A review of the monograph:

Przemysław Jan Sieradzan, *The Red and Brown. The Alliance of the Radical Right and Left in Present-day Russia*, Warsaw: Oficyna Wydawnicza ASPR-JR, 2010

by Tadeusz Dmochowski

The monograph constitutes the fourth volume of an interesting series "Power, Elites, Leadership" edited by Tadeusz Bodio. The author divided his work into six chapters, of which two initial ones, focusing on the years 1991–1993, concern historical and genetic issues. The remaining chapters are devoted to the ideological standpoints of the major political trends of "the alliance of extremes".

Przemysław Sieradzan attracts the readers' attention to the inadequacy observable in the division of Russian doctrines and political trends into "rightist" and "leftist" that is frequently used by western political scientists. He notices that what poses the common ground for the synthesis of the Russian extremes was and still is the rejection of certain western values, such as parliamentary democracies, moral liberalism and capitalism. Therefore, the author states that the Russian political scene is in fact divided into the followers and the opponents of the western model of life. It was the objection against westernisation that united superpower patriots and communists, who appeared so distant from one another (p. 19).

In consequence, what has become the basic criterion for the division of the Russian political scene since 1991 was the

attitude towards parliamentary democracies, moral liberalism and capitalism (p. 20). By their Russian opponents, these values are regarded as imposed by the West, colonizing and devastating Russian identity as well as cultural and civilization autonomy which constitutes a kind of entirety separated from western civilization, shaped in the formation of Russian statehood at different historical stages, including the Soviet Union.

As far as his methods of research are concerned, the author described himself as the follower of the integral and interdisciplinary approach and the supporter of the holistic rather than reductionist standpoint, considering constituents as secondary towards the whole. As a result, he renounced model depictions, quantification of social phenomena and quantitative methods (p. 21; also there motivation and further expansion). Sieradzan took civilization, humanistic (the perspective of maximal humanism) and anthropological approaches, which seems to constitute a kind of compensation for his renunciation of quantitative methods (p. 22).

What constitutes the basis for the work in question is the literature of the subject matter in Polish, Russian and English. As regards the main actors of the depicted political process, such as ideologists, lead-

ers and organizers, the references section (pp. 409–422) is dominated by the works of Aleksandr G. Dugin, Lev N. Gumilev, Maksim Kalashnikov, Sergey G. Kara-Murza, Sergey E. Kurginian, Eduard V. Limonov, Aleksander A. Prochanov and Gennady A. Zyuganov. What is more, the author used Russian press and websites. The work is supplemented by and the index of names (pp 423–429) and summaries in English and Russian.

The author divides the alliance of the opponents of liberalism, “radical rightists” and “radical leftists”, in Russia into four periods. The first one, described as “the phase of consolidation”, began with the Putsch in August 1991 and included the majority the following year. The second one, that is “the phase of a uniform front”, lasted until the constitutional crisis in September and November 1993, when the National Salvation Front, concentrating anti-liberal, anti-Western and anti-Yeltsinian left-wing and right-wing groups that proscribed the political camp of Boris Yeltsin, became the major organizational structure of the opposition. The third period, “the phase of disintegration and transformation”, continued until the breakdown of the “Rodina” parliamentary fraction. The fourth and last period, “the metapolitical phase” had began in 2006 (pp. 389–391).

In the first chapter, “The Genesis of the Alliance of Extremes”, the author searches for the national roots of Soviet communism and describes the period of the Second World War as the turning point in the process of its nationalization (p. 48).

At that particular time the bourgeois cosmopolitanism started to be severely branded and the pre-war “pure” internationalism in rhetoric, politics and aesthetics stopped to be returned to.

The national and communist trends in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union are depicted by means of such figures as Valery I. Skurlatov and Nina A. Andriejeva and the parliamentary group “Soyuz”. What is also presented is the “Pamjat” (“Memory”) movement, adopting different forms of organization, which in the initial period of its functioning, that is from 1970s’ to 1987, constituted the strongest opposition movement in the USSR referring to “the synthesis of socialistic, super-power and nationalistic slogans” (p. 68). It was in “Pamjat” where numerous later activists of the National Salvation Front, the Eurasian movement and the National Bolshevik Party started their political career. Moreover, the author briefly characterizes the group concentrated around Jurij V. Bondariev and Vasilij Belov and “Juzynska Group” lead by Jurij W. Mamleev and Yevgeny V. Golovin.

In the following sections the author analyses inefficient “August Putsch” organized by hard-line members of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Sieradzan draws a conclusion that its activity and collapse “became the foundation stone in the formation of the national and communistic opposition” (p. 92), although at the time of the Putsch the later activists of the anti-liberal opposition could be found on both sides of the barricade.

The next chapter, entitled “The Formation of the Anti-liberal Opposition and the Constitutional Crisis in 1993”, concerns the organizational rebuild of the Russian political scene that occurred after Yeltsin placed a ban on the activity of the communist party after the August Putsch. As soon as December 22, 1991 the first manifestation, known as “the March of Hungry Queues”, took place. Communists, monarchists and members of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia participated together, although in separate columns.

The first attempts to unite communist and nationalistic trends and organizations, that was the Congress of Civil and Patriotic Powers that took place on February 8–9, 1992, proved to be unsuccessful. It was due to rowdy speeches of the members of the “Pamjati” movement and its leader, D.D. Vasiliev.

As the bonds between the two so distant movements continued to tighten, which could be observed at the demonstration of February 23, 1992 and the congress of February 27, 1992, a new definition, “the red and brown”, was introduced by the liberal environment. This rather pejorative expression was to describe the non ideological alliance of communists and nationalists (national patriots). The obvious connotation with the “brownshirts”, Hitler’s SA-men, was used to discredit the anti-liberal movement in the public eye, both Russian and international, could, at least theoretically, enable the political game of Yeltsin and Kozyrev for the liking and help of western countries in the economic and political transformation of Russia.

The expression “the red and brown” was eagerly adopted by the government propaganda that tried to show how dangerous the accession to power of the red and brown opposition could be. The Kremlin and the liberal movements kept presenting this possibility as the end of economic reforms and the modernization of the country as well as the cessation of the pro-western policy of Kozyrev. Such a situation was regarded as the communists and nationalists’ return to power, which could lead to numerous conflicts or even wars in the post soviet areas resulting from the attempt to rebuild the Soviet empire.

Those whom the expression concerned, preferred to speak rather of the alliance of “the red” and “the white”. Still, some of them adopted the aforesaid definition, due to which its negative connotations decreased, especially as regards the Russian political scene. On the arena of international politics, its undertone remained unchanged.

As far as common ground for the uniting anti-liberal opposition is concerned, it was the National Salvation Front established on October 24, 1992. The establishment congress gathered 1428 delegates and 675 guests derived from 103 cities of the former Republic of the Soviet Union, excluding Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. The Front chose the following figures for its co-presidents: S.N. Baburin and N.A. Pavlov (The Russian National Unity), G.A. Zyuganov (Coordinational Board of the National and Patriotic Forces), I.V. Konstantinov (Christian Democratic Party of Russia),

M.G. Astafiev (The Constitutional-Democratic Party – the Party of National Freedom), V.A. Ivanov (The Rebirth Party), W.B. Isakov, G.V. Sayenko (United Russia), A.M. Makashov (Russian Communist Labour Party). What is more, those figures, together with V.I. Alksnis (“Soyuz” movement), N.N. Lysenko (National-Republican Party of Russia), A.A. Prochanov (the editor of “The Day”) and others, became members of the newly established Political Board of the Front. However, the author should have mentioned the functions they performed in national structures at the time, without which their position in the Russian political scene it is not so obvious.

Three of the co-presidents, that is Baburin, Konstantinov and Isakov, belonged to a seven-person group separated from the 250 deputies of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic that on December 12, 1991 voted against the ratification of the Belavezha Accords which lead to the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

The author highlights the heterogeneity of the Front leaders as regards their world outlook, and accurately notices that they were connected by a negative program – the rejection of western values and hostility towards the policy of Yeltsin and the government he supported. Therefore, what constituted the common ground here was anti-westernisation, “anti-Yeltsinism”, longing for the superpower character of Russia and attempting to restore to that position. “Anti-Yeltsinism”, according to the activists of the Front was a necessity, as they regarded Yeltsin’s policy

to be “the policy of national betrayal” (the Manifest of the National Salvation Front).

Similarly, but from a more “external” perspective, the union was perceived by E. Limonov, for whom Yeltsin and his followers were merely executors of western policy in Russia. According to Limonov, the cooperation of “anarchists” and “fascists” constituted the only power able to resist the new world order established by totalitarian democracies, that is the United States and Western Europe (and later the European Union), aiming to take control over the world.

Yeltsin’s fear of the national and communist union made the Kremlin issue a decree no. 1308 “On Means to Protect the Constitutional Regime of the Russian Federation” on October 28, 1992. According to that particular document, the organizational committee was to be solved and the union itself was illegalized. The motivation for that was that “recently, there has been an increase in the activity of groups, which to achieve their extremist political goals resorted to unconstitutional actions, aiming to provoke riots and destabilize the social situation, and unconstitutional structures and illegal paramilitary formations that had been created”. Nonetheless, the activists of the Front did not stop their actions and the decree was overruled several month later.

The ultimate blow was aimed at the anti Yelstinian national-communist coalition in autumn 1993. At that particular time, as a result of the constitutional crisis, Yeltsin first issued a decree no. 1400 “On a Gradual Constitutional Reformation of

the Federation of Russia”, which against constitution and without any rights to do so, dissolved the Congress of People’s Deputies of the Soviet Union and the Supreme Soviet replacing them with a bicameral parliament. The deputies to the Supreme Soviet, vice-president Rutskoy, some of the deputies to Congress of People’s Deputies of the Soviet Union and the majority of the anti-liberal extra parliamentary opposition started to rebel against the violation of law and the constitution. The units to protect the “White House” (The House of Soviets) were spontaneously created. In that conflict, the West unequivocally supported Boris Yeltsin. On October 4, the “White House” was fired by the army and its protectors were removed.

The fights in Moscow connected with the dissolution of the Supreme Soviet were the most sanguinary events since control over the city was taken by the Bolsheviks in 1917. What is more, they constituted the only military clash between the anti-western union of communists and nationalists and pro-western liberals in the history of the Federation of Russia.

The use of force to disperse the opponents meant the end of the uniform political front of the anti-liberal and anti-western opposition. The second phase, the phase of a uniform front, was over.

Thinking of the phenomenon of the “soyuz of extremes”, the author comes to the conclusion that “the rebirth of the significant political power advocating for the union of communists and the supporters of superpower patriotism in its radical

version is highly unlikely in the Russia of today” (p. 400).

As far as the successive issue of the monograph is concerned, there are certain inadequacies to be corrected, such as the mistake in the Russian name of the Communist Party of Russia, that is *Rossijskaja Politiczeskaja* (instead of *Komunisticzeskaja*) *Partija* (p. 97). What also requires correction are certain expressions, including “he was disappointed with Yeltsin’s policy” (p. 99), minor spelling mistakes and dates. “November 24” should be replaced with “September” (p. 129), “October 21 and 24, 1993” with “September” (p. 144).

Writing about the common participation of Soviet and American armies in the Gulf War, the author seemed to be carried away by his emotions, probably due to the attacks of Gorbachev and Shevardnadze’s political opponents who were realizing the “new thinking” policy (p. 398). Despite the fact that the Soviet Union supported the anti Iraqi United Nations Security Council resolutions forced by Washington (the resolutions were condemning Iraq for invading Kuwait, demanding the removal of the Iraqi army, lifting economic sanctions on Iraq and concerning the use of force to remove Iraqi army from Kuwait), Moscow refused to take part in the international military services, even against Shevardnadze’s declaration.

In the four consecutive chapters the author leaves the chronological and subject matter schema and focuses on the presentation of four specific trends. The third chapter, entitled “The Syncretic Extremism of the National Bolshevik Party”, briefly

presents the history of the ideological trend that in 1994 gave birth to this party, particularly interesting from the perspective of the reconciliation of extremes. The author perceives the party from the angle of Eduard Limonov (whose real surname is Savenko), a prolific writer and politician, a man who keeps provoking not only with his thoughts, which he used to change without any embarrassment, but also with his attitude towards life and contestation of reality. Due to all of that, Limonov is perceived as a troublemaker yearning for public attention rather than as a radical systemic politician. According to the National Bolshevik Party, the basic political division is the one into the "system", consisting of liberalism, democracy and capitalism, and its enemies, and negates the division into the Right or the Left.

The fourth chapter ("The Neoeurasianism of Aleksandr Dugin") presents one of the most interesting intellectual postulates of the anti-western movement, that is Neoeurasianism, created and propagated by Aleksandr Dugin. Dugin, since 1998, has been Limonov's closest collaborator in the National Bolshevik Party. According to Limonov, Dugin is the representative of the "black" and Limonov himself of the "red" part of national bolshevism. It was Dugin who popularized and introduced certain concepts, including euroasianism, geopolitics, geoeconomics, mondialism, the new Right and the third way, into not only scientific but also public discourse.

The fifth chapter ("Neoimperial Socialism of 'Zawtra' Weekly"), concerns the beliefs of Aleksander A. Prochanov, a

writer and journalist, the author of the concept of the "Fifth Empire", in which form the Russia of today is to revive (in historical order the Soviet Union was the fourth empire), the creator and editor of "Zawtra weekly magazine, which gives place for discussion for anti-liberal imperial opposition of different political colors. In the last chapter ("The Osmosis of Communism and Superpower Patriotism") Sieradzan presents the superpower patriotic trend, lead by Ziuganov, of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, the environment of "conservative patriots", the "Rodina" bloc (D.O. Rogozin, S.J. Glazyew) and political writers Sergey Karamurza and Maksim Kalashnikov (whose real name is Vladimir Alexandrovich Kucherenko).

The most interesting intellectually and the strongest of the trends described by the author seems Dugin's Neoeurasianism, whose aim is to rebuild Russia and the world ("conservative revolution"). This goal was to be achieved by means of the penetration of the political elites and the manipulation of politicians to create a strong and authoritarian country. By Limonov, Dugin was described as the "Cyril and Methodius of fascism and the new Left" at the same time. As Dugin is considered as the most prominent and the strongest representative of the imperialistic movement of Russian political thought, his beliefs inspired both the surroundings of Yeltsin and Putin as well as communist movements connected not only with the Communist Party of the Russian Federation.

The most important result of the activity of anti-liberal opposition ("national and patriotic left-wing opposition", according to Dugin) after the pogrom of the Supreme Soviet in October 1993, had been the fact that certain ideas of the defeated opponents were adopted by the winners, Dugin described as "liberals", "westernizers" and "oligarchs". They started to speak of Russian, patriotism, national interests and dissimilarity to western civilizations.

A similar process, that is a transition from the negation and ridicule of patriotism to affirmation and disputes who constitutes a greater patriot, could be observed in several Eastern European countries in the first years after the transformation. At that particular time substantial part of uncritical pro-western leaders devoted their energy to fight patriotic behaviour, classifying it as a form of the rebirth of fascism and continued to accuse patriots of xenophobic and anti-liberal intentions and backwardness. This subject matter, both in its

Russian and Eastern-European variants, is still expecting certain research. Since October 1993, geopolitics and the place of Russia in the map of European civilization has become the subject of numerous academic and social debates and a turn to the previously attacked eurasiatism has been observed.

The aftermath of the anti-liberal ideological opposition was this departure of Russian elites from the opinion, so popular in early 1990's, that integration with the West constitutes the only solution for the country. Secondly, the belief that Russian civilization is particularly unique and distinguished from this previously imposed western model of social, political and economic life that was widely accepted. Thirdly, what could be observed was a common disappointment with the West and its political attitude towards Russia. As a result, the pro-western trends, so popular in the first years of Yeltsin's presidency, were replaced with diverse anti-western ones.

A review of the book:

Polityka zagraniczna. Aktorzy – potencjały – strategie, ed. T. Łoś-Nowak,
Warszawa: Poltext, 2011, pp. 575

by Marcin Chelminiak

The question of what will be the shape of international policy in the next decades, especially at the moment, when the Euro-

pean Union (and other regions) struggle with a financial crisis is difficult to answer as a new international order is still in the