

A Challenge to Aleksandr Dugin

By Charles Upton

For years I knew no more about Russian political philosopher Aleksandr Dugin than that “he is (somehow) a follower of René Guénon and Julius Evola.” Mark Sedgwick’s useful yet misleading book *Against the Modern World* situated him as a member in good standing of Sedgwick’s hazy image of the Traditionalist School, along with such groups as Aristasia, a female fantasy cult who officially deny the existence of the male sex and do their best to live in the style of either the 1950’s or the Victorian Age.

Now, however, in the era of Brexit and the Alt Right, Dugin has emerged from obscurity—though certainly not from ambiguity—in the western world. Often cast as “Putin’s Rasputin” (though “Putin’s berserker” is a better description), a figure who is somehow also the hypnotic Svengali of Steve Bannon and consequently also of Donald Trump, he is seen—at least by many Liberals—as a kind of occult political mastermind, the incarnation of the mystical, crypto-Nazi extreme right. This characterization, while not entirely false, is so heavily influenced by the dark irrational fears of Liberalism in its decline that a clear picture of Dugin, one that does justice to all the facets of his ideology, from geopolitics to metaphysics, had not yet emerged as of 2017.

Consequently, at the beginning of 2018, I began writing a book entitled *Dugin Against Dugin: A Traditionalist Critique of the Fourth Political Theory*. (*The Fourth Political Theory* is one of Dugin’s books; *Dugin against Dugin* was suggested by another of his titles, *Putin against Putin*.) In my humble opinion, Aleksandr Dugin represents, among many other things, an all-out attempt, so-far highly successful, to hijack the name and doctrines—in inverted form—of René Guénon, as well as the global mantle of Traditionalism, in the name of the Counter-Initiation. This is all the more ominous in view of the fact that this planetary nerve center of inverted spirituality has now stepped out from the shadowy world where Guénon first discerned it and taken its place on the world stage, not only in the areas of philosophy and religion, but equally in government, social engineering and political action—and one sign that

Aleksandr Dugin is fully aware of this is that he has published an essay attempting to prove that the Counter-Initiation is an invalid concept.

Suffice it to say that, if Dugin's bastardized version of Traditionalism as an eclectic and contradictory mix of occult and political ideologies becomes generally accepted, there is a real danger that the great works of René Guénon and Ananda Coomaraswamy and Titus Burckhardt and Martin Lings and Frithjof Schuon and Seyyed Hossein Nasr—and even Julius Evola!—may be lost to human history.

In light of this threat, I have issued the following “Challenge to Aleksandr Dugin”:

“Dear Professor Aleksandr Dugin:

I am writing to alert you to the publication of my book *Dugin against Dugin: A Traditionalist Critique of the Fourth Political Theory* [Reviviscimus, 2018, 539 pp]. In it I am pointedly critical of many of your published statements, though frankly appreciative of others. My criticism, however far outweighs my appreciation, and it can sometimes get pretty hot.

You have reached out to western intellectuals such as myself—especially those who love Tradition and understand the abysmal corruption of the modern world—apparently promising to give us at least a virtual homeland in your Neo-Eurasian movement; you have also been generous enough to publish my writing on two of your websites. My response now, however—after digesting three of your books (*Eurasian Mission*, *The Fourth Political Theory*, and *The Rise of the Fourth Political Theory*)—is that even though I have opposed nearly every act of U.S. foreign policy for the past 50 years, I would never consider making common cause against my own country with any international movement or foreign power; since I consider many of the leaders of my nation to be guilty of treason, I would be throwing away my right to denounce them if I committed the same crime.

I share your loathing for Postmodern Liberalism and its outrageous attempt to deconstruct the human form, seeing it as an ideology which is as far from Classical Liberalism as Cultural Marxism is from the theories of Karl Marx (though both Classical Liberalism and Classical Marxism had plenty of problems of their own). And I gravely salute your accurate, courageous, and prophetic picture of the self-inflicted doom now faced by the entire human race, as well as your crucial attempt—no matter how wrongheaded it may be in actual practice—to ground political ideology in Traditional metaphysics and eschatology. Beyond this, I entirely agree with you that the West, led by the United States, has been undermining Russian stability ever since the fall of the

Soviet Union, offering provocation after provocation, and then portraying any legitimate act of Russian self-defense as a sign of expansionist aggression. On the other hand, I am not blind to the real expansionist aggression you have repeatedly advocated, nor to the elements of Postmodern Liberalism that you have incorporated into your own “Fourth Political Theory”.

You define Liberalism as the “absolute evil,” and claim that it would take nothing less than a third world war to destroy it. But before you subject all humanity to “revolutionary suicide”—a phrase made popular by one of our home-grown American madman, Jim Jones—I would advise that you begin purging your own ideology and movement of the last traces of the absolute evil you denounce. If you succeed in this you may begin to realize that Liberalism is now deeply engaged and far advanced in the process of destroying itself. In light of this, I suggest that you leave revolutionary suicide to the Liberals, and renounce your desire to immolate yourself, and all the rest of us, on Liberalism’s pyre. A third world war would be the end of humanity, and likely the end of all life on earth. If you are deluded enough to believe that any good, for anyone or any thing, could result from this cosmic crime, then I can only conclude that you have taken leave of your senses. Furthermore, as my wife Jenny comments, those most likely to survive this kind of war—if any survival is possible—would be the Luciferian global elites; the common man, who might still retain a shred of human decency and Traditional sensibility, would likely be wiped out.

You claim, as one of the pillars of your Fourth Political Theory, the Traditionalism of the great French metaphysician René Guénon—a perspective that I myself firmly adhere to—which you define as “Conservatism in its purest form.” Unfortunately, your understanding of Tradition as Guénon defined it—namely, as the science of universal metaphysics which is epitomized in our own age by the great God-given religions and wisdom traditions—is woefully deficient; you give every appearance of attempting to expound upon a subject that you have never seriously studied, apparently relying upon the ignorance of your listeners, or else their vague notion that esoteric doctrines, since they are inherently mysterious, can mean anything their exponent wants them to mean at any given time. There are certainly many areas of academic learning, such as contemporary sociology and modern German philosophy, where your expertise surpasses mine, but when it comes to Traditional metaphysics I have no hesitation in pointing out exactly where, either knowingly or unknowingly, you have departed from its central principles.

Metaphysics is not just anything, it is one particular thing; the same is true of Orthodox Christianity, of traditional civilizational Islam, and of any of the other revealed religions or spiritual traditions, including the Primordial Tradition itself—from which, according to René Guénon, all later sacred traditions have branched. Due to your lack of solid intellectual grounding in these matters, your

metaphysics is vague, contradictory and filled with glaring errors, your picture of Christianity clearly heretical, and your presentation of Guénon's doctrines totally inverted. Furthermore, your notion of Islam, my own chosen religion, is seriously twisted. To take only one example, you present the Takfiri Jihadists, who have killed even more Muslims than Christians, burning our mosques with copies of the Holy Qur'an still in them, as legitimate representatives of the religion of the Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessing be upon him! And you continue to assert this even after these mad dogs, headed by international mercenaries, who have been willing to take funds, arms and strategic support from the United States of America—the hated “Atlantis”—have been formally excommunicated by the Grozny Declaration, promulgated in the city of Grozny, Chechnya, in August of 2016 by a number of Grand Muftis, as well as the Grand Shaykh of al-Azhar, the highest authority in traditional Sunni Islam—a declaration that was seconded by the Russian Council of Muftis itself.

To what degree these errors are based on simple ignorance, and how far they may be explained by deliberate and self-interested deception, cannot yet be determined. Nonetheless, in publishing them, you give every appearance of having taken certain sacred, God-given doctrines into your own hands, deliberately distorting them to serve various political agendas—and this is a degree of sacrilege that must not go unanswered. If Guénon exposed the spiritual deceptions of the Theosophists and the Spiritualists, I consider it my duty, if I am serious about following him, to subject you to the same treatment. Therefore I invite you, by this communiqué, to an intellectual contest on these matters. Both because you have touched upon many of the crucial issues of our time, and because the work of untangling your ingeniously-constructed contradictions presents a fascinating challenge in itself, I consider you a worthy opponent. I have issued this invitation to intellectual combat in line with the principle announced by the English poet William Blake, in his epic poem “, namely that the suppression of the “mental war” by various “hirelings in the camp, the court and the university” must ultimately lead to the outbreak of bloody “corporeal war”—a war which, in our time, would inevitably spell the final end of Man. So read my book, and then answer it. If you cannot or will not do this, if you elect not to accept this challenge, then I will inform my readers that you have forfeited the match by default.

I await your reply.

Sincerely,

Charles Upton”