CONSTRUCTIVE EURASIANISM: REVISITING DEFINITIONS

Teoman Ertuğrul TULUN

Analyst

Since 2017, the Center for Eurasian Studies (AVİM) has been advancing the concept of Constructive Eurasianism. Like any intellectual endeavor that needs to be discussed objectively and brings a new dimension to stereotyped ideas, this new concept also occasionally requires reflection to understand its origins and relevance. This process is akin to pausing for a coffee break at a rest area during a long drive, providing an opportunity to revisit and reaffirm the logic behind its proposition to readers.[1]

Even before 2017, and particularly within that year, AVİM highlighted the emerging shifts in global alignments in post-Brexit era and after German Chancellor Angela Merkels Munich speech. The center posed critical questions: Why should Türkiye limit its relations only to 'the West' when Western nations themselves are reassessing their global roles? Is adhering to the outdated concept of the 'Western bloc' □□□□□ Türkiye is seen as merely the eastern-most outpost □□□□□ beneficial? Exploring new opportunities for engagement with Eastern nations could, indeed, align more closely with Türkiye's interests.[2]

Recent years have seen significant changes both in the West, as well as in the East. It was against this backdrop that AVİM embraced the concept of 'Eurasia,' a vast landmass spanning from the Atlantic to the Pacific, with Türkiye strategically positioned at its core. This perspective fostered the development of 'Constructive Eurasianism,' promoting a positive approach to regional dynamics. Events in Ukraine, Romania, Georgia, Moldova, and the Near East have underscored the validity of this approach. As we move into 2025, it is essential to reflect on how Constructive Eurasianism has contributed to academic discourse so far.

Constructive Eurasianism has enriched academic literature by defining new concepts such as 'Constructive Eurasianism', 'Nexus Between East and West'. It has reinterpreted and emphasized the importance of existing terms which include 'Eurasia', 'Strategic Autonomy', 'Balanced Approach', 'Regional Cooperation' 'Rejection of Anti-Westernism', 'Stability and Security' in regional dynamics.

Constructive Eurasianism advocates for Türkiye to balance its Western ties with Eastern opportunities, positioning it as a unique nexus between Europe and Asia. This geopolitical approach promotes regional cooperation across Eurasia, emphasizes strategic

autonomy, and values stability and security. It seeks to explore new syntheses by rediscovering the East and acknowledges the role of international institutions. This strategy aims to correctly analyze and manage the manipulations that create regional destabilization and the efforts to re-establish stability following this destabilization, and to develop Türkiyes role as a stabilizing force that respects neighboring sovereignties and supports their development and Euro-Atlantic aspirations.[3]

Eurasia, geographically defined, extends from Lisbon to Vladivostok, with Türkiye strategically positioned at its core. Within the framework of Constructive Eurasianism, 'strategic autonomy' refers to a nation's capacity to independently determine its foreign policy and security priorities. This concept advocates for a balanced approach that upholds existing international partnerships while exploring new cooperative avenues, aiming to avoid rivalries or antagonisms.[4]

A balanced approach enables a country to maintain its existing institutionalized relationships while exploring new opportunities for cooperation and engagement. This strategic pursuit aims to position the country effectively within the evolving global landscape, ensuring it does so without fostering rivalries or antagonisms.

Constructive Eurasianism defines the **rejection of anti-Westernism** as a commitment to sustain and value established Western connections while also seeking new cooperation opportunities with Eastern partners. This approach recognizes the West's valuable contributions to global development without ignoring historical contexts or sacrificing strategic autonomy.[5]

The concept of '**nexus between East and West**' is central to Constructive Eurasianism. It defines a country's role as a conduit that bridges diverse civilizational spheres, enhancing dialogue and cooperation across the Eurasian landmass.

By the end of 2024, Constructive Eurasianism had begun to emphasize the terms '**stability**' and '**security**.' It defines stability for any country as maintaining a balanced geopolitical orientation that upholds strategic autonomy and regional cooperation, and respects international institutions. This approach navigates through cycles of destabilization and restabilization, aiming to secure long-term peace, economic growth, and social cohesion without compromising sovereignty or fostering new rivalries [6].

Building on the term of **stability**, Constructive Eurasianism defines **security** as a country's ability to protect its stability through a comprehensive approach. This includes addressing both traditional and non-traditional threats, leveraging multilateral efforts and strategic partnerships, enhancing resilience against external pressures and internal vulnerabilities, and maintaining independent decision-making in foreign policy and security. This framework aims to contribute to regional peace and cooperation [7].

In conclusion, since its inception, the concept of, Constructive Eurasianism has made significant contribution to academic discourse and policy analysis by promoting a balanced geopolitical orientation for Türkiye. This approach not only redefines Türkiye's interactions on the global stage but also enhances its strategic autonomy by emphasizing stability and security. Through fostering connections with both Eastern and Western

partners, it positions Türkiye as a pivotal nexus that bridges diverse civilizational spheres. In the coming period, instead of supporting and glorifying destabilization, conflict, war and hegemonic approaches, we should focus on bona fide cooperation, multifaceted and cooperative international relations strategy.

In this context, it should be underlined that the concept of "Constructive Eurasianism" is not a utopian approach, but on the contrary, a realistic approach that correctly diagnoses the challenges in the Eurasian geography, proposes cooperation for peace, stability and tranquility, and emphasizes the importance of remembering the long-forgotten principle of the indivisibility of security. It is believed that it would be beneficial for those who created the principle of "indivisibility of security" 50 years ago to remember the importance of this principle for the West and the East, and therefore for the Eurasian geography.

As mentioned in 1974 Helsinki Final Act, we should recognize the close link between peace and security in Europe and in the world as a whole and conscious of the need for each of them to make its contribution to the strengthening of world peace and security and to the promotion of fundamental rights, economic and social progress and well-being for all peoples.[8] We believe that it is time to understand that being in a constant state of conflict will not bring lasting benefit to any country.

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[2] Teoman Ertuğrul Tulun, "EU's New Central Asia Strategy and Notion of Constructive Eurasianism," Center for Eurasian Studies (AVİM), Commentary No. 2019/68, December 31, 2019, https://avim.org.tr/en/Yorum/EU-S-NEW-CENTRAL-ASIA-STRATEGY-AND-NOTION-OF-CONSTRUCTIVE-EURASIANISM .

[3] Teoman Ertuğrul Tulun, "Turkey's Interests and Constructive Eurasianism," Center for Eurasian Studies (AVİM), May 5, 2022, https://avim.org.tr/en/Yorum/TURKEY-S-INTERESTS-AND-CONSTRUCTIVE-EURASIANISM .

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[5] Mehmet Oğuzhan Tulun and Teoman Ertuğrul Tulun, "The Necessity of Constructive

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[8] Conference on Security and Co-Operation in Europe, "Final Act," August 1, 1975, https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/5/c/39501.pdf.

About the Author :

Teoman Ertuğrul Tulun is an analyst at Ankara-based think-tank Center for Eurasian Studies. Dr. Teoman Ertuğrul Tulun received his Ph.D. in Political Science and Public Administration from İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University in Ankara. His area of research include European Union Studies, Globalization, Xenophobia, Hate Speech Studies and International Relations.

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Süleyman Nazif Sok. No: 12/B Daire 3-4 06550 Çankaya-ANKARA / TÜRKİYE
Tel: +90 (312) 438 50 23-24 • **Fax**: +90 (312) 438 50 26
@avimorgtr
https://www.facebook.com/avrasyaincelemelerimerkezi
E-Mail: info@avim.org.tr
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