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## ALEKSANDR DUGIN THE ART OF THE ABSURD AND THE ESOTERIC ROOTS OF THE RUSSO-UKRAINIAN WAR

by Dr. Mark Sedgwick Professor of Arab and Islamic Studies, Aarhus University President of the European Network for the Study of Islam and Esotericism

Mark Sedgwick will discuss the origins of the Eurasian ideology of Aleksandr Dugin, a Russian philosopher whose ideas are sometimes blamed for the outbreak of the Russian-Ukrainian war. Dugin is often described as a fascist, but Sedgwick will show that it is more complicated than this. He will look at Dugin's earlier career, during which he participated in artistic and political activities that had more to do with the art of the absurd than with fascism, and had their roots in the late Soviet artistic underground. This period led to an engagement with Western European esoteric thought, notably the Traditionalism of the French Sufi René Guénon. Sedgwick will then show how Dugin moved from the absurd to the serious, from the esoteric to the geopolitical, ending with Dugin's 2015 book, *Ukraine: My War. A Geopolitical Diary*. Sedgwick is a historian of ideas who has worked on anti-modernism, Dugin, and Eurasianism since the 1990s.

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