

Pro-State Ethnology in Late Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia in the Service of Russian Nationality Policy

Vadim Sidorov

<https://doi.org/10.46585/cargo.2025.2.154>

Abstract: *The policy of Russia towards the peoples within its borders follows a consistent trajectory. The strategic goal of this policy is to neutralise the potential for the independent national development of those peoples, to transform them into loyal Russian subjects, and to turn the whole Russian realm into a homogeneous entity, while paying lip service to its multiethnicity. Not only was this the policy of the last Russian tsars but, contrary to popular myth, it was also the original view of Russian communists. The Soviet leadership's abandonment of permanent mass repression in the USSR after Stalin's death reduced the intensity of this policy and led to the emergence of an unstable model of nationality policy. It was at that point that Yulian Bromley's dualist theory of ethnos emerged in Soviet science. Bromley's theory sought to overcome the contradictions of Soviet policy, but it eventually turned out to be at odds with the nationality policy of the Russian state, which therefore led to its abandonment in the post-Soviet period. This article describes how the post-Soviet Russian establishment, reverting to the paradigm of the nationality policy of the late Russian Empire, is shedding the legacy of enforced Soviet multinationalism, and how key pro-state Russian ethnologists are providing theoretical justifications for this process.*

Keywords: *Russia's nationality policy, multinationality, multiethnicity, Yulian Bromley, Valeriy Tishkov*

Russia's nationality policy: from late imperial times to the end of the USSR

At the start of the 20th century, the Russian Empire encompassed not only almost all the territory later held by the Soviet Union, but also most of modern-day Poland and Finland. Nevertheless, it could hardly have been called a nation-state for two main reasons. First, the nation, in any sense, was not the source of the empire's sovereignty. Instead, absolute power resided in the ruling dynasty (Russian Empire 1906), which itself was of foreign origin (Durasov 1906). Second, the people who would eventually be classified as ethnic Russians under Soviet nationality policy – known in the empire as Great Russians – made up only 44.31% of its population. Taken together with Belarusians and the so-called Little Russians (the ancestors of modern-day Ukrainians), this figure rose to 66.12% (Russian Empire 1897). Officially, these groups were considered a single 'triune Russian nation' (Sidorov 2023), though, as later events made clear, strong movements towards national self-determination led to Ukrainians and Belarusians forming separate national identities – something Vladimir Putin now seeks to challenge (*ibid.*).

From the second half of the 19th century, the imperial authorities followed a policy of what Benedict Anderson called 'official nationalism' (Anderson 1991: 83–113) in an effort to 'Russify' the empire's various ethnic groups and transform them into loyal Russian subjects. At the same time, the empire imposed a system of religious and quasi-ethnic restrictions, prompting resistance and struggles for national liberation. This, in turn, forced the emerging Russian political society to clarify its own position on the question of national self-determination.

Despite differences in approach and rhetoric – largely stemming from various domestic political strategies – the majority of Russian political forces supported preserving Russia's territorial integrity. Supporters of the absolute monarchy wanted to maintain the existing order (Union of the Russian People 1905). Liberal opposition groups called for an end to discrimination based on religious and quasi-ethnic criteria and for non-Russian ethnicities to be granted the right to cultural autonomy (Constitutional Democratic Party 1905). Among the Russian revolutionaries, there was an ongoing debate over whether nations had the right to self-determination and whether Russia should be restructured as a federation or allow the secession of nationalities that wished to separate.

However, it is important to note that, contrary to a popular myth, the Russian Bolsheviks were initially opposed to any form of national autonomy (Stalin 1913) – both territorial and cultural (Lenin 1913) – even though they opportunistically played up the issue of the oppression of non-Russian peoples in order

to gain their support. Methodologically, the Bolsheviks' view of the nationality question was shaped by a socialist-progressivist approach, arguing that a 'centripetal' form of development fosters progress: under capitalism it leads to the emergence of bourgeois nations, and under socialism it leads to international solidarity among the working class. By contrast, 'centrifugal' nationalism was deemed reactionary (*ibid.*). This set them apart from the Socialist Revolutionaries (SRs) – the long-dominant group of Russian revolutionaries – who, as heirs to the populist tradition (the nationally-oriented Russian socialists), took a more national-romantic stance (Lenin 1894). Politically, the SRs promoted national autonomy and sought alliances with non-Russian national movements, which the Bolsheviks, by contrast, viewed as adversaries (Congress of Russian National Socialist Parties 1907).

Nevertheless, once the Bolsheviks became the leading revolutionary force in 1917 and seized power – sparking a civil war – they had to revise their stance on the nationality question. Although they continued to oppose genuine national self-determination and actively worked to suppress it, they decided to court the support of those parts of the non-Russian peoples who were undecided. Unlike their Russian adversaries in the civil war (the 'Whites'), the Bolsheviks promised these peoples the right to national self-determination by establishing Soviet national republics (Avtorkhanov 1988).

However, once Soviet power was firmly consolidated under Stalin, this initial courtship of non-Russian nationality sentiments gave way to a wave of repression targeting those who expressed a strong sense of national identity (*ibid.*). Non-Russian intellectuals who had joined the Bolsheviks found themselves widely persecuted. In 1939, numerous national districts and national councils were disbanded (All-Union Communist Party 1939). Entire ethnic groups were then uprooted and deported as 'unreliable', and their national autonomies were abolished (Campana 2007). At the same time, beginning in 1939, the Russian language was made compulsory in schools across all national republics (Council of People's Commissars of the USSR and Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party 1938), and the Russian cultural and historical canon was enforced as the norm throughout the Soviet Union (Brandenberger 2009: 57–80).

Stalin's death and the subsequent denunciation of Stalinism meant the Soviet leadership could no longer rely on widespread repression to suppress separatist leanings in the non-Russian republics. As a result, the post-Stalin period ushered in what historian Richard Pipes called 'the permanent Soviet dilemma between centralism and multinationalism' (Pipes 1958: 15). During this era, Yulian Bromley's 'dualist theory of ethnos' emerged, which sought to make sense of the Soviet Union's contradictory ethno-national policies. At the same

time, a contrasting anti-ethnic, statist viewpoint gained ground as a reaction – especially in the late Soviet and post-Soviet academic sphere, where it was championed by Valery Tishkov. This perspective effectively helped justify the nationality policies pursued by both the Russian tsars and the Russian communists, all designed to quell the ethno-national ambitions of non-Russian peoples and forge a politically homogeneous state.

The Dual ethnopolitical reality in the late USSR and Yulian Bromley's dualistic theory of ethnicity

Both the original view of 'national question' adopted by key Russian Bolshevism ideologists and the actual policies pursued by the Soviet central authorities effectively aimed to 'Russify' the diverse peoples of the USSR and mould them into a single Soviet people defined by Russian cultural and historical norms. Yet, formally, the Russian Bolsheviks were forced to abandon their Jacobin leanings and accept the creation of a 'state of nationalities', an idea they had once opposed. As a result, a dual reality emerged: on the one hand, there was a policy of cultural Russification and a declared goal of creating a unified Soviet people; on the other, the state officially recognised multiple nationalities, with membership based on a citizen's ethnic origin (in mixed-heritage cases, an individual could choose one parent's nationality). The theory of ethnos by Yulian Bromley, the director of the Institute of Ethnography at the USSR Academy of Sciences from 1966 to 1989, was used to justify this setup.

It is therefore no coincidence that this theory is known today as the 'dualistic' theory (Dondokova 2006: 7). As part of the Soviet formational doctrine, it was believed that a specific type of social community corresponded to each type of socio-economic formation: kin and tribe to tribal societies, nationality ('*narodnost'*) to feudalism, and the nation to capitalism and, partly, to socialism (Alekseev 1962). Within Marxist-Leninist discourse, there were notions about the merger of nations under socialism, which were subject to various interpretations and discussions.¹

In the aforementioned formational scheme, however, there had been hitherto no concept of ethnicity as a constant that exists regardless of different social conditions and their changes. It was Yulian Bromley who introduced and legitimised this idea in official Soviet science. Although similar ideas had existed among various scholars before, Bromley, as the head of the leading ethnological

¹ See Lenin's positions (Lenin 1894) and Stalin's response to some of their interpreters (Stalin 1949: 333–355).

institute of the Soviet Academy, managed to make them dominant during the described historical period. Earlier attempts to conceptualise ethnicity were made by Pavel Kushner, whom some researchers consider the father of Soviet ethnology (Alymov 2006). However, in the works of prominent ideologists of Russian Bolshevism, such as Lenin and Stalin, the concept of ethnic groups as independent from social formations was absent. When they discussed nations, nationalities, tribes, and clans, they did so in the context of analysing corresponding socio-economic relations.

Neither Lenin nor Stalin had a conceptual understanding of ‘primordial ethnicity’ as existing through different epochs and social formations. This concept became dominant in Soviet science thanks to Yulian Bromley, which is why British scholar Ernest Gellner attributed the conceptual revolution that occurred in the Soviet scientific/academic world to him (Gellner 1977). To achieve this in the conditions of an ideocratic state, Bromley had to solve the complex task of legitimising ethnological notions that lay outside the scope of the formational approach, yet, at the same time, without rejecting the latter and its conclusions.

To address this, Bromley posited that there are two aspects to every ethnic community. The first aspect is social, shaped by corresponding formational, socio-economic, and political conditions. The second aspect is purely ethnic and is independent of these conditions. Bromley termed the first aspect the ‘ethno-social organism’ (ESO) and the second aspect, which essentially equates to ethnicity, ‘*ethnikos*’ (Bromley 1983: 57–63). As practical examples of his theory, Bromley pointed to members of the same ethnicity integrated into different ethno-social organisations: Soviet Ukrainians and Canadian Ukrainians, West and East Germans, and even the Hellenes of Athens and Sparta. Although these groups belonged to different political communities, categorised in Marxist-Leninist terms as socialist nations, bourgeois nations, or slave-owning demes, from Bromley’s perspective, they shared a common ethnicity, which within the framework of the Soviet system was referred to as ‘nationality’ (ibid.: 57–58).

It is evident that Bromley, the leading Soviet ethnologist in an ex-officio capacity, not only introduced a new conceptual dimension that was absent from the works of Russian Bolshevik ideologists – who considered communities solely within specific social contexts – but also directly contradicted them. In the view of Lenin and Stalin, a nation emerges under the influence of external factors such as centralised power politics or market relations (and are thus essentially constructed). In contrast, Bromley’s *ethnikos* is a self-reproducing community from generation to generation (ibid.), primarily characterised by its members’ shared memory of a common ancestry and an awareness of their distinction from other such communities. While Stalin emphatically argued that groups lacking

a common territorial and economic life would assimilate into the nations with which they shared a social and economic life (Stalin 1913), Bromley contended that parts of a unified *ethnikos* living in different locations and conditions would still maintain their ethnic unity (Bromley 1983: 59–61).

To substantiate his views, Bromley also employed biosocial arguments, or sociobiology, a discourse absent from Lenin and Stalin but present among their ideological opponents. By postulating the biosocial nature of humanity (ibid.: 28), Bromley argued that *ethnikos* is a product of social relations in a broad sense, distinguishing them from socioeconomic relations in the narrow sense (ibid.: 31) – the sense in which Lenin and Stalin analysed relations in their studies of the nature of nations. Bromley asserted that ethnic communities do not require a shared economic life (ibid.: 57) or territorial residence (ibid.: 50), directly contradicting the concept of a nation espoused by both Lenin and Stalin. Although earlier Stalin had explicitly stated (Stalin 1913) that a nation is not a tribal or racial community, and Lenin had criticised (Lenin 1894) views suggesting that nations arise from the merger of clans, Bromley, questioning the actual common ancestry of all members of an *ethnikos*, asserted that the perception of such an ancestry is an essential characteristic of ethnicity (Bromley 1983: 186).

Demonstrating a good understanding of the various views on ethnicity from both Soviet and Western scholars (ibid.: 11–12), Bromley sought to formulate a scientifically valid perspective on its nature as much as was possible under a dogmatic and ideocratic regime. Essentially, his theory of ethnicity aligns well with the views of some prominent Western scholars on this phenomenon, whose perspectives, as evidenced by his works, he was familiar with. If we set aside Bromley's discussions of the 'ethno-social organism' (ESO), his views on the nature of ethnicity (*ethnikos*) (ibid.: 57–58) did not fundamentally differ from those of his renowned Western colleague Fredrik Barth (1969).² Regarding the relationship between ethnicity and modern nations, Bromley's views (1983: 63) were also quite similar to those of Anthony Smith, who believed that nations emerge based on pre-existing ethnic groups (Smith 1991).

² Anatoly Kuznetsov, a Russian researcher who studies ethnological concepts, believes that the works of the Russian émigré ethnologist Sergey Shirokogorov influenced Frederik Barth's views on ethnicity (see Kuznetsov 2023). Bromley was undoubtedly familiar with Shirokogorov's works, but he rejected the holistic-idealistic notions of ethnicity characteristic of the Shirokogorov and developed these ideas in a more instrumentalist direction, which is also characteristic of Barth. It is also noteworthy that Kuznetsov points out the genealogical intertwining of the Swedish and Russian ethnological schools, with St Petersburg as their point of intersection.

However, some Soviet scholars criticised Bromley's ideas from the standpoint of 'orthodox' Marxism-Leninism. For instance, Ivan Tsemeryan criticised Bromley's view that Ukrainians in the USSR and Ukrainians in Canada belonged to the same national community (nationality), despite lacking a common economic life and living in different socio-economic conditions (Tsemeryan 1979). One of Bromley's main theoretical and scientific-political opponents in the context of the state control over and ideologisation of science in the USSR was Mikhail Kulichenko, head of the sector of the theory of nations and national relations at the Institute of Marxism-Leninism under the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). In 1985, in a letter to the new General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, Mikhail Gorbachev, Kulichenko expressed concern about the spread of the 'ethnic disease' in the scientific community of the USSR, blaming Bromley for it (Alymov 2021). Translating these accusations into contemporary scientific language, one could argue that Bromley was effectively accused of espousing primordialist views, which contradicted Marxist-Leninist doctrine.

The triumph of Bromley's theory in the USSR, which adapted pre-Soviet Central-Eastern European ethnological principles (Golovnev 2018) to Marxism-Leninism, became possible once the Soviet regime was nearing its demise and its ideological grip was weakening. It is notable that towards the end of his life and of the Soviet regime, Bromley proposed an alternative to the crisis-ridden Soviet model of nation-state organisation, which was reminiscent of the Austro-Marxist concept of a 'state of nationalities' (Alimov 2021). Just as the Austro-German Social Democrats wanted, on the one hand, not to tie federal autonomous regions to specific nationalities and, on the other, to guarantee these nationalities broad extraterritorial autonomy, Bromley, in his project, proposed not to limit national autonomy to the union republics, with their large nations, but to extend it to all nationalities, including the smallest ones, that were interested in maintaining the cohesion and unity of the country. This distinguished his proposal from the ideas of the academician Valery Tishkov, who called for abandoning the ethnic understanding of the nation and beginning to view all Soviet citizens as a single nation (Tishkov 1990).

Both perspectives, however, reflected an exclusively Russia-centric view of the fate of the unified state within the USSR's borders, while national movements in its union republics were already fighting for the creation of their own fully fledged nation-states. This opportunity was provided by Boris Yeltsin, who, in his struggle to grant the Russian republic a status equal to other union republics, managed to secure his election as its president in 1991. On 8 December 1991, together with the leaders of Ukraine and Belarus – the two other republics that, along with

the Russian republic, were the nominal founders of the USSR in 1922 – Boris Yeltsin signed the Belovezha Accords, which declared the cessation of the USSR's existence and the transformation of its union republics into independent states (Belarus, Russian SFSR, and Ukraine 1991).

Russia after the USSR: from Soviet multinationalism to Russian state nationalism

What was called the 'parade of national sovereignties' did not end at Russia's borders but continued within Russia itself – in the republics that were autonomous within the Russian Soviet Republic (RSFSR). On the brink of the USSR's collapse, some of these republics sought to elevate their status to union republics, aiming either to exit the USSR with other union republics or to remain in a reformed Soviet Union on equal terms with Russia, not within it. Yeltsin adopted a strategy of concessions and pressure towards these republics. He invited them to 'take as much sovereignty as they could swallow' (Volk 2015) but warned them 'not to strain themselves' (Yeltsin undated). To this end, he initiated the signing of the Treaty of Federation on 31 March 1992. Article three of this treaty declared that 'the republics within the Russian Federation possess full state (legislative, executive, judicial) authority on their territory, except for the powers transferred to the federal government of the Russian Federation under this Treaty' (Protocol 1992). Essentially, this echoed the tactical approach of the Russian Bolsheviks, who, in a weakened state, had to temporarily recognise the national republics that accepted their rule.

The resulting national-federal structure of post-Soviet Russia was markedly asymmetric. On the one hand, the republics within it were established on an ethno-national basis and mostly confirmed and strengthened their national character during what was known as the 'parade of sovereignties'. On the other hand, within the rest of Russia, the leadership and political class operated not on behalf of its titular ethno-nation – i.e. the ethnic Russians – but on behalf of a community similar to the 'Soviet people', though now limited to Russian citizens or '*Rossiyane*'. This ambiguity regarding the status of ethnic Russians and the predominantly ethnic Russian-populated non-republican territories of the Russian Federation (the *krais* and *oblasts*) quickly became a problem for Russia's state structure. Operating within an ethno-national paradigm that effectively recognised the existence of autonomous national units within Russia, this issue could theoretically have been resolved by either declaring that Russia as a whole was created by ethnic Russians and other peoples united with them or by granting *krais* and *oblasts* with a Russian ethnic majority the status of one of

the ethno-national autonomous republics, alongside the autonomous republics of non-Russian peoples. Each option had its strengths and weaknesses. The main, and retrospectively the most obvious, weakness was that in the end neither of them was adopted. However, the main problem seems to lie elsewhere: unlike the leaders of most former Soviet republics, who positioned themselves as representatives of both their entire population and their titular ethno-nations specifically, the leaders of post-Soviet Russia during Yeltsin's time did not want to position themselves primarily as representatives of ethnic Russians. This would have placed them on (morally) equal footing with the authorities of the national autonomous republics, whereas they wanted to be seen as the all-Russian ('*Rossiysky*' and not just '*Russky*', which relates just to ethnic Russians) government and political class, representing all the peoples and all the citizens of Russia. To this end, they used the quasi-national concept of '*Rossiyanе*', which was meant to encompass all of Russia's population.

The main theoretical question arising with regard to the concept of '*Rossiyanе*' was its meaning in a political and legal sense. The Russian Constitution clearly defines it as 'multinational people', which legally corresponds to the fact that the Russian Federation comprises many distinct nation-states.³ However, Valery Tishkov, who, with the demise of the USSR, replaced Yulian Bromley as head of the Institute of Ethnology of the Russian Academy of Sciences and became Minister for Nationality Affairs in Yeltsin's administration in 1992, entered the doctrinal discussion during this period. Alluding to his earlier argument that 'throughout the world' a nation is understood in a civic rather than an ethnic sense, and that all the citizens of a state constitute a single nation, Tishkov began insisting that Russians ('*Rossiyanе*') are not a 'multinational people' but a 'multiethnic nation' or a 'multiethnic Russian nation'.⁴ This concept, bypassing the Russian constitution, then began appearing in various legal acts adopted by the Russian government.

This was more than just a change in terminology. In the Russian-Soviet history of the 20th century, the concept of a nation was firmly associated with the recognised right of nations to self-determination. Initially, the Russian Bolsheviks believed that such a right could only be realised by nations that were creating their

³ In Article 5 of the Russian Constitution, the autonomous republics within Russia are referred to as 'states', just as they are referred to in their own constitutions, many of which were created with their establishment being linked to the self-determination of their titular nations

⁴ 'As Ivan Alexandrovich Ilyin said in the 1920s, we are a multiethnic nation. And in 1992, while I was a minister, I proposed to Shakhrai during the preparation of the Constitution to include Ilyin's term in the main law' (Tishkov 2007b).

own states, whereby they were against federalisation and national autonomies. However, after seizing power in Russia, they changed their approach and claimed that nations could exercise their right to self-determination within other states, transforming those states into federations comprising autonomous national units. While the republics of the former Soviet Union realised their right to self-determination by becoming independent states, the republics that remained within Russia saw themselves as nation-states with limited sovereignty, having exercised their right to self-determination within the multinational state of the Russian Federation. Thus, for them, the term ‘multinational people’ or ‘multinational state’ meant that Russia comprised various nation-states.

In contrast, proponents of a unified Russian (*Rossiyskaya*) nation argued that if Russia was a single state, then the nation within it should be one civic nation, ‘in line with the understanding of the matter all over the world’ (Tishkov 2007b). According to them, the various ethnic communities within Russia were not nations but peoples (ethnicities or ethnic groups). These views were increasingly expressed in both political and academic circles in Russia. Academically, these views were supported by critiquing ethnic notions of the nation in general and Bromley’s theory in particular, framing the debate as though ethnic concepts of the nation in Russia were a Soviet-era construct (Tishkov 2013). Additionally, there was a growing belief that the Russian Bolsheviks had intentionally (rather than out of necessity) promoted ethnic notions of the nation and thereby divided the former Russian Empire into national republics, which ultimately led to the Soviet Union’s collapse and planted a time bomb under post-Soviet Russia.⁵

With Vladimir Putin’s rise to power in 2000, this ‘bomb’ began to be ‘defused’ in a manner reminiscent of Stalin’s approach to national autonomies in the 1930s. As of 2025, at the time of writing this article, despite constant and repeated calls from Russian unitarists, the republics within Russia, originally established on an ethno-national basis, have not been formally abolished yet.⁶ Abolishing them twenty-five years ago would have been unrealistic anyway without risking uprisings in a dozen other republics alongside the war in Chechnya, the second round of which began with Putin’s ascent to power. Therefore, without formally

⁵ ‘...the leaders of October 1917 planted a time bomb under the structure of the unitary state called Russia. What did they do? They divided our Fatherland into separate principalities that had never existed on the world map before, endowed these principalities with governments and parliaments, and now we have what we have’ (Putin 1991).

⁶ Plans to dissolve the national republics within larger regions are being regularly discussed by government representatives, including those within these republics (Galim 2023).

abolishing these republics, Putin began to limit their political powers and effectively strip them of their national character, much like Stalin did in the 1930s.

The linguistic sphere became one of the main avenues for this denationalisation. Almost immediately after coming to power in 2002, Putin enacted a law requiring the alphabets of all the peoples within Russia to be converted to Cyrillic script (Russian Federation 2002). Prior to this, some of these alphabets had used the Latin script, which was more suited to their phonetic characteristics. This echoed the processes in the USSR during the Stalin era, when the alphabets of several Soviet peoples were converted from Latin (and before that, for historically Muslim peoples, from Arabic) to Cyrillic in the 1930s. What Putin did in 2017 was reminiscent of Stalin's actions in 1938, when he made Russian language education compulsory in all the national republics of the USSR. However, Putin went even further in the Russification of non-Russian peoples. By the time of Putin's decision, the absolute majority of Russia's non-Russian citizens were already being educated in Russian and, in many cases, no longer knew their native languages. Education in Russia, including for non-Russian peoples, as a rule had long been conducted in Russian, and the only difference was that, until 2017, schools in the national republics were also required to teach the language of the titular ethno-nation several times a week. In 2017, Putin abolished this mandatory language instruction (e.g. of the Tatar language at schools in Tatarstan, the Yakut language at schools in Yakutia, the Chuvash language at schools in Chuvashia, etc.), making all compulsory education entirely in Russian and turning the 'native language' subject into an optional one. Commenting on this decision, Putin said:

'The languages of the peoples of Russia are an integral part of their unique culture. Studying these languages is a constitutional right, which can be exercised voluntarily. Forcing someone to learn a language that is not native to them is as unacceptable as reducing the level and time devoted to teaching Russian. Russian is our state language, the language of interethnic communication, and nothing can replace it. It is the spiritual framework of our multinational country. Everyone must know it.' (Interfax 2017)

Since Vladimir Putin's third presidential term, this policy has been elevated to a new ideological level. Putin's article 'Russia: The National Question' (Putin 2012) marked a new era and ideology in the nationality policy of the Russian government. In it, Putin condemned the isolationist attitude of Russian ethno-nationalism, which advocated the creation of a nation-state for ethnic Russians ('*Russkiye*'). He proclaimed that ethnic Russians form the foundation of a multiethnic community and that historical Russia encompassed the entire Soviet Union. Since then, Putin has frequently asserted that the Soviet Union

was historical Russia. From 2014, amid the national-democratic revolution in Ukraine, he began claiming that Ukraine is not only a part of historical Russia but also an artificial state and even an artificial ethno-national entity that has divided the 'greater Russian nation' (Sidorov 2023).

Thus, during Putin's third presidential term, the Russian government and political class clearly reverted to the national-state conceptions of their predecessors from the late Russian Empire. One of the significant steps in this direction was the shift from the term '*Rossiyane*' (Russians in a civic sense) to '*Russkiyе*', which, during the Soviet period and until recently, was typically used to refer to ethnic Russians. Now, however, it began to signify all subjects of Russia. A new, overarching Russian national identity began to be actively promoted among all Russian citizens, especially since the full-scale war against Ukraine in 2022. The militaristic song 'I Am Russian' ('*Ya Russskiy*') effectively became the country's unofficial anthem in that period and was widely promoted across all ethnic groups in Russia (Idel.Realii 2023a). High-ranking members of the Russian establishment have openly called for abandoning the term '*Rossiyane*' and declaring all Russian citizens '*Russkiyе*' (Idel.Realii 2023b).

This policy aligns with the Russian imperial paradigm, which has persisted since the 19th century and continued through the Soviet and early post-Soviet eras. In this context, Stalin's ethnicisation of the term 'Russians', equating it with the pre-revolutionary concept of 'Great Russians', was as reactive as Yeltsin's extraction of the Russian republic from the USSR. Just as Yeltsin did not intend to separate 'core Russia' from 'greater Russia', which he saw as the post-Soviet space, Stalin did not want to separate Russians from other Soviet peoples. He feared isolationist Russian nationalism and viewed Russians as the unifying force of the USSR.

The distinction between ethnic Russians and non-Russians in the USSR was driven more by the desires of the latter and the practical impossibility of assimilating them into the former. Therefore, soft Russification in the late Soviet era required more flexible but contradictory approaches, such as declarations about creating a new historical community – the Soviet people – within which national convergence would occur. Under Putin, the Russian establishment decided that in a country where ethnic Russians now make up about 80% of the population, compared to 50.79% in the USSR, it could afford an open policy of Russification for the entire population of Russia, as well as for the territories it manages to bring back under its control, both *de jure* and *de facto*.

Academician Tishkov: forget the nation, or forget all nations except the Russian one?

The main theoretical foundation of the views of Russia's leading pro-state ethnologist, Valery Tishkov, can be considered his article 'Forget About the Nation', published in Russian in 1998 (Tishkov 1998); a slightly different version was also published in English in 2000 (Tishkov 2000). This article serves as a characteristic example of the manipulation of scientific arguments and concepts to justify the nationality policy of the Russian state. In it, Tishkov attempts to portray the ethnic notion of nations as a Soviet anachronism, while drawing on Western scholars who aim to deconstruct the concept of nation, thereby aligning his ideas with theirs.

Moreover, he frames discussions about the right of nations to self-determination as 'the language of the so-called Marxist-Leninist theory of nation and national question', labels the 'ethno-cultural meaning' of the 'concept of nationality' as 'Soviet' (Tishkov 2000: 637), discusses 'communist ethnophilia' (Tishkov 2000: 642), and claims that 'as to the former USSR area, scholastic rhetoric on ethno-nations as biosocial or ethno-social organisms (Bromley 1983, 1987; Gumilev 1989, 1990) served for several decades as the basis for (post-)Soviet ethnic engineering and for nationalist entrepreneurship as well' (Tishkov 2000: 631).

Tishkov promotes among his English-speaking readers the dominant post-Soviet Russian myth that 'it is precisely the Bolsheviks who constructed, institutionalised, and sponsored ethnic nations in the country. It is also because of them that all major non-Russian ethnic groups used to have and possess today a growing level of ethno-territorial autonomy with their own constitutions, state symbols, languages, legitimate governments, and strong representation in federal power structures' (Tishkov 2000: 634).

Of course, the claim about the 'growing level of ethno-territorial autonomy' in Russia is long outdated. Among other things, thanks to Tishkov and like-minded individuals, the push for Russia's political mono-nationalism has replaced the once diverse national landscape.⁷ However, it is noteworthy that in the Russian

⁷ 'In the USSR, the appealing but potentially self-destructive formula of "multinationality" emerged and nowadays it is strongly present in Russia' (ibid.: 643). 'This problem persists in the new Russia. Take, for instance, the opening line of the current Constitution: "We, the multinational people of the Russian Federation." These old clichés of "multinationality" (instead of the widely accepted "multi-ethnicity") from Soviet declarations, when there was no need to pay the price of implementation, have migrated into a completely new political context with more responsible meanings and advocates liberated from those meanings...' (Tishkov 1998: 10)

version of his article, Tishkov does not claim that ‘it was precisely the Bolsheviks who constructed, institutionalized, and sponsored ethnic nations’ (ibid). Instead, the Russian version includes an interesting remark not found in the English one about how Lenin originally understood the concept of a nation. Advocating that the term ‘nation’ can be used in a civic-political sense and not just ethnically, Tishkov writes in the Russian original: ‘The (post)Soviet understanding of the word nation does not have a long history. Not only for Struve and Berdyaev but also for V. I. Lenin, it was characteristic to understand the nation in multiple ways, predominantly in a civic-political sense’ (Tishkov 1998: 15). Tishkov thus acknowledges that the founder of the Soviet state did not initially share the ‘ethnophilic’ views he attributes to Soviet communists. Tishkov must also be aware that Lenin and Stalin initially opposed not only ethnic federalism but federalism in any form. However, for his English-speaking audience, he propagates the opposite myth – that the Bolsheviks allegedly preferred ethnic federalism over territorial federalism out of conviction and that the nation-state formations in the USSR were created by them purely for ideological reasons rather than out of necessity.⁸

In short, Tishkov tries to portray the communists as the malicious creators of ‘ethno-nations’ and ‘internal nation states’ within the former Russian Empire, where they did not previously exist. He has to concede, however, that the ‘ethnic understanding of the nation’ was also espoused by many respected Western authors, not just the Soviet ‘primordialist’ Bromley. This is understandable, given that the latter is not very well-known among English-speaking readers, whereas the former is. Thus, he acknowledges that ‘within this framework, little difference can be found between the ethnic tree of nations drawn by Anthony Smith (1986), the ethno-historical interpretation of Miroslav Hroch (1985), John Armstrong’s nations before nationalism (1982), and the ethnogenesis constructions and nationalities studies of Russian scholars (Bromley 1983, 1987)’.

To combat this approach, Tishkov seeks to ally with some Western scholars, especially Rogers Brubaker. He writes:

‘However, not all is hopeless with the study of nationalism. Recently, Rogers Brubaker’s work on European nationalism has provided a significant breakthrough in understanding nationalism. According to him, the explosion of nationalism should not lead us to view nations as something material. “Nationalism can and should be understood without reference to ‘nations’ as

⁸ ‘It was more because of the polemic with “bourgeois federalism” based on territoriality than for any other reason that the principle of internal “national statehoods” became established in the USSR’ (ibid.: 17).

objective entities. Instead of focusing on nations as real groups, we should turn to the national (nationhood and nationness), to 'nation' as a practical category, as an institutional form and a contingent event. 'Nation' is a practical category, not an analytical one. To understand nationalism, we need to understand the practical use of the category 'nation', how this category structures understanding, fills thought and experience, organizes discourse, and political action" (Tishkov 2000: 638).

Justifying his stance that a large, unified space is better than centrifugal tendencies, Tishkov cites German professor Hans-Rudolf Wicker:

'The resurgence of national identities and the ethnicization of various social sectors are side effects of transformation, which inevitably weakens the state, reduces social rights, and liberalizes the economy. The cumulative effect of these processes quickly erodes the last remnants of social solidarity. Although it is strange to see new nationalisms looking to pre-communist times for meaningful concepts, it should not be forgotten that the structure of this nationalization is ultimately conditioned by the communist legacy ... In reality, the decline of central power facilitated the rise of regional elites. Many nationalizations and ethnicizations at the regional level, initially aimed at creating independent statehood, are used by regional elites to gain their share of the bankrupt communist estate. Similar processes of regionalization and the increased weight ascribed to ethnicity have unleashed ethnic wars in the former Yugoslavia and the Caucasus region' (Wicker 1997: 31).

However, today, after academician Tishkov cited these lines in his article, we can state the opposite. The largest war in Europe over the past seven decades was not instigated by the numerous 'internal nation-states' that Tishkov lamented had arisen as a result of 'state weakening'. Instead, it was launched by a highly centralised state that has, over the past three decades, managed to suppress centrifugal processes, including the 'revival of national identities and ethnicisation'. Yet at the same time, modern European history provides many examples of simultaneous democratisation, regionalisation, and the expansion of national autonomy, as seen in Spain with the Basque Country and Catalonia or in the United Kingdom with Scotland. In contrast, the war in Yugoslavia was triggered by the central leadership's attempt to forcefully counteract these processes.

Tishkov concludes his article with the following: 'My final words are: forget the nation to save states, peoples, and cultures, even if future scholars may question these definitions as well' (Tishkov 2000: 647). However, it seems that in his

attack on nations, by equating states with peoples and cultures, Tishkov was not entirely sincere. Unless, of course, he meant only one people and one culture – the Russians – whom he essentially recognises as having rights that he denies to other peoples under their hegemony. This is theoretically justified by the idea that only the state, and specifically the Russian state within the territory of the former Russian Empire and present-day Russia, can form a nation. Thus, the same Tishkov who in 1998 called for forgetting nations as a theoretical category soon turned into a fervent apologist for the Russian (*Rossiyskaya*) nation, created by the Russian state (Tishkov 2013).

However, Tishkov does not grant all internationally recognised states the right to form a nation from their citizens. For example, the Russian nation, according to his views, has one language – Russian (*Russkiy*) – which is also the state language. He argues that the resulting ‘voluntary linguistic assimilation (i.e. the shift from an ethnic language to the commonly used one) is normal’, as ‘adopting the state language is a natural process’ (Tishkov 2019).⁹ He bolsters his argument by noting that ‘this is precisely how our emigrants behave when they move to France, Germany, or America’ (ibid), conveniently overlooking or intentionally ignoring that the peoples who have self-determined in the respective republics of Russia are not immigrants forced to accept the host country’s rules. These are peoples whose republics were recognised as ‘states’ within Russia at the moment of post-Soviet Russia’s formation, with the constitution guaranteeing them ‘equality and self-determination’ (Russian Federation 1993).

In contrast, Tishkov views Ukraine’s implementation of Ukrainian as the state language as justification for Russian military aggression (Tishkov 2022) under the guise of protecting Russian speakers.¹⁰ Thus, it turns out that all the scholarly

⁹ ‘In our country, more than 200 languages are spoken. However, practically the entire population, 99.4%, knows and speaks one language – Russian. It is the first language learned in childhood for the majority of the non-Russian population as well. Traditionally, however, we consider the native language to be the language of one’s nationality. This is incorrect. Languages should be equal in rights, but they cannot be equal in their usage, opportunities, and status. A significant portion of the world’s cultural heritage, such as the works of Leo Tolstoy, Anton Chekhov, and Fyodor Dostoevsky, is created in Russian. Therefore, Russian will always have a privileged position in our country. Voluntary linguistic assimilation (i.e., the shift from an ethnic language to the commonly used one) is normal and an inherent human right. Adopting the state language is a natural process. This is precisely how our emigrants behave when they move to France, Germany, or America.’ (Tishkov 2019)

¹⁰ ‘...it makes sense to support the demands of the eastern regions of Ukraine to grant Russian the status of a second official language. Guided by international legal norms and concerns for the Russian language, Russia should not abandon the issue of official bilingualism in former Soviet states such as Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Latvia, Moldova, and Kyrgyzstan’ (Tishkov 2007).

appeals to post-national concepts were meant to justify a reality where, in Russia, the state should form one nation based on the 'state-forming' people and culture, while denying the right to full national development to other peoples. At the same time, neighbouring Ukraine is denied the same right to form its own nation on its territory, as this supposedly infringes on the interests of a people whose privileged rights Russia feels entitled to defend by military force. In Vladimir Putin's decree of 8 May 2024, this inequality was conceptualised in the Russian public space through the idea of a 'civilisational state' (Sidorov 2024), which Tishkov (2024) effectively supported.

It is important to note that Tishkov is not the only one to have attacked the 'ethnos theory' in general and Bromley's version of it in particular, while also promoting Russian imperialist narratives. Various Russian or Russia-affiliated scholars are pushing these ideas within academic circles. A notable example is Vasily Filippov, a fierce critic of the 'Soviet ethnos theory'. As a senior researcher at the Center for Sub-Saharan Africa at the Institute for African Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, Filippov writes books exposing French colonialism in Africa (Filippov 2016, 2023). Recently, Russia has been trying to harness anti-colonial sentiments in Africa (Russian Federation 2023) to displace France and take its place, making Filippov's books seem less like pure academic interest and more like strategic propaganda. However, while condemning colonialism and supporting national movements in Africa, Filippov takes a completely different stance regarding the struggle for national self-determination within Russia. He labels the 'self-determination of "nations" (in the ethnic interpretation) up to the point of their separation into independent states' or even just 'subjects of a federal state' as an 'erroneous and dangerous ideology' (Filippov 2010: 31). All of this is based on his theoretical opposition to the 'ethnos theory' in general and its Russian-Soviet variant in particular, including the so-called 'Bromley theory' (Filippov 2010), which has in the meantime become a bugbear.

Unlike state-affiliated Russian scholars such as Tishkov and Filippov, Yuri Slezkine, posing as an American scholar with Russian roots, accuses the West of refusing to 'deal with Russia on equal terms', echoing one of Putin's favourite narratives (Slezkine 2023). It is particularly noteworthy that Slezkine was one of the first in the English-speaking world to promote the idea that it was the communists who created nation-states in Russia, that Soviet nationality policy was carried out by nationalists, that it was based on ethnophilia, and that this policy paved the way for the dissolution of a unified Russia (Slezkine 1994).

These examples illustrate that, at the end of the day, the post-Soviet criticism of 'Soviet ethnophilia' and Bromley's 'Soviet ethnos theory' by many Russian scholars has transformed into an ideological struggle against nation-building in

post-Soviet states or Russia's republics. Thus, the calls by academician Tishkov and his like-minded colleagues to 'forget the nation' in theory imply, in practice, the need to retain only one nation – the state and culturally Russian one– in Russia and the territories it claims.

References

- Alekseev, Vladimir. 1962. *Rod, plemya, narodnost', natsiya: (Istoricheskie formy obshchnosti lyudey)* [Clan, Tribe, National Feeling, Nation (Historical Forms of Human Communities)]. Moscow: Gospolitizdat.
- All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks). 1939. *Resolution of the Politburo of the Central Committee 'On the Abolition and Transformation of Artificially Created National Districts and Village Councils'*. 20 February 20. <https://docs.historyrussia.org/ru/nodes/123908-postanovlenie-politbyuro-tsk-vkp-b-locale-nil-o-likvidatsii-i-preobrazovanii-iskusstvenno-sozdannyh-natsionalnyh-rayonov-i-selsovetov-locale-nil-20-fevralya-1939-g#mode/inspect/page/1/zoom/4>.
- Alymov, Sergei. 2006. *P. I. Kushner i razvitie sovetskoy etnografii v 1920–1950-e gody*. [P. I. Kushner and the Development of Soviet Ethnography in the 1920s–1950s]. Moscow: Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology.
- Alymov, Sergei. 2021. *Zabyvaya etnos i natsiyu: etnograficheskie diskussii i ekspertiza po "natsional'nomu voprosu" v period perestroyki*. [Forgetting Ethnos and Nation: Ethnographic Discussions and Expertise on the "National Question" during the Perestroika Period]. *Shagi/Steps* 7 (2): 70–92.
- Anderson, Benedict. 1991. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London and New York: Verso.
- Avtorkhanov, Abdurakhman. 1988. *Imperiya Kremlya: sovetskiy tip kolonializma*. [Kremlin's Empire: Soviet-Style Colonialism]. Garmisch-Partenkirchen: Prometheus-Verlag.
- Barth, Fredrik. 1969. 'Preface.' In *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Cultural Difference*, edited by Fredrik Barth: 9–38. Bergen: Universitetsforlaget.
- Belarus, Russian SFSR, and Ukraine. 1991. *Agreement on the Establishment of the Commonwealth of Independent States*. 8 December. <https://eccis.org/en/page/176>
- Brandenberger, David. 2002. *National Bolshevism: Stalinist Mass Culture and the Formation of Modern Russian National Identity, 1931–1956*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Bromley, Yulian. 1983. *Ocherki teorii etnosa*. [Essays on the Theory of Ethnos.] Moscow: Nauka.
- Campana, Aurélie. 2007. *The Soviet Massive Deportations: A Chronology*. *Sciences Po*, 5 November. <https://www.sciencespo.fr/mass-violence-war-massacre-resistance/fr/document/soviet-massive-deportations-chronology.html>.
- Constitutional Democratic Party. 1905. *The Program of the Constitutional Democratic Party*. 12–18 October. <https://www.yabloko.ru/Themes/History/kdprogr.html>.

- Congress of Russian National Socialist Parties. 1907. *Protocols of the Conference of Russian National Socialist Parties, April 16–20*. St. Petersburg, 1908. <http://elib.shpl.ru/ru/nodes/27768-sezd-rossiyskih-natsionalno-sotsialisticheskikh-partiy-1907-peterburg-protokoly-konferentsii-rossiyskih-natsionalno-sotsialisticheskikh-partiy-16-20-aprelya-1907-g-spb-1908>.
- Council of People's Commissars of the USSR and Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks). 1938. *Resolution No. 324: 'On the Compulsory Study of the Russian Language in Schools of National Republics and Regions.'* 13 March 1938. <https://docs.historyrussia.org/ru/nodes/123876-postanovlenie-tsk-vkp-b-i-snk-sssr-ob-obyazatelnom-izuchenii-russkogo-yazyka-v-shkolah-natsionalnykh-respublik-i-oblastey-13-marta-1938-g>.
- Dondokova, Lyudmila. 2006. *Kratkiy tematicheskiy slovar' po etnologii*. [A Brief Thematic Dictionary of Ethnology.] Ulan-Ude: BGSMA Publishing House.
- Durasov, Vasily. 1906. *Rodoslovnaia kniga Vserossiiskogo dvorianstva. Chast' 1*. [Genealogical Book of the All-Russian Nobility. Part I.] St Petersburg: R. Golike i A. Vil'borg.
- Filippov, Vasily. 2010. Sovetskaya teoriya etnosa. [The Soviet Theory of Ethnos.] *Anthropology & Archeology of Eurasia* 48 (4): 10–26. <https://doi.org/10.2753/AAE1061-1959480401>.
- Filippov, Vasily. 2016. *Fransafrika: ten' Eliseyskogo dvortsa nad Chyornym kontinentom*. [Françafrique: The Shadow of the Élysée Palace over the Black Continent.] Moscow: Goryachaya Liniya-Telekom.
- Filippov, Vasily. 2023. *Afrikanskaya politika prezidenta Frantsii E. Makrona: khronika deystviy i evolyutsiya idey*. [African Policy of French President E. Macron: Chronicle of Actions and Evolution of Ideas.] Moscow: IAfr RAS.
- Galim, Azamat. 2023. *Interview with the 'Prufy' Project*. YouTube video. 14 December. <https://youtu.be/ghExr5HhisY?si=p5PlodI2fYTPH9s>.
- Gellner, Ernest. 1977. Ethnicity and Anthropology in the Soviet Union. *European Journal of Sociology* 18 (2): 201–220.
- Golovnev, Andrey. 2018. Etnografiya v rossiyskoy akademicheskoy traditsii. [Ethnography in the Russian Academic Tradition]. *Etnografiya* 1. https://etnografia.kunstkamera.ru/en/archive/2018_1/golovnv_a_v.
- Idel.Realii. 2023a. Shkol'nikov v Kazani prizvali podnyat ruku "v nebo, v NATO" pod pesnyu "Ya russkiy". [Schoolchildren in Kazan Were Urged to Raise Their Hands "to the Sky, to NATO" to the Song "I Am Russian"]. 16 March. <https://www.idelreal.org/a/32321168.html>.
- Idel.Realii. 2023b. Il'shat Aminov stal chto-to podozrevat': kak tatarstanskiy "edinoross" posporil s moskovskim. [Ilshat Aminov Began to Suspect Something: How the United Russia Party Member from Tatarstan Argued with His Counterpart from Moscow.] 10 December. <https://www.idelreal.org/a/32721212.html>.
- Interfax. 2017. Putin Called the Russian Language the Natural Spiritual Framework of the Country. 20 July. <https://www.interfax.ru/russia/571405>.
- Kuznetsov, Anatolii. 2023. Kontseptsiya etnichnosti F. Barta, yeyo proiskhozhdenie i real'noe znachenie. [The Concept of Ethnicity by F. Barth, Its Origins, and Real Significance.] *Oikumene. Regional Studies* 3: 85–97.

- Lenin, Vladimir. 1960 [1894]. Chto takoye “druz’ya naroda” i kak oni voyuyut protiv sotsial-demokratov. [What the “Friends of the People” Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats.] In *Lenin Collected Works*, Vol. 1: 129–332. Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- Lenin, Vladimir. 1913. Cultural-National Autonomy. (Za Pravdu 46). In *Lenin Collected Works*, 1977, Vol. 1: 503–507. <https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1913/nov/28.htm>
- Pipes, Richard. 1958. The Nationalities. *The New Leader*, April 14. <https://catalogue.nla.gov.au/catalog/504760>
- Protocol. 1992. Protocol to Treaty on the Delineation of Spheres of Jurisdiction and Authority Between Federal Government Bodies of the Russian Federation and the Government Bodies of the Sovereign Republics Belonging to the Russian Federation: March 31. <https://oxcon.ouplaw.com/display/10.1093/law:ocw/rd89.regGroup.1/law-ocw-rd89?prd=OXCON>
- Putin, Vladimir. 1991 Interview. YouTube. 31 March 2022. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4F86UdfTbTY>.
- Putin, Vladimir. 2012. Rossiya: natsional’nyy vopros [Russia: The National Question.] *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 23 January. https://www.ng.ru/politics/2012-01-23/1_national.html
- Russian Empire. 1897. *First General Population Census of the Russian Empire in 1897: Distribution of Population by Native Language, Provinces and Regions*. https://www.demoscope.ru/weekly/ssp/rus_lan_97.php.
- Russian Empire. 1906. *Underlying State Laws (of the Russian Empire), April 23. Chapter One: ‘On the Essence of the Supreme Autocratic Power.’* <https://imperialhouse.ru/rus/history/foundations/dinzak1.html>
- Russian Federation. 1993. *Constitution, Preface*. <http://www.constitution.ru/en/10003000-01.htm>
- Russian Federation. 2002. *Federal Law No. 165-FZ of 11 December, On the Amendment to Article 3 of the Law of the Russian Federation ‘On the Languages of the Peoples of the Russian Federation’*. <https://duma.consultant.ru/documents/737567?items=100>
- Russian Federation. 2023. *Declaration of the Second Russia–Africa Summit*. 28 July 2023. <http://en.kremlin.ru/supplement/5972>.
- Sidorov, Vadim. 2023. ‘Vladimir Putin’s Views on the Russian Nation and Russian History as the Reason for the Aggression against Ukraine.’ *Studia Ethnologica Pragensia* 2: 39–60.
- Sidorov, Vadim H. 2024. Kreml’ sobral’sya perepisyvat’ istoriyu narodov Rossii. [The Kremlin Aims to Rewrite the History of the Peoples of Russia.] *Idel.Realii*, 11 May. <https://www.idelreal.org/a/kreml-sobral'sya-perepisyvat-istoriyu-narodov-rossii/32940606.html>
- Slezkine, Yuri. 1994. The USSR as a Communal Apartment, or How a Socialist State Promoted Ethnic Particularism. *Slavic Review* 53 (2): 414–452.
- Slezkine, Yuri. 2023. Russia Has Seriously Separated from Europe for Long. *CIVILNET*, 10 July. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ha3g96C63oQ>

- Smith, Anthony D. 1991. *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Stalin, Iosif. 1949. Natsional'nyy vopros i leninizm: otvet tovarishcham Meshkovu, Koval'chuku i drugim. [The National Question and Leninism: A Reply to Comrades Meshkov, Kovalchuk, and Others.] In *Collected Works*, Vol. 11, 333–355. Moscow: OGIZ, State Publishing House of Political Literature.
- Stalin, Josif. 1913. Marxism and the National Question. *Prosveshcheniye* 3–5. <https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1913/03a.htm>
- Tishkov, Valery. 2007a. 'Report at the General Meeting of the Russian Academy of Sciences.' *HSE Daily*, 19 December. <https://www.ras.ru/News/ShowNews.aspx?ID=-1be890c1-c7a5-48c3-9be0-28b91cb66bc1>
- Tishkov, V. 2007b. Rossiya — eto i natsiya, i tsivilizatsiya, a rossiyskiy narod — eto natsiya natsiy [Russia Is Both a Nation and a Civilization, and the Russian People Are a Nation of Nations.] *HSE Daily*, 6 May 2024. <https://daily.hse.ru/post/rossiya-eto-i-naciya-i-civilizatsiya-a-rossiiskii-narod-eto-naciya-nacii>
- Tishkov, Valery. 2007c. Kontseptsiyu nuzhno modernizirovat. [The Concept Needs Modernization.] *Boss*, no. 10. http://www.valerytishkov.ru/cntnt/publikacii3/novye_publikacii/intervyu_k.html
- Tishkov, Valery. 1998. Zabyt' o natsii (postnatsionalistskoye ponimaniye natsionalizma). [Forget the Nation (Post-Nationalist Understanding of Nationalism)]. *Voprosy Filosofii* 9. https://eo.iea.ras.ru/wp-content/uploads/1998/05/eoarchive_1998_5_003_tishkov.pdf
- Tishkov, Valery. 2013. *Rossiyskiy narod: istoriya i smysl natsional'nogo samosoznaniya*. [Russian People: History and Meaning of National Self-Consciousness]. Moscow: Nauka.
- Tishkov, Valery. 1990. On the Concept of Restructuring Interethnic Relations in the USSR. *Soviet Anthropology and Archeology* 29 (3): 6–28.
- Tishkov, Valery. 2000. Forget the Nation: Post-Nationalist Understanding of Nationalism. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 23 (4): 625–650. https://is.muni.cz/el/fss/podzim2005/SOC765/um/TISHKOV_Forget_the_nation.pdf
- Tishkov, Valery. 2019. The People Do Not Die with the Language. *Izvestia*, 12 September. <https://russiancouncil.ru/analytics-and-comments/comments/narod-ne-umiraet-s-yazykom/>
- Tishkov, Valery. 2022. Dlya DNR i LNR nado sokhranit' status respublik, kak eto sdelano s Krymom. [The DPR and LPR Need to Retain the Status of Republics, as Was Done with Crimea]. *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, 24 September.
- Tsemeryan, Ivan. 1979. Some Current Issues in the Theory of Nations and National Relations. *Scientific Communism* 2.
- Union of the Russian People. 1905. *Charter of the Society Called "Union of the Russian People"*. In *Imperial Russia: A Source Book, 1700–1917*. Edited by Basil Dmytryshyn: 410–416. Hinsdale, Illinois: The Dryden Press (2 edition).
- Volk, Evgeny. 2015. *Boris Yel'tsin: Berite stol'ko suvereniteta, skol'ko smozhete proglostit*. [Boris Yeltsin: Take as Much Sovereignty as You Can Swallow]. 6 August. <https://yeltsin.ru/news/boris-elcin-berite-stolko-suverineteta-skolko-smozhete-proglostit/>

- Wicker, Hans-Rikert. 1997 Introduction: Theorizing Ethnicity and Nationalism. In H.-R. Wicker (ed.), *Rethinking Nationalism and Ethnicity/The Struggle for Meaning and Order in Europe*. Oxford-New York: Routledge.
- Yeltsin, Boris. (undated) *Video Commentary*. YouTube. 5 December 2016: <https://youtu.be/6rmtHbHvhw?si=1TrFK7BbfU1urdRn>.

Vadim Sidorov

Department of Ethnology and Central European and Balkan Studies,
Faculty of Philosophy,
Charles University
Prague
Email: hvsidorov@gmail.com
Orcid ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1470-7229>