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“Main directions of potential realization
Eurasian Economic Union”

Annotation of the dissertation for the degree
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speciality 5.5.4 - «International Relations, Global and Regional Studies»

Relevance of the research topic. The topic of this dissertation is relevant for several reasons. Recently, there is the thesis that "... globalization/integration/liberalism has failed"¹. This often leads to the conclusion that the main subject of world politics is the state, and the emphasis should be on bilateral relations between the countries of the world, and not on the activities of international organizations and integration structures. It seems, however, that at least integration associations are still too early to write off. First, they have already become a reality that surrounds the citizens of Member States. The population of the Member States consumes goods that comply with the technical regulations and standards of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) at a reduced price due to the absence of customs duties between the Member States of the Union. Secondly, the integration potential is not fully disclosed even in such an association as the European Union (EU). After all, the world is constantly changing, new opportunities and challenges are emerging, and unlocking the potential is an endless process, and with the necessary scientific study, it can be effectively implemented.

Currently, Eurasian integration has a potential that is not fully used in practice. It is necessary to find new opportunities for its use and disclosure not only in the economic sphere but also in the political and socio-cultural sphere. In this sense, a serious mission has been entrusted to Eurasian integration. It is not only to improve the well-being of the Eurasian peoples but to maintain peace between

¹ Kucherenko, S.A. State Existence as a Value Problem of Political Realism // Questions of Philosophy. - 2021. - No. 7. - P. 5-16.

them, to ensure their security and prosperity in the conditions of the formation of a new world order. The transformation of the world order requires new approaches from countries and integration structures, the use of new opportunities, that is, a more complete realization of their potential. The dynamics of Eurasian integration are also influenced by socio-economic and political changes in the EAEU member states.

The current strategic planning documents note that the EAEU occupies one of the first places in the system of regional priorities of Russia's foreign policy². It was created for stable development, comprehensive modernization, increasing the competitiveness of the EAEU member states' economies and raising their population's living standards. This association has not only economic significance for Russia. The Eurasian region is the key to building a security system along the perimeter of the Russian borders, so the establishment of allied relations with the EAEU countries is an urgent need for our country. Today it is extremely important to determine its potential and effective ways to implement it.

Another reason for the relevance of the dissertation topic is related to the fact that Western countries are currently pursuing an active policy in the Eurasian space. The policy of unilateral restrictions against Russia leads to a slowdown in the Eurasian integration processes since it is the largest member state of the EAEU. The policy of the West towards Belarus, Armenia and other countries of the EAEU requires Russia to put forward initiatives aimed at finding new additional sources of increasing the efficiency of the Eurasian integration processes. Such an additional source can be just the realization of the potential of the Union, which for various reasons is not currently involved.

The topic of this dissertation is also relevant because today China is extremely active in the post-Soviet space, in particular in Central Asia. Beijing's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) proposes huge investments in the development of transport

² Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation dated November 30, 2016 // Official website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia / URL: https://www.mid.ru/ru/foreign_policy/official_documents/1538901/ (date of access: 05/29/2022); National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation. Approved by Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of July 2, 2021 No. 400 // URL: https://www.mid.ru/ru/foreign_policy/official_documents/1784948/ (date of access: 05/29/2022).

routes and logistics in the countries of the region. In case of low efficiency of the Eurasian integration, the BRI can act as an alternative to the Eurasian integration. Therefore, proposals are needed today aimed at the most complete realization of the potential of Eurasian integration.

The purpose of the dissertation is to determine the main directions for realizing the integration potential of the EAEU based on the study of the theoretical foundations and trends of regional integration, foreign experience in the evolution of integration structures and the current state of Eurasian integration.

To achieve this goal, it is necessary to solve the following **tasks**:

- to determine the content of the concepts of "potential" and "realization of potential", to identify the main directions for the implementation of the integration potential;
- to determine the research methods by which it is possible to study these areas;
- explore foreign experience in implementing the integration potential;
- identify priority ways of using the integration reserves of the EAEU;
- discover new possibilities for the development of Eurasian integration within the framework of the EAEU;
- develop recommendations for realizing the integration potential of the EAEU.

The **object** of research is the Eurasian Economic Union.

The **subject** of the research is the potential of Eurasian integration in the economic, political and socio-cultural spheres.

The theoretical basis of the dissertation. The current stage of world politics is associated with a change in the world order, the end of the era of the unipolar world and the formation of a new world order, therefore, works on the subject of geopolitical and geo-economic world order³, the paradigm of the new world order⁴, polycentrism and multipolarity was used in the dissertation⁵.

³ Neklessa, A.I. Geo-economic world order system as a global project // http://www.intelros.org/books/opera_selecta/opera_selecta_43.htm (Accessed: 05/10/2021).

In the thesis, various integration theories were applied. The institutional theory of D. North⁶ turned out to be very useful. He divided changes in organizational structures into incremental and discrete. Incremental changes are gradual, while discrete changes are radical. Discrete changes are often associated with a breakthrough. A breakthrough can be called a flagship, the first event of an integration series, for example, the conclusion of agreements on a free trade zone with third countries⁷. A breakthrough can also be considered a solution to a controversial issue in which countries had to make mutual concessions in the common interest⁸. Another basis for discreteness can be crises, which often lead to finding new approaches to solving problems. Therefore, the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC) pays considerable attention to this aspect⁹. In this study, the first three directions of realization of the integration potential can be classified as incremental, while the remaining three directions can be classified as discrete.

The applicant finds the neo-functional approach developed by J. Nye, E. Haas and K. Deutsch¹⁰ very useful. It arose from the need to explain the nature of supranational institutions of regional integration. Within the framework of this approach, it was also shown that economic integration from a certain moment becomes the basis of political integration, and all these integration areas are in

⁴ Osipov, G.V. The paradigm of the new world order and Russia. - M.: Institute of Ecological and Technological Problems, 1999; Plashinsky, A.A. The New World Order Paradigm in the US Foreign Policy Strategy: Formation and Development: Monograph / A.A. Plashinsky; under scientific ed. S.N. Knyazev; International University "MITSO". - Minsk: MITSO, 2017. - 292 p.

⁵ Mikhailenko, A.N. Contours of the new world order // *Ethnosocium and international culture*. - 2019. - No. 8 (134). - P. 143-158; Mikhailenko, A.N. Polycentric world: what should it be like? // *Questions of political science*. - 2015. - No. 4 (20). - P. 89-101.

⁶ North, D.C. *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*. - Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990. - 152 p.

⁷ EAEU and FTA with Vietnam: a breakthrough on the path of integration // https://n.tass.ru/ekonomika/2005825?utm_source=google.com&utm_medium=organic&utm_campaign=google.com&utm_referrer=google.com (Accessed 05/29/2022).

⁸ The EAEU countries provided a breakthrough in resolving disagreements on the formation of a common electric power market of the Union // URL: <http://www.eurasiancommission.org/ru/nae/news/Pages/23-04-2019-3.aspx> (Accessed 27/01/2022).

⁹ Global Crisis 2020: Challenges for the World and the EAEU. Experience of overcoming the crisis of 2014/15. Analytical note as of 03/31/2020 // URL: <http://www.eurasiancommission.org/ru/covid-19/Documents/2222.pdf> (accessed 01/27/2022).

¹⁰ Haas, E. Functional cooperation as a condition for overcoming conflict and achieving political integration / E. Haas // *Theory of international relations: a reader*. - M.: Gardariki, 2002. - P. 316-320; Deutsch, Karl W. *The Analysis of International Relations*. - Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1968. - 214 p.

need of coordination. These issues are very relevant for the Eurasian Economic Union, the next stage of development of which could be a political union.

Considering that Russia is much larger in size than all other EAEU member states put together, it has a special leadership mission in the development of the Union. For a more thorough consideration of this issue, the applicant studied the theory of hegemonic stability, which is presented in the works of R. Gilpin, C. Kindleberger, R. Cohain and other scientists¹¹. According to this theory, the largest country of the integrating region assumes both the leadership role and a significant part of the costs of organizing regional cooperation. Integration practice really shows that the most significant contribution to the EU budget is made by Germany, and the EAEU - by Russia.

A certain point of theoretical support for the applicant was the theory of modern society of the Frankfurt School in the person of J. Habermas¹². He draws attention to the fact that national identity is a very stable factor in the statehood of any country. The desire of the political elites to quickly pass successive stages of integration with the transfer of an increasing number of state functions to supranational jurisdiction may not correspond to the mood of the population of the integrating countries. This contradiction can lead to various conflict situations. In the EAEU, the issue of the development of political integration is currently debatable.

The methodological basis of the dissertation. The dissertation used sociological, structural-functional, systemic and comparative methodologies. The sociological methodology was necessary when studying the public opinion of the EAEU member countries on the attitude of the population to integration processes. The structural-functional methodology was used by the author in identifying the relationship between various areas of integration activities of the EAEU and foreign integration structures. The system methodology was necessary to analyze

¹¹ Gilpin, R.G. No one loves political realist // Security Studies. - 1996. - No. 5 (3). pp. 3-26; Kindleberger, Ch.P. Hierarchy versus inertial cooperation // International Organization. - 1986. - No. 4 (40). - P. 841-847; Keohane, R. O. After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy. - Princeton, NY: Princeton University Press, 1984.

¹² Habermas, Y. Split West / Per. with him. - M.: Nauka, 2008.

the directions for realizing the potential of the EAEU in their interconnection. A comparative methodology was needed in order to include foreign experience in realizing the integration potential as an asset of Eurasian integration.

The dissertation used various research methods. They include general scientific and specific methods used in mathematics, economics, political science, the theory of international relations, sociology, psychology, and civilization studies. General scientific methods include analysis, synthesis, classification, systematic approach, generalization, comparison, analogy, abstraction, structural-functional analysis, and the method of proof "by contradiction". Thus, generalization and comparison were used to analyse the state of regional integration associations. A systematic approach was needed to determine further ways not only quantitative growth but also qualitative development of Eurasian integration.

In the dissertation research, especially taking into account the need to study economic, political and socio-cultural factors, specific methods are also used that are characteristic of particular sciences. These are statistical, mathematical methods, expert and scoring methods, macroeconomic modelling and forecasting, geopolitical and civilizational approaches (historical and logical method, periodization method, psychological assessment), event analysis, document study method (including content analysis), method of expert assessments, public opinion survey method. The dissertation also uses various indices and other quantitative methods, the use of which provides a higher reliability of the results obtained.

When working on the dissertation, various methods of studying integration processes were used as a set of research methods in their specific sequence. On this basis, the author's methodology for studying the integration potential of a regional integration association has been developed.

When studying the topic of the dissertation, the methods of external and participant observation were also used. Simultaneously with the external observation of the events taking place in the Eurasian space, the researcher carries out participant observation, since the author is directly involved in the

development of directions for the development of Eurasian integration, the development of strategic documents and regulatory legal acts in view of his labour activity in the EEC.

Provisions for defence:

1. Regional integration associations in the modern world are influenced by a number of factors that limit their interaction. These are such factors as the aggravation of the situation in the world in connection with the formation of a new world order, the coronavirus pandemic, unilateral restrictive measures, and others. In this regard, integration unions are beginning to pay more attention to their development potential. Currently, science has not developed a generally accepted understanding of the potential and methods for measuring it. Most often, the potential is associated with the degree of manifestation of any possibilities. In the author's interpretation, the potential of a system, including an integration association, can be understood as the difference between its actual and possible maximum effective states. Under the implementation of the potential is proposed to understand the use of deferred, not currently used reserves, as well as the discovery of new opportunities. The main elements of the integration potential of the EAEU are contained in the economic, political and socio-cultural spheres.

2. In the study of the potential of an integration association, a variety of tools can be used. Modelling and forecasting methods are often used to estimate the economic resources that a country or association can use; for the assessment of political and socio-cultural resources - methods of analysis of expert opinion and content analysis. When assessing the integration potential, the method of statistical comparisons of indicators, indices and sub-indices, ratings is effective. To analyze the quality of management of the integration process, it is possible to apply methods for assessing the progress and dynamics of the implementation of strategic documents of the integration structure, the composite index of regional integration. To identify the political and other competitive advantages of an integration association, you can use the SWOT analysis method. Public opinion

polls, as well as methods of conflict management, can be effective methods for studying contradictions in integration associations and ways to resolve them.

3. An analysis of the experience of the EU, MERCOSUR and ASEAN demonstrates the existence of problems similar to the EAEU in realizing their potential, such as inequality in the levels of economic development of member states, imperfection of the supranational institutional structure, protectionism as a reflection of the contradiction between the national and supranational principles of regional integration. The EU is currently focusing on activating deferred resources. ASEAN also realizes its potential in all areas, with the exception of the creation of powerful supranational institutions, which is due to the specifics of the eastern region. MERCOSUR has great potential for development, but at the moment many opportunities for its implementation are not used due to internal disagreements. In general, we can conclude that all integration associations are working to realize their potential. However, in many respects, it is carried out in accordance with the needs of the current moment, on an intuitive level and randomly, and not systematically.

4. The EAEU has achieved positive results in its development in a historically short period of time, although not significant enough. Today there is a significant potential for its further development associated with the use of unused reserves in three areas. First, the Union does not fully use the existing political.



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