



Dawn of Eurasia: On the Trail of the New World Order

Bruno Macaes

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A bold, eye-opening account of the coming integration of Europe and Asia

Weaving together history, diplomacy, and vivid personal narratives from his overland journey across Eurasia from Baku to Samarkand, Vladivostok to Beijing, Bruno Maçães provides a fascinating portrait of the shifting borderlands between Europe and Asia, tracking the economic integration of the two continents into a new supercontinent: Eurasia.

As Maçães demonstrates, glimpses of the coming Eurasianism are already visible in China's bold infrastructure project reopening the historic Silk Road, in the success of cities like Hong Kong and Singapore, in Turkey's increasing global role, and in shifting U.S. foreign policy toward Europe and Asia. This insightful and clarifying book argues that the artificial separation of the world's largest island cannot hold.

Dawn of Eurasia: On the Trail of the New World Order Details

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Jim Coughenour says

Maçães's book had the salutary effect, at least while I was reading it, of inverting my usual perspective. Reading *The Dawn of Eurasia* I had the strong sense of observing world events from the periphery, not the center. Of course there is no center, or there are several. In Maçães's view, there is the US, off to one side - then China, Russia and the EU, this trio being the salient aspects of the emerging "supercontinent" of Eurasia. Like the old geography exercise of turning the world map upside down, this perspective provokes us to consider obvious facts that we've easily overlooked.

It's also a book that, once begun, finds echoes everywhere. *The Economist* just published an issue on "Planet China" and its Belt and Road initiative; last week *The Guardian* published a colorful series on the New Silk Road; and Maçães himself has popped up here and there pointing out the possible promise of Brexit (the UK as a new Hong Kong or Singapore) or opining about the "Trump doctrine." *The Dawn of Eurasia* is less streamlined, following Maçães for 6 months as he meanders across Eurasia, talking to all manner of characters who exist, more or less, to substantiate *his* talking points. His excursions are never less than interesting, and less fevered than the apocalyptic travels of Robert Kaplan.

World generalizations require a grain of salt, but here are a couple to savor:

Returning to Europe after a visit to China feels akin to stepping back in time, to a world where cash, email and business cards are still in use. Europeans have grown accustomed to new forms of social and technological conservatives, a widespread resistance to change which everywhere raises its head, often under harsh regulatory inquisition, while Asia seems addicted to change, often for its own sake. (117)

Stripped of appearances, every Russian discussion, and every division in society, is a discussion and a division about history rather than politics. (175)

European politicians tend to appeal to rules and values to which political power must subject itself, while in Russia it is much more common and natural to appeal, not to rules, but to a power capable of establishing and enforcing them. . . . Since power needs the latent presence of chaos as a source of legitimacy, then chaos itself is legitimized and, ironically, may even be celebrated. (194, 195)

Maçães's book may be "unashamedly Centre right" (as one reviewer phrased it); books like this, it seems, generally are. That's fine. Any reader, right or left, will benefit from its critical perspective. I also appreciated the author's reference to a range of Russian, Japanese, Chinese, Korean and Mongolian novels, most of them dystopian. But if this is the dawn, you can't blame Europeans for hoping to head back into a more welcoming night.

Carlos Vasconcelos says

Interesting. Read this book if the subject matters to you.

Can't give it 5 stars because it does get repetitive and the author sometimes goes for some unnecessary fact

"show off" that doesn't get the arguments anywhere.

Ben Davies says

A interesting first delve into the topic of super-continental geopolitics. The author does a great job of covering the high level desires and motivations for the key players in the region and the likely roles they would like to play.

If you're interested in what the the history of the next 100 years could be then this is well worth a read.

Carsten says

The thought, that Eurasia will emerge as a geopolitical entity in the not so distant future is an interesting one. I wonder, though, how long this transformation will take, whether it will be peaceful and whether democracy as we know it (in the EU) will remain. Possibly Trump will accelerate this transformation, but I am not sure. There are a lot of interesting points in the book (although I don't share some of the authors conclusions). The content of the book is 4 stars, but the writing let it down: many repetitions and, I felt, unnecessary points. Still, this is an interesting book and I am happy that I've read it.

Paulo Lopes says

With this book, Macaes shows the path for Europe to have a future.

Lalitha says

Nothing against the book but the subject is a dry one. I was lent this book by a colleague at work. It was only polite to read the book.

The author talks about the weakening of the economic superiority of the western world with a rising face of new policies in the east. Consequently he espouses the need to have the idea of "eurasia" which shall blend the strengths of both regions. He then proceeds to understand economic growth in China, the position of Russia - is it western or Asian and Turkey's role as the western most frontier of Asia. The author seems to have done a lot of research in this field and has travelled quite extensively to glean his data. I liked the fact that the book included pictures of remote places and villages which are of geographic importance but just not yet.

On the whole, I like that I have read a book that I would not pick up but this only reinforced my belief why I pick only certain genres.

Rafaël Garcia-Suarez says

Organized around a 6-month journey between Europe and Asia, touring places that very few ever visit (from

Azerbaijan to China, going through Kazakhstan, Russia, Turkey, Chechnya, and others), this is much more than a simple travelogue, but also a perceptive point of view on geopolitics and on the shifting relations of global power and trade between the old Europe and the rising lights of the East.

Matthew Edwards says

The travelogue sections are fine and give you a glimpse of central Asia, which as a rule I don't really think about. But what really sets this book apart is giving you a schema for thinking about the ideologies behind the new multipolar world. Europe's new rules based quasi-expansionism coming up against Russia and China will be very important and this book gives you a structure to think with.

Miss Kelly says

Nothing original about this book; not even its title. A very Eurocentric vision of the world from a Minister of Europe. Despite many turns of phrases and attempts to convey the idea of universality, this is a book about the idea of European superiority, the higher values and morality offered by Europe and the need to "manage" the unruly "others" and it comes across very forcefully. I don't see any real proposals or new ideas of promoting greater collaboration between different peoples; on the contrary all I hear is how to reserve European exceptionalism, how not to lose ground too quickly to the advancing Chinese economy. The first thing that Europe needs to give up is the arrogance that has defined its dealings with the rest of the world. The world is becoming multipolar, ideas do not live in a single place, and there is a natural tendency for power to shift from region to region. Europe it was, Asia it will be soon, and maybe Africa down the road. Anything else is just either blindness, ignorance of history, or denial of the inevitable.

Stevedutch says

From his vantage point – about as west as you can get on mainland Europe – the author, in this ambitious geopolitical travelogue, casts his glance from one side of the sprawling mass that is 'Eurasia' to the other. Informing his prognostications, amongst other varied geopolitical type appointments, is his experience as Portugal's 'Europe Minister'. The book certainly takes the reader to, what is likely to be – at least to the great majority, I suspect – little known and far-flung places, attempting to trace the nascent super-continent's 'centre of gravity'. As such the reader would be well advised to have at hand a world atlas: even though the published market addition has maps at the beginning, the proof copy hasn't and this reader, at least, found it, if slightly awkward, an indispensable accessory!

The format is part travelogue, part geopolitical history, essentially providing, respectively, interwoven worm's and bird's eye views, the former arising from interviewing indigenous members of various exotic sounding populations along the way; the latter, from his own education and experience, sprinkled, sporadically by aphoristic, anecdotal seasoning in the form of quotes from a variety of past and present 'Eurasian' worthies.

And gradually, we begin to see the world in a different way, removed from the Mercator projection etched into Western minds by years of, largely, not very creative and imaginative formal education, made even more so by national curricula. How often, for example, do we recall that Russia and America are only a couple of hundred miles or so apart if we stop to consider their respective eastern and western boundaries?

Despite being somewhat 'stodgy' in parts – mainly when travelling in 'worm mode', it's certainly a book that provides food for a great deal of thought and should warrant more than one reading over the course of the next few years, in order to get the most from it.

Cristian says

Blown away by the many original thoughts on current global & metapolitical issues. Looking at the crisis of the western world through the lens of the ascension of Asia is not completely new, but I've never read it in such a thorough execution. Macaes viewpoint may be European by birth, but his outlook is definitely Eurasian. It also helps that it is very well written, especially the Robert D. Kaplan-like travelogues. Highly recommended.
