and the late Aleksandr Panarin, in my forthcoming paper „Kulturhegemoniale Strategien der russischen extremen Rechten: Die Verbindung von faschistischer Ideologie und metapolitischer Taktik im ‘Neoeurasismus’ des Aleksandr Dugin,” *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Politikwissenschaft* 33:2 (2004), in print.

10 Anatolii Mel’nichenko and Aleksandr Dugin, “Russkim pora probuditsia!” *Shakhterskii kraj* 20 (2004), at: <http://sh-kray.narod.ru/archiv/2004/20/pol2.htm> as well as <http://evrazia.org/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=1910>.

11 I, for instance, regard Germany’s laws on political extremism as too restrictive and in discord with the „free-democratic basic order” (*freiheitlich-demokratische Grundordnung*) that my home country claims to have.

12 Andreas Umland, „The Post-Soviet Russian Extreme Right,” *Problems of Post-Communism* 44: 4 (1997): 53-61. Some of Dugin’s recent writings as well as parts of the programme of the International Eurasian Movement may be found in German language in the first 2004 issue of the extremely right-wing journal *Junges Forum* published by a certain Markus Fernbach under the imprint of Germany’s infamous *Regin Verlag*. I have the honour of being re-printed (with some mistakes) in this dubious journal, and take the opportunity to clarify here that I had no knowledge of this.

13 *Idem*, „Russischer Rechtsextremismus im Lichte der jüngeren theoretischen und empirischen Faschismusforschung,” *Osteuropa* 52:2 (2002): 901-913, here 902 n. 5, and 904 ns. 20 & 21.

Andreas Umland

20<sup>th</sup> September 2004

#### Address

Dr. Andreas Umland, St. Antony’s College, GB-Oxford OX2 6JF, UK.

## Brief

### Response to Dr. Andreas Umland

To the Editors of *Erwägen Wissen Ethik*:

((1)) Before I enter into the substance of this communication, I would like to affirm that I have always admired Dr. Andreas Umland's work. My admiration has not in any sense been diminished by this present exchange. In my judgment, he has been misled by some rather odd notions on how one deals with the concepts "Fascism," "fascism," and "neofascism."<sup>1</sup>

((2)) Dr. Umland has taken perfectly understandable umbrage at my intimation that he might be disposed to deny Alexander Dugin his freedom of political expression. He does admit, however, that his insistence that Dugin's "bizarre ideas" are "fascist" is motivated by his desire to limit the apparently increasing influence of dangerous antidemocratic thought in Russia. Nationalist and "extreme rightist" political forces have duly objected to their identification as "fascist," particularly when the sobriquet "fascist" slides artlessly into "neo-Nazi" as it does in Dr. Umland's letter ((2)). For many commentators, as it apparently does for Dr. Umland, the term "fascist" immediately calls to mind the "Final Solution"—the mass murder of innocents and genocidal violence ((4)). Given the current usage by some, to be identified as "fascist" is tantamount to being denied the *moral* right to express one's political convictions.

((3)) Given those circumstances, Russian nationalists have charged those who have identified them as "fascist" or "neofascist" with defamation—and have won in the Russian courts more frequently than not (just as Julius Evola won against those who charged him with being a "Fascist sympathizer"<sup>2</sup>). Russian nationalists and "rightists" of sundry sorts recognize that the terms "neofascist" and "fascist" have become simple terms of abuse, of derogation, possessed of very little cognitive substance. I would suggest that Dr. Umland can better address his concern (and mine) about the future of Russia by addressing the "bizarre," the "esoteric mumblings and fantastic schemes" ((5)), and antidemocratic ideas of "ultranationalists" like Dugin without attempting to identify them as "fascist-nazi" mass murderers. If the term "fascism" has acquired a "special meaning" ((7)) in Russia, having nothing to do with Mussolini's Fascism, perhaps one might be well-advised to use a different word to characterize Russia's antidemocratic forces.

((4)) Dr. Umland has not shown that Dugin's ideas have any affinity with those of Mussolini's Fascism. He has not denied that Dugin borrows the core of his convictions from Julius Evola—who was neither a Fascist nor a National Socialist. In my judgment, whatever the source of Dugin's curious ideas, calling them "fascist" does absolutely nothing to stop their increased reception by the Russian elite ((6)). Dr. Umland and I agree that Dugin may well be a dangerous political person and that everyone committed to political democracy and human rights should take every opportunity to expose his "reprehensible," "dangerous," and "fantastic" ideas particularly since Dr. Umland is convinced that they might lead to "the death of thousands, perhaps millions of people" ((4)). If Dr. Umland can convincingly show that to be the case, it should not be too difficult to defeat such grotesque and inhumane ideas without identifying them as "fascist." Calling Dugin a "fascist" might provide some immediate advantage, but given the very thin intellectual vindication for its use, indiscriminate use of the term may very well provide him, and his likes, advantage when the Russian courts and Russian intellectuals dismiss the attribution as irresponsible.

((5)) Whatever Alexander Dugin is, he is not a fascist in the literal and historically meaningful sense of the term—and neither Professor Roger Griffin nor Dr. Umland have said anything that might convince me otherwise. Dugin might well be a representative of the "Russian extreme right" ((8)) or the "ultraright wing" ((3)), but I have argued that neither would qualify him as a "fascist."

((6)) Dr. Umland and I both agree that something is amiss with fascism studies. For his own reasons, Dr. Umland laments that scholars have written "hundreds of books and articles" trying to identify the "extreme right" with fascism to the apparent neglect of more serious issues.

((7)) In my opinion, the profligate use of the term "fascism" by some specialists (think of the use of the term "Islamofascist") to identify any and all objectionable political groups, accomplishes little for comparative studies, and has at least two negative consequences: (1) it tends to delegitimize the right of such groups to free expression; and (2) it affords their opponents the occasion to attempt to implicate contemporary political leaders like A. B. Vajpayee, leader of one of the largest political parties in India,<sup>3</sup> and Gianfranco Fini, leader of the Alleanza Nazionale, and a notable political figure in Italy, in mass murder in general, and the mass-murder of Jews in particular<sup>4</sup>—something I find reprehensible. One might accept such costs if it was

clear there were significant cognitive gains by using the term “fascism” in the fashion recommended by Professor Griffin. I have argued there are no such gains, and considerable intellectual costs.

((8)) Over the extent of the exchange in EWE, Professor Griffin has forthrightly abandoned or significantly modified his earlier views, including those to which I initially took objection—something I find commendable.<sup>5</sup> We can now make distinctions between different, if related, political movements and regimes. Fascism does not mean National Socialism any more than it means communism. Given that, we can hardly be sure what “generic fascism” or “neofascism” might mean in the modern world. What we can say with considerable assurance is that the “neofascism” of Julius Evola had literally nothing to do with Mussolini’s Fascism—and whatever we may think of the ideas of Alexander Dugin, I hardly think they qualify as “fascist” in any meaningful sense.

### Notes

1. In my judgement, the distinctions must remain clear. Professor Griffin (R2, fn. 7) chooses to skate over them. He speaks of Julius Evola as influencing “neofascism.” I have not contested that. I have, however, insisted that Evola was never a Fascist, neither in his own nor in the judgment of Fascists. That “neofascists” chose him as an ideologue tells us how little such “neofascism” has to do with Mussolini’s Fascism.

2. Professor Roger Griffin tells us that if a political thinker denies that he is a “fascist,” and entertains a system of beliefs that are, “at least in theory...deeply unfascist...,” he cannot be a fascist (R1 ((25))). And yet, although Evola satisfies those requirements, he is still identified as a fascist by both Professor Griffin and Dr. Umland. Dugin, who is Evola’s intellectual heir, is similarly identified. I think the difficulty lies entirely with Professor Griffin’s conceptualizations.

3. Jairus Banaji, in his “Political Culture of Fascism” (in *Fascism in India: Faces, Fangs and Facts* [edited by C. Krishna. Manak 2003], pp. 20, 27), cites Professor Griffin’s generous definition of “fascism” as grounds for denigrating the largest political party in India, its founders, and its present leaders.

4. Both Vajpayee and Fini deny that they are fascists or neofascists. Vajpayee comes from a tradition having nothing to do with Mussolini’s Fascism or Hitler’s National Socialism. Gianfranco Fini has traced his ideas throughout Italy’s modern history into the “postfascist” era. He has affirmed that he is not a Fascist, because Fascism has no place in contemporary Italy. According to the criteria offered by Professor Griffin, neither Vajpayee nor Fini could be identified as “fascists” or, I would imagine, as “neofascists.” In far too many instances, the terms have become virtually meaningless other than to serve as simple expressions of abuse (see my forthcoming volume, *The Search for Neofascism: The Use and Abuse of Social Science*).

5. The editors of *Erwägen Wissen Ethik* have provided ample space and opportunity for the airing of Professor Griffin’s views. One need only compare his original position in *The Nature of Fascism* (Routledge 1991), my criticism (in *Interpretations of Fascism* [Transaction 1997]) with his latest formulations to measure the distance between his original notions and his present, much modified conceptualizations. Professor Griffin no longer speaks of “fascism” being the unique source of mass murder in the twentieth century, nor does he deny the affinities shared between Mussolini’s Fascism and the various forms of Marxism-Leninism. He now fully acknowledges the “important and substantive taxonomic and interpretive issues...raised by the relationship of communism to fascism....”(R2, fn. 7). He talks of “Stalinism, Maoism and the Khmer Rouge as hybrids of Marxism and fascism”—something I urged on him in our earliest exchanges—something he appears to have initially dismissed with his silence. He now proceeds to grant that “interwar period fascism” shared “greater affinities with communism than with conservatism,” and that both regimes were “totalitarian” and “intensely nationalistic”—[corroborating] assertions long since made by Gregor,” and then recommends that we treat Fascism and communism as “belonging to distinct, yet related political categories” (R2 ((9)) 5)—something I have always insisted upon (see my discussion in *The Faces of Janus: Marxism and Fascism in the Twentieth Century* [Yale 2000] and *A Place in the Sun: Marxism and Fascism in China’s Long Revolution* [Westview 2000]). He admits his term “palingenetic” is a “universal, archetypal human myth” and that “ultranationalism” is “felicitously vague” (R2 ((8)) 3, ii and iii)—criticisms I advanced with my first review of his work. Professor Griffin now agrees that the term “totalitarianism” has “value in the understanding of fascism” (R2 ((9)) 6)—a concept totally neglected in his original treatment of Fascism and generic fascism. He speaks of Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany as “two quite different regimes” (R2 ((10)) 3)—a distinction for which I have argued from the commencement of our exchanges. For all that, Professor Griffin seems to still believe that I have argued that nationalism and racism are “binary opposites” (R2 ((11))—when I have simply argued for *differences* that must be acknowledged since the consequences of “ultracism” are manifestly different from those of “ultranationalism”—a difference he now fully acknowledges (R2 ((11)) 4). Professor Griffin is now prepared to recognize the differences between a National Socialism and a Fascism that share “affinities” (as I urged upon him), just as he is prepared to recognize the affinities between Fascism and the various forms of Marxism-Leninism (see (R2 ((14)) 5, 6, 8). He is prepared to reconsider the relationship between the “New Right” and “fascism” (something I have consistently urged upon him). He graciously admits that his original Hauptartikel was a “mish-mash of concept, definition and theory” (R2 ((15)) 9)—something I suggested in my first response.

I am convinced that Professor Griffin is right in maintaining we have come a long way. The Editors of *Erwägen Wissen Ethik* are to be applauded.

A. James Gregor

24 October 2004

### Address

Prof. Dr. A. James Gregor, University of California, Department of Political Science, 210 Barrows Hall, Berkeley, CA 94720-1950, USA

## Letter / Brief

Dear Editors of *Erwägen Wissen Ethik*,

I would like to take the unusual step to ask you to publish a second letter in which I continue the discussion, with Professor Gregor, of Aleksandr Dugin's world view within the debate on Roger Griffin's concept of fascism in *Erwägen Wissen Ethik* 15:3, (2004).<sup>1</sup> My request is certainly out of the ordinary. As illustrated in my previous letter in EWE 15:4,<sup>2</sup> I think that the context and height of Dugin's recent rise in Russian society, however, warrant further attention.

\*\*\*

### Classification, Julius Evola and the Nature of Dugin's Ideology

((1)) Having responded in my previous letter not to a comment by Professor Gregor on Aleksandr Dugin himself, but to a speculation about the reasons of my interest in Dugin,<sup>3</sup> I would like to deal in this letter shortly with some methodological and substantive issues related to Professor Gregor's rebuttal to my initial critique of him.<sup>4</sup> As Professor Gregor has, as far as I know, published two books on methodological issues in the social sciences,<sup>5</sup> I look forward to learn from his response. Professor Gregor rejects two of the major reasons for my classification of Dugin as a fascist – namely that Dugin himself and a number of Western students of the Russian extreme right have used „fascism“ with reference to his world-view. Professor Gregor writes that

[s]elf-avowals concerning one's personal qualities hardly serve as unimpeachable evidence of those qualities – and one hardly takes a poll to determine the truth of an empirical, evidentiary claim. We all appreciate the fact that few among us would lend money to a borrower simply because he insists upon his creditworthiness.<sup>6</sup>

While such a remark is a good reminder that classification should be empirically based, the statement seems to me, at least with regard to the issue at hand here, to imply a too (if not impossibly) straightforward procedure for categorizing social phenomena. i.e. for relating a concrete empirical case to a particular generic concept. Let me illustrate this point with regard to the case of Dugin.

((2)) Dugin's affirmative evaluation of fascism and an apparent application of the term to his own ideology is by itself, of course, not „unimpeachable evidence.“ But it is certainly of interest – not only in view of Professor Gregor's categorical rejection of such a classification.<sup>7</sup>

First, how a political actor classifies his or her own ideology would, in certain instances, seem to be a relevant specification of the nature of this ideology. Francine Hirsch, in a debate on the question whether there was racism under Stalin, made the important observation that “historians ignore or dismiss the concepts and terms used by historical actors (regimes, leaders, experts) at great peril to understanding.”<sup>8</sup> This concerns, above all, the actors' self-description and -presentation as well as their depiction of their declared enemies. “To be sure,” Hirsch clarifies,

analyzing the conceptual categories and definitions that historical actors used does not require accepting them at face value. It is critical for historians to explore the tension between rhetoric and practice, between language and action.<sup>9</sup>

In as far as the issue of the relation between Dugin's language and actions is concerned, a link between his political practice and pro-fascist rhetoric can be easily established: Many of his activities in the late 1980s and throughout the 1990s, such as his co-foundation of the National-Bolshevik Party in 1994 or his various contacts to Russian neo-Nazis and West European “New Right” intellectuals, are described in detail in the literature quoted here and in my previous contributions.

Second, whereas denotations of „fascism“ in Western interpretations have sometimes excluded Nazism (e.g. Gregor, Sternhell, partly Linz), in Soviet and post-Soviet Russia, the term „fascism“ refers, paradoxically, first and foremost to German Nazism and only, in the second instance, to Italian Fascism. This has been the case in both, the Soviet and post-Soviet periods.<sup>10</sup>

In connection with this circumstance, Dugin's expression of his closeness to inter-war fascism is a considerable admittance within the context of post-Holocaust European and post-World War II Russian discourse. The Third Reich's – or, in the Russian understanding, “German fascism's” – attack on the Soviet Union took the lives of approximately 20 to 43 million Soviet citizens – depending on whose estimate one prefers. Most of those killed and many more who were injured, raped, deported, exploited etc. were Eastern Slavs; and of these a plurality were Great Russians.

That is why Dugin has made statements such as the one I quoted in my initial critique of Professor Gregor<sup>11</sup> in only few of his articles and, usually, for specific audiences. His general line has been instead to use such constructs as „National Bolshevism,“ „neo-Eurasianism,“ „New Socialism,“ „Conservative Revolution,“ etc. for describing his world-view. These are terms that are either more agreeable in Russia, or so elusive as not say much in particular, or so unfamiliar to Russians as to reveal little.

((3)) It might be illuminating to mention, in this context, the Russian neo-Nazi leader Aleksandr Barkashov's insistence that he is not a „fascist“ or „Nazi,“ but a „national socialist.“ Barkashov and his party *Russkoe Natsional'noe Edinstvo RNE* (Russian National Unity) are different from Dugin and the International Eurasian Movement in that their front-stage image includes clear references to inter-war fascism – as mentioned *de facto* a synonym for Nazism in Russia – such as the Swastika and Roman salute. Barkashov's re-assurances that the *RNE*'s Swastika is not a Nazi, but a traditional Orthodox Christian symbol, and that his movement is thus not „fascist“ (in the Russian sense of the word) have been taken seriously by only few educated Russians. The *RNE*, as a result, has remained isolated, even within the ultranationalist spectrum. It constituted, in those cases in which it did cooperate with other extremely right-wing groupings (such as during the October 1993 uprising), a liability for the public image of the Russian nationalist movement.<sup>12</sup>

Dugin's tactics, in contrast, have, especially recently, been to present himself front-stage as a „centrist,“ and to reveal the sources of his inspiration, if at all, only back-stage for the anti-systemic section of his support. This has, so far, been, apparently, a successful approach. His positive references to inter-war fascism have remained unnoticed, been taken not seriously, forgotten or „forgiven.“

((4)) Dugin has several times criticized inter-war fascism in the way he did in the article quoted in my critique of Professor Gregor's assessment, i.e. emphasizing the inconsistencies and opportunism of the Third Reich and its allies. In view of this particular approach, Dugin can indeed claim that he is different from Hitler, Mussolini and other inter-war fascists. In this peculiar way, he manages to distance himself from World War II and the Holocaust while, at the same time, not betraying his attraction to core ideas of Nazism and Fascism. Dugin's critique of inter-war fascism in his article „Fascism – borderless and red“ does thus not make him an anti-fascist. Rather, his enthusiasm for „a true, real, radical revolutionary and consistent, a fascist fascism“ is in harmony with his critique of historic fascism.<sup>13</sup>

In conclusion, I do not think that Dugin's references to fascism can be as lightly dismissed as Professor Gregor seems to suggest. Surely, Dugin is not a Western-trained social scientist. However, while Dugin's main fascination seems to be with occultism, he is also well-read in mainstream philosophy, history and political theory of both, Russia and the West. He recently defended a Candidate of Science thesis and a Doctor of Science dissertation. My reading of him is that, when talking about fascism, he seems to have a rather good idea of what he is referring to. True, his subsumption of Franco and Salazar under the heading of fascism in that particular quote is, in view of recent advances in comparative fascist studies, imprecise. Yet, such – what would be now regarded as – mis-classifications have been made by established Western scholars of fascism in the past too.

The problem with Dugin is not that, as Professor Gregor seems to argue, he writes positively about fascism (or criticizes it as being too moderate) while he is not really a fascist. The issue is that he has made positive statements on inter-war fascism, including Nazism, but has not been noted for such evaluations sufficiently in the Russian public so far. In Russia, affirmative statements on fascism hardly constitute equivalents of a money-borrower's insistence upon his creditworthiness, as Professor Gregor suggests.

((5)) I consider the meaning of Dugin's self-description for an adequate scholarly classification of his ideology an interesting methodological issue. In contrast, I find little that merits lengthy discussion in Professor Gregor's rejection of my reference to a seeming mainstream opinion in the research community that Dugin is a fascist. My allusion to these authors was not, as Professor Gregor suggests, the equivalent of a „poll.“

It is almost too trivial to spill ink on to say that scholarly research is a collective endeavour in which we take into account the assessments of our informed colleagues. Of course, collective research is also not „democratic“ in the sense that the majority always wins. But, especially with regard to conceptual – as opposed to explanatory – issues, consensus-building is an important instrument in securing the cumulativeness of our theorizing.

Professor Gregor's usage of the word „truth“ in this context is confusing. I would – unlike post-modern researchers – agree that the idea of „truth“ has a rather important role to play in evaluating causal statements. On the other hand, however, whether or how much „truth“ is found or not is a less clear-cut issue in evaluating classificatory decisions (unless one is an essentialist, of course). Our usage of certain generic terms and not others is, as far as I can see, founded as much on collective agreements and elementary logic as on empirical evidence. The divergence between the apparently mainstream opinion in the research community on, and Professor Gregor's classification of, Dugin seems to have to do far more with the different conceptualizations of fascism used here than with any particular empirical issue.

((6)) Concerning Professor Gregor's interpretation of the relationship between Evola and Dugin, I would like to make some critical statements too. The nature of Dugin's critique of inter-war fascism and the peculiar alternative he proposes lead me, first, to agree fully with one particular aspect of Professor Gregor's argument concerning the impact of Julius Evola on Dugin.

Being unfamiliar with contemporary Italian history and unable to read Italian, I leave the assessment of Evola to specialists.<sup>14</sup> But I may be allowed to reproduce here one particular statement by Evola: „We would like a fascism more radical, more

intrepid, a truly absolute fascism, made of pure force, inaccessible to any compromise."<sup>15</sup> I shall dare to point out a resemblance between Evola's statement, and the content and tone of Dugin's above-quoted vision of a fascist Russia. Evola's and Dugin's dissatisfactions with inter-war fascism – at least according to these two statements – seem to be not dissimilar: For both of them, it was too moderate. In that particular regard, I concur unreservedly with Professor Gregor's emphasis on the similarity of Evola and Dugin.

Obviously, I would, however, have my doubts that Professor Gregor's rather interesting analysis of Evola and his relationship to Italian Fascism and Dugin amounts to a convincing argument against a classification of either of these two peculiar critics of inter-war fascist regimes as non-fascists (and I am not even discussing the issue whether they were anti-fascists, in any meaningful sense of the word). Such logic would seem similar to arguing that Trotskyism was not a variety of Bolshevism because it demanded a *permanent* revolution (an idea, by the way, also propagated by Dugin).

What I, as a non-Italianist, found surprising about Professor Gregor's analysis of Evola's relationship to generic fascism is that he focuses solely on Evola's distance from the PNF and critique of the inter-war Italian Fascist regime, yet does not mention Evola's editorship for Farinacci's journal *Regime Fascista*, antisemitism, keen interest in Nazism, support for the *Waffen-SS*, attraction to the Romanian Iron Guard, praise for MSI leader Giorgio Almirante, etc. In any way, while I am unable to further assess Evola, I feel sufficiently competent to comment on Professor Gregor's insistence on a close link between Evola and Dugin.

((7)) Let me restate, first, my impression (expressed also in my previous letter in EWE 15:4) that Professor Gregor has made an, in spite of its brevity, very valuable contribution to our understanding of the sources of Dugin's thinking. Professor Gregor's detection of striking similarities between Evola's and Dugin's thinking is not only from a scholarly, but also political point of view a useful corrective to the widespread opinion that Dugin is, as he claims himself, a „neo-Eurasian” – i.e. that his ideas are firmly rooted in historic Russian national thought, namely in the Russian inter-war émigré intellectual movement of Eurasianism. Like Professor Gregor or Leonid Luks,<sup>16</sup> I too have argued that Dugin's world-view seems to, instead, owe much more to certain varieties of Western anti-democratic thought.<sup>17</sup>

While elements of classical Eurasianism, the neo-racist theories of Lev N. Gumilev,<sup>18</sup> and the ideas of other Russian nationalist thinkers are present in Dugin's thought, the origins of his most important concepts can be traced back rather to certain German, French and Italian (as well as, to a lesser degree, other Western) schools of thought, than to any theories developed in Russia or by her émigrés. This is in so far a *politically* relevant finding, as Dugin, as a public actor, is, of course, situated within the nationalist section of the Russian political spectrum. Contending that Dugin's ideas are not of primarily Russian origin, but imported from the (hated) West is thus a serious allegation which, apart from his *de facto* endorsement of inter-war fascism, could be problematic for Dugin's image in Russia, especially among nationalists. Whereas, with his explicit classification of Dugin as *not* fascist, Professor Gregor did, I believe, a disservice to scholarly and political discourse within the study of the Russian extreme right, he has, in his reply to me, provided potential ammunition for a demystification of Dugin in Russia.

((8)) Though I find the latter input significant, I also feel that Professor Gregor's emphasis on Dugin's debt to Evola might be too strong. Dugin doubtlessly borrowed heavily from Evola. Perhaps, the Italian even had a formative influence on the Russian. Yet, Dugin's theories are too multifarious, his thinking too diverse, and his points of references to inter- and post-war European extremely right-wing as well as other schools of thought too numerous to construct as straight a line of ideological ancestry as Professor Gregor seemingly tried to do here. One could, probably, reproduce arguments that are structurally similar to Gregor's, but would, instead, suggest that Dugin's real spiritual father was the early Ernst Jünger, or the late Jean Thiriart, or the current Alain de Benoist – to name but a few of the potential candidates for such a role. Among the Western theorists most explicitly praised by Dugin have been Karl Haushofer, Carl Schmitt and René Guénon. But, it seems to me, that neither of them has formulated some kind of early “neo-Eurasianism.”

To properly understand, adequately conceptualize and appropriately label Dugin's ideology is, indeed, a challenging task. The difficulty of the issue was recently illustrated when Germany's leading specialist on Dugin, Markus Mathyl,<sup>19</sup> proposed to call Dugin's ideology, with reference to inter-war Germany's followers of Ernst Niekisch, “neo-National Bolshevism” – a construct also preferred by a well-informed younger German researcher of Russian nationalism, Mischa Gabowitsch.<sup>20</sup> This formula indicates other sources to Dugin's thought than Evola, and captures better the eclectic nature of his world-view. Yet, Mathyl's terminological solution seems in so far also imperfect as “National Bolshevism” is a fuzzy concept with a large variety of con- and denotations.<sup>21</sup> Its application to Dugin could, for instance, be misunderstood to suggest that “neo-Eurasianism” is a permutation of extremely left-wing thought. Although Dugin has written affirmatively about a number of figures generally regarded as belonging to the left (including Lenin), he is certainly no egalitarian.

Alas, I also do not have a good terminological solution to contribute here – apart from my earlier claim that Dugin's ideology belongs to the class of generic fascism. In any way, while it may be possible to show the unfoundedness of my classification, Professor Gregor's attempt to demonstrate a close connection between Evola and Dugin misses the point, in that regard. When Professor Gregor states that “[t]here are few things in the informal discipline of intellectual history more certain than that Dugin's ‘fascism’ is, in significant measure, as ‘fascist’ as the ideas of Evola are ‘fascist’”<sup>22</sup> – many would probably agree. Yet, they will see this statement as exactly *supporting* my and others' classification of Dugin as a fascist. What Evola and Dugin most obviously unites is not only and, perhaps, less so Dugin's indebtedness to Evola, but that the generic concept that best captures the mythic cores of their ideologies is, in both cases, palingenetic ultra-nationalism.



## Endnotes

- 1 A. James Gregor, „Andreas Umland and the ‘Fascism’ of Alexander Dugin,” *Erwägen Wissen Ethik* 15:3 (2004): 426-429. This article was a reply to Andreas Umland, „Dugin kein Faschist? Eine Erwiderung an Professor A. James Gregor,” *Erwägen Wissen Ethik* 15:3 (2004): 424-426 in which I criticized Professor Gregor’s assessment of Dugin in his „Roger Griffin, Social Science, ‘Fascism,’ and the ‘Extreme Right,’” *Erwägen Wissen Ethik* 15:3 (2004): 316-318. The below letter does not touch upon the subject matters of the letters Andreas Umland, „Some Addenda on the Relevance of Extremely Right-Wing Ideas in Putin’s New Russia,” *Erwägen Wissen Ethik* 15:4 (2004): 591-593, and A. James Gregor, „Response to Dr. Andreas Umland,” *Erwägen Wissen Ethik* 15:4 (2004): 594-595. I am grateful to Robert C. Otto, Michael Hagemeyer, Andrei P. Tsygankov and Marlene Laruelle for their comments on an earlier version of my below note.
- 2 Umland, „Some Addenda on the Relevance of Extremely Right-Wing Ideas in Putin’s New Russia.”
- 3 *Ibid.*
- 4 Gregor, „Andreas Umland and the ‘Fascism’ of Alexander Dugin;” Umland, „Dugin kein Faschist?”
- 5 A. James Gregor, *An Introduction to Metapolitics: A Brief Inquiry into the Conceptual Language of Political Science* (New York: The Free Press 1971); *idem*, *Metascience & Politics: An Inquiry into the Conceptual Language of Political Science* (New Brunswick: Transaction 2003).
- 6 *Idem*, „Andreas Umland and the ‘Fascism’ of Alexander Dugin,” ((2)).
- 7 *Idem*, „Roger Griffin, Social Science, ‘Fascism,’ and the ‘Extreme Right.’”
- 8 Francine Hirsch, „Race without the Practice of Racial Politics,” *Slavic Review* 62:1 (2002): 30-43, here 41.
- 9 *Ibid.*
- 10 Andreas Umland, „Concepts of Fascism in Contemporary Russia and the West,” *Political Studies Review* 3:1 (2005): 34-49.
- 11 *Idem*, „Dugin kein Faschist?”
- 12 The best analysis of the RNE in a Western language can be found in Stephen D. Shenfield, *Russian Fascism: Traditions, Tendencies, Movements* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe 2001), 113-189, 260-261. The party has, during the last years, split into six separate organizations. I am grateful to Robert Otto for this specification.
- 13 Aleksandr Dugin, „Fashizm – bezgranichnyi i krasnyi,” at: <http://www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/Embassy/8429/fashizm.html> and <http://jesuschrist.ru/forum/121967..1.php>. On this article, see also Markus Mathyl, „The National-Bolshevik Party and Arctogaia: Two Neo-Fascist Groupuscules in the Post-Soviet Political Space,” in: Roger D. Griffin with Matthew Feldman, ed., *Fascism. Volume V: Post-war Fascisms* (London and New York: Routledge 2004), 185-200, here 190-191.
- 14 Thomas Sheehan, „Myth and Violence: The Fascism of Julius Evola and Alain de Benoist,” *Social Research* 48:1 (1981): 45-73; Richard Drake, *The Revolutionary Mystique and Terrorism in Contemporary Italy* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press 1989), 114-134; Roger D. Griffin, „Between Metapolitics and Apoliteia: The Nouvelle Droite’s Strategy for Conserving the Fascist Vision in the ‘Interregnum,’” *Modern and Contemporary France* 8:1 (2000): 35-53; Leonard Weinberg, „Evola, Julius Caesar (1898-1974),” in: Cyprian Blamires, ed., *Historical Encyclopedia of World Fascism* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO 2005), forthcoming.
- 15 As quoted in Richard Drake, „The Children of the Sun,” in: Griffin, ed., *Fascism. Volume V: Post-war Fascisms*, 217-248, here 222.
- 16 Leonid Luks, „Der ‘Dritte Weg’ der ‘neo-eurasischen’ Zeitschrift ‘Elementy’ – zurück ins Dritte Reich?” *Studies in East European Thought* 52:1-2 (2000): 49-71.
- 17 Andreas Umland, „Formirovanie fashistskogo ‘neoevraziiskogo’ intellektual’nogo dvizheniia v Rossii: Put’ Aleksandra Dugina ot marginal’nogo ekstremista do ideologa postsovetskoi akademicheskoi i politicheskoi elity, 1989-2001 gg.,” *Ab Imperio* 3 (2003): 289-304; reprinted in: V.I. Polishchuk, ed., *Deiatel’nost’ i ponimanie kul’tury kak vida chelovecheskogo bytia* (Nizhnevartovsk: Nizhnevartovsk State Pedagogical Institute 2004), 160-171; Andreas Umland, „Kulturhegemoniale Strategien der russischen extremen Rechten: Die Verbindung von faschistischer Ideologie und gramscistischer Taktik im ‚Neoeurasismus‘ des Aleksandr Dugin,” *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Politikwissenschaft* 33: 4 (2004): 437-454.
- 18 The Gumilev phenomenon would be another topic in post-Soviet Russian intellectual life worth closer attention by the international community of students of the extreme right. Gumilev’s eccentric theories of ethnogenesis have acquired a status in post-Soviet Russian higher education, historical research and social sciences that is, probably, difficult to comprehend for Western academics. See Bruno Naarden, „‘I am a genius, but no more than that.’ Lev Gumilev (1912-1992), Ethnogenesis, the Russian Past and World History,” *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 44:1 (1996): 54-82; Hildegard Kochanek, „Die Ethnienlehre Lev N. Gumilevs: Zu den Anfängen neu-rechter Ideologie-Entwicklung im spätkommunistischen Rußland,” *Osteuropa* 48:11/12 (1998): 1184-1197; Marlene Laruelle, „Kogda prisvaivaetsia intellektual’ naya sobstvennost’, ili O protivopolozhnosti L.N. Gumileva i P.N. Savitskogo,” *Vestnik Evrazii – Acta Eurasica* 4(15) (2001): 5-19; Victor Shnirelman and Sergei Panarin, „Lev Gumilev: His Pretensions as a Founder of Ethnology and his Eurasian Theories,” *Inner Asia* 3:1 (2001): 1-18; Vadim Rossman, *Russian Intellectual Antisemitism in the Post-Communist Era* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press 2002).
- 19 Markus Mathyl, „Grenzenloses Eurasien,” *Jungle World* 45 (2002).
- 20 *Idem*, „Der ‚unaufhaltsame‘ Aufstieg des Aleksandr Dugin: Neonationalbolschewismus und Neue Rechte in Russland,” *Osteuropa* 52:7 (2002): 885-900; Mischa Gabowitsch, „Der russische ‚Nationalpatriotismus‘ der Gegenwart und sein Verhältnis zum Kommunismus,” in: Uwe Backes, ed., *Rechtsextreme Ideologien in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Köln: Böhlau 2003), 311-338.
- 21 Erik van Ree, „The Concept of ‚National Bolshevism:‘ An Interpretative Essay,” *Journal of Political Ideologies* 6:3 (2001): 289-307.
- 22 Gregor, „Andreas Umland and the ‘Fascism’ of Alexander Dugin,” ((5)).

**Andreas Umland**

**14<sup>th</sup> May 2005**

**Address**

Dr. Andreas Umland, Bosch-Lektoren, Goethe-Institut Kiew. Post- und Kurierstelle, Werderscher Markt 1, D-10117 Berlin.

## Letter / Brief

To the Editors of *Erwägen Wissen Ethik*,

### Once Again on Fascism, Classification, and Aleksandr Dugin

((1)) My decision, a lifetime ago, to become an academic was imbued with an irrepressible optimism. To this day, despite my years, and my many disappointments, I remain convinced that intellectual disagreements can ultimately be resolved through patience, good will, and right reason. It is in terms of that confidence that I, once again, ask the indulgence of my colleagues in allowing me to address the complex issue of how terms like “German Nazism,” “neo-Nazis,” “New Right,” “German fascism,” “Fascist,” “fascist,” “nazi,” and “right-wing,” have been used, and continue to be used to, what I take to be, the disservice of everyone. I remain convinced that one day, although perhaps not in the lifetime of anyone now living, the question of how both *Fascism* and *fascism* are to be understood will be resolved.

((2)) After much lucubration, a debilitating amount of electronic communication, and an entire issue of *Erwägen Wissen Ethik* devoted to the subject of how “Fascism” and generic “fascism” might best be understood, Dr. Andreas Umland has chosen to take us back to the very beginning of the discussion in order to once again address the question of the “fascism” of Aleksandr Dugin. We are told that Dugin is indeed a “fascist” because he satisfies the “heuristic definition” of fascism provided by Professor Roger Griffin—a definition that “captures” its “mythic core”—*palingenetic ultra-nationalism* ((14)).

((3)) I am a little dismayed to read of Dr. Umland’s return to the beginning of the beginning when I thought we had arrived, at least, at the beginning of the end. As I indicated in my *Brief* to the editors of *Erwägen Wissen Ethik*, dated 24 October 2004, Professor Griffin has long since revised his characterization of generic fascism in a fashion that has direct bearing on the issues before us. He no longer speaks of fascism as uniquely captured by “palingenetic ultranationalism.” He now tells us that there are “important and substantive taxonomic and interpretive issues...raised by the relationship of communism to fascism” (R2, fn. 7). As a product of the exchanges in *Erwägen Wissen Ethik*, Professor Griffin now speaks of “Stalinism, Maoism and the Khmer Rouge as hybrids of Marxism and fascism,” granting that they all share in the palingenetic myth, which he now identifies as one that is “universal” and archetypal—hardly a defining trait of Fascism, National Socialism, fascism, neofascism *or* Stalinism, Maoism or anything else. Much the same might be said of “ultranationalism.” Professor Griffin now tells us that Marxist regimes, like interwar fascism, were “intensely nationalistic [corroborating] assertions long since made by Gregor,” going on to say that both generic fascism and Marxism-Leninism produced regimes that “belong to distinct, yet related political categories” (R2((9))5)—not much on which to hang a cognitively useful identification. In fact, given all these qualifications concerning “palingenetic ultranationalism,” identifying Dugin as a “fascist” by identifying him with such “core values” is to identify him, with equal justification, as a “Bolshevik,” a “Maoist,” and/or an unregenerate follower of Pol Pot.

((4)) Not content with the kind of confusion all that might generate, Dr. Umland goes on to tell us that Dugin not only entertained an “affirmative evaluation of fascism,” but was “co-founder” of the “National-Bolshevik Party” ((2)). In fact, Dugin has many positive things to say about “National Bolshevism,” just as he has had many positive things to say about “chaos magicians,” Knights Templar, Sufi mystics, Samurai warriors and “practitioners of the Left-Hand Path” (see the *Seminal Writings of Alexander Dugin*, in three volumes). If we are to accept, as Dr. Umland suggests, Dugin’s affirmations as evidence of his political ideology ((2)), then he must be not only a fascist, but a Bolshevik—as well as a mystic, an occultist, a Sufi wiseman, a Samurai and a “neo-Eurasian,” a “new socialist,” and a “conservative revolutionary.” Why Dr. Umland settles on identifying Dugin as a fascist remains a mystery to me. Together with polar myths, gnostic wisdom, alchemy, evil demiurges, “eschatological pathos,” and “mystic materialism,” Dugin’s ideas run the gamut from the occult to the absurd.<sup>1</sup> Because historic Fascist ideology is rarely seriously assessed,<sup>2</sup> those who search for “fascism” and “neofascism” with a special passion more often than not identify “neofascism” with any grotesquery whatever. Recognizing the very diversity of Dugin’s ideological dalliances, there is little suggestion that he has a special attraction to the “core ideas of Nazism and Fascism” ((4)). He seems to have an indiscriminate taste for almost any bizarre notion that crosses his path. Dugin seems to shower “affirmative evaluations” on almost any quaint and curious political idea. If he has said anything affirmative about fascism, it would not distinguish fascism from generic bolshevism, occultism, gnostic nostrums, alchemy, eurasianism, or silliness in general.

((5)) Dr. Umland seems to think that my bringing all this to the attention of other academics constitutes a rejection of some sort of “consensus” that prevails among specialists concerning “fascism” in general, and Dugin’s fascism in particular. Even if there were any such consensus—which I emphatically deny—I am sure that Dr. Umland is not advocating consensus for the sake of consensus.

Dr. Umland knows perfectly well that there was “consensus” among “race scientists” during the National Socialist period in Germany. Not a good thing. Dr. Umland also knows perfectly well that there was a consensus among Soviet professors concerning Lysenko’s genetics, and dialectical “logic,” throughout the entire history of the Marxist-Leninist regime. Not a good thing. Today, there is a consensus among Chinese thinkers concerning the merits of Mao Zedong Thought in the People’s Republic. Not a good thing.

We all like to pretend that things are very different in the democratic West. And yet, I think we are all prepared to concede that there are fads and foibles among social scientists wherever they are found. There is nothing intrinsically good about consensus. All too often there is unanimity of opinion for all the wrong reasons. For just such reasons we should be particularly cautious in the febrile search for consensus concerning subjects that invoke passion. Fascism, however it is understood, is invariably associated with mass murder, destruction and sado-masochism. We should be extremely circumspect concerning any consensus arising in such an environment.

((5)) Finally, Dr. Umland wishes to discuss the “fascism” of Julius Evola once again. I really think that there is very little more to say.<sup>3</sup> Professor Griffin has advised us that if someone denies that he is a fascist and “is, at least in theory...deeply antifascist,” he cannot be considered a fascist (R 1 ((25))). Evola has denied in every way humanly possible that he was a fascist and his “theory,” such as it was, was certainly “deeply antifascist.” This was so evident that the Italian courts dismissed the charge of “fascist sympathies” that had been lodged against him after the Second World War. More than that, in the dossier document AR-126 of Heinrich Himmler’s Correspondence Administration Department, Evola is identified unequivocally with the “old aristocracy” of pre-National Socialist Germany, as a person “only tolerated” by Fascist Italy, and therefore someone who did not deserve any support from either Nazism or Fascism.<sup>4</sup> Neither the Nazis nor the Fascists ever considered Evola one of their own.

((7)) As for Evola’s influence on the “neofascism” of the post-World War II period, it was at best idiosyncratic.<sup>5</sup> His name is not mentioned in the official history of the *Movimento sociale italiano* (the MSI), that political party unequivocally identified as “neofascist,” and does not appear in the pages of the major work by Giorgio Almirante, the founder of the movement.<sup>6</sup> Should Dr. Umland really be interested in Evola’s relationship to Fascism, Nazism, Roberto Farinacci, the *Waffen-SS*, and anti-Semitism ((6)), I suggest he read Evola’s own account.<sup>7</sup> Renzo De Felice’s informative work on the history of the Jews under Fascism would also be instructive.<sup>8</sup> Evola’s relationship to all the topics that are of concern to Dr. Umland demonstrates a singularly “antifascist” disposition on his part. The fact that Dugin draws many of his quaint ideas from Evola suggests that Dugin too is possessed of an equally “antifascist” persuasion. That Dr. Umland is prepared to argue that perhaps Dugin derived more substance from West European intellectuals like Ernst Jünger, Jean Thiriart, Alain de Benoist, Karl Haushofer, Carl Schmitt and Rene Guénon ((8)) presents us with a still more complicated issue. Is Dr. Umland prepared to say that all these persons are “fascists” or “neofascists”? or are they all “right-wing extremists”? or perhaps “radical conservatives”? Is that all the same thing? If we could decide what they all are we might be able to classify Aleksandr Dugin. At this point, unfortunately, it would seem that almost anything is possible.

((8)) I am not sure where Dr. Umland hopes to go with this discussion. The uncertainty leaves me a little sad. I had thought that with Professor Griffin’s modification of his views on the “mythic core” of “fascism” we had made progress. Unhappily, we find ourselves once again *ab initio*, to cover, yet one more time, very familiar ground. For all that, I remain optimistic. Given good will, application, and a great deal of time, our children or our grandchildren will decide on how Fascism, fascism and neofascism are to be understood.

### Endnotes

1. As I previously indicated, a great deal of Dugin’s writings are available in various European languages. His “Metaphysical Roots of Political Ideologies,” is easily available in Italian in Aleksandr Dugin, *Continente Russia* (Milan: Edizioni all’insegna del Veltro, 1991), pp. 77-97.

2. See A. James Gregor, *Mussolini’s Intellectuals: Fascist Social and Political Thought* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005) and *The Search for Neofascism: The Use and Abuse of Social Science* (New York: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming).

3. I have written extensively about the “fascism” of Evola. See Gregor, *Mussolini’s Intellectuals*, chap. 9, *The Search for Neofascism*, chap. 4, and *Phoenix: Fascism in Our Time* (New Brunswick, N. J.: Transaction Publishers, 1999), pp. 14-16. One of the better treatments of Evola’s “fascism” is to be found in H. L. Hansen, “Preface to the American Edition” and “Introduction: Julius Evola’s Political Endeavors,” Julius Evola, *Men Among the Ruins: Post-War Reflections of a Radical Traditionalist* (Rochester, Vermont: Inner Traditions, 2002), pp. xi-xvi, 1-104, and his “Short Introduction to Julius Evola,” Julius Evola, *Revolt Against the Modern World* (Rochester, Vermont: Inner Traditions, 1995), pp. ix-xxii.

4. See Hansen, in Evola, *Revolt Against the Modern World*, p. xviii.

5. There were a great many Evoliani among the confused, distraught and perverse after the end of the Second World War, but whatever else they were they hardly qualified as Fascists by any ideological criteria. Those who considered themselves “serious neofascists” tended to dismiss them as “distracted.”

6. Giorgio Almirante, *Autobiografia di un "Fucilatore"* (Milan: Edizioni il Borghese, 1974); Hansen, "Introduction..." in *Men Among the Ruins*, p. 91.
7. See Julius Evola, *Il cammino del Cinabro* (Milan: All'insegna del pesce d'oro, 1963).
8. Renzo De Felice, *Storia degli ebrei italiani sotto il fascismo* (Turin: Einaudi, 1993, new and enlarged edition), particularly pp. 245-248, 392-394. See Gregor, *Mussolini's Intellectuals*, pp. 227-228.

**A. James Gregor**

**7 June 2005**

**Address**

Prof. Dr. A. James Gregor, University of California, Department of Political Science, Berkeley, California 94720-1950, USA