Chapter 9
Armenia's Approach to Eurasian Integration

Norayr Dunamalyan
Russian-Armenian (Slavonic) University, Armenia

ABSTRACT

The Armenian view on Eurasian integration is multidimensional, as it includes various ideological, historical, political, and economic aspects that simultaneously contradicts to the classical Eurasianism, but gets along with the political and economic contexts of this phenomenon. Joining CSTO and the EAEU is explained by searching political and economic stability in regional integrative projects, as well as within a country. Highlighting three levels of reflection of Eurasian integration allows observing a large gap of state, public, and diasporic approaches to understanding and mastering the idea of integration in the post-Soviet space. However, there is no split in the Armenian public opinion as the initial prerequisite for Armenia's participation in the Eurasian integrative project concerning the political and economic aspects. Another feature of the Armenian approach to the CSTO and the EAEU is the consideration of these projects in the general direction of Russian-Armenian relationship, rather than a scrutiny of multilateral cooperation.

INTRODUCTION

Armenia's approach to Eurasian integration is considered as a pragmatic step towards establishing strategic relations within the scope of a common political and economic integration project. In this context, there are several main trends, related to Armenia's accession to the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU): the problem of security, the need for economic integration due to overcoming the effects of the blockade, the strengthening of statehood and internal economic stability. Referring to the problem of approaches to Eurasian integration, public discourse in Armenia is built on a comparison of three patterns: "Eurasian economic integration", "Armenia's participation in the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO)", and "Russian-Armenian relations". For economists, political scientists or lawyers, these phenomena differ for several reasons and functions, but public opinion, and in many respects, political statements, are built by combining these elements of Armenia's foreign policy. At the same time,

it is important to understand what changes have occurred in the views of the political elite and society of Armenia in perceptions of Eurasian integration after the "velvet revolution". Determining the degree of the Armenian domestic policy influence provides a large field for studying the interdependence of factors within the integrative processes.

The main aim of this chapter is to detect the major approaches to Eurasian integration within the framework of the various social and scientific discourses transformation in Armenia.

This chapter includes three parts. The first part is dedicated to the analysis of the social, political, economic and cultural prerequisites of Armenia's participation in the Eurasian integration project. In the second part, the effects of Armenia's entry into EAEU are analyzed in conjunction with the security problem. Finally, the third part appeals to the possible development of Armenian integrative approaches after the political changes in 2018.

BACKGROUND

The complexity of the analysis concerns the omission of many important aspects of the problem. Researchers come to not quite correct conclusions because of many nuances related to the EAEU "semi-integration" problem (Tigran Sarkisyan vidit neobkhodimost 'v soglasovanii natsional'nykh politik ..., 2019), whereas the internal political context is ignored beyond the frameworks of scientific analysis or it takes too much attention.

The most popular topic of analysis remains the discussion around the concept of "conflict between two integrations" (the term was introduced by Vinokurov et al. 2015). This problem includes two levels. On the one hand, the studies are connected with a more professional assessment of the institutional interoperability issue in the economic union and cooperation with other integration projects. On the other hand, the discussion revolves around the "existential" choice between the West and the East. This approach is common both in the Armenian and foreign academic community, but it is worth noting that politicization of the issue has been a subject of a thorough scrutiny in academic papers (Delcour, 2018; Tavadyan, 2018, Shirinyan 2019) and analytical publications on various network resources (Armeniya mezhdu ES i EAES: v lovushke politicheskogo parasitisma, 2017; ES – EAES: vozmozhna li konvergentsiya? 2017).

Speaking about the internal political context of the U-turn of Armenia towards Eurasian integration, another discourse aims to analyze the tactics and strategy of Armenia's political elite in 2008-2013. This approach considers the process of including Armenia in various integration projects from the domestic political expediency perspective, aimed at strengthening political power and ensuring stability within the state. Thus, the process of association with the EU is explained by the need to neutralize the liberal opposition in Armenia and to ensure the victory of the ruling party and President S. Sargsyan in the elections for 2012-2013, that is why some scholars saw the motivation of the following global changes rather prosaic (Giragosian, 2014). At the same time, the geopolitical component of the process is not neglected, since joining the EAEU is determined by a combination of internal and external factors. Besides, the problem becomes biased, reducing the discussion of the issue in the public and scientific fields to the competition of "pro-European" and "pro-Eurasian" (meaning "pro-Russian") discourses (Terzyan, 2016; Gabrielyan, Dabaghyan, Tadevosyan, Zakaryan, 2017).

As a part of Armenia's accession to the EAEU, the main focus was on the issue of security, which became the leitmotif of Armenia's accession to the Customs Union (CU) and then to the EAEU. The S. Sargsyan's formula «participating in one military security structure makes it unfeasible and inefficient

20 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/chapter/armenias-approach-to-eurasian-integration/245196

Related Content

Business Management Models of Microfinance Institutions (MFIs) in Africa: A Study into Their Enabling Environments
Nadya Pashkova, Andres Trujillo-Barrera, George Apostolakis, Gert Van Dijk, Periklis D. Drakosand George Baourakis (2020). *African Studies: Breakthroughs in Research and Practice (pp. 76-98).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/business-management-models-of-microfinance-institutions-mfis-in-africa/253138

Citation Analysis of Potential Predatory Journals Removed From the UGC-CARE List
Rosy Jan (2022). *International Journal of Public Sociology and Sociotherapy (pp. 1-10).*
www.irma-international.org/article/citation-analysis-of-potential-predatory-journals-removed-from-the-ugc-care-list/297200

Respect for Human Rights as a Predictor of Arab Spring Intensity: A Replication and Extension Study
Matthew D. Hudson-Flege (2019). *International Journal of Political Activism and Engagement (pp. 1-13).*
www.irma-international.org/article/respect-for-human-rights-as-a-predictor-of-arab-spring-intensity/235390

The Ancient Wisdom and Resurgence for Yoga: A Sociological Perspective
Jah-Xolani Radebe (2021). *Ethical Research Approaches to Indigenous Knowledge Education (pp. 206-227).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/the-ancient-wisdom-and-resurgence-for-yoga/261296

Tawaifs and Islamicate Culture: Reading Bollywood's Muslim Women
Nadira Khatun (2020). *Handbook of Research on Social and Cultural Dynamics in Indian Cinema (pp. 93-101).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/tawaifs-and-islamicate-culture/257395