

ARTYKUŁY ▶▶ KULTURA

SHOKHRAT KADYROV

Russian Academy of Sciences

OLGA BRUSINA

Russian Academy of Sciences

ISAAC SCARBOROUGH ▶

London School of Economics and Political Science

Ethnicity and ethnicities

Part I

Abstract

Scientific paradigm changes are frequently accompanied by the reconsideration of central terms and ideas. This article demonstrates how this process is currently underway in Russian anthropological studies [narodovedenie] as part of a broader move away from ethnography to theoretical ethnology. The article also shows lines of succession and divergence between various paradigms currently dominant in Russian anthropology, including primordialism and constructivism, and presents the author's vision of a definition of "ethnicity", instruments needed to study ethnicities, the nature of "ethnicity," the underlying axioms on which ethnicities are conceptualized. An initial attempt has been made in the article to outline the central positions that would provide for a principally new ethnological paradigm by way of a new definition of the phenomenon of ethnicity.

Keywords: scientific paradigms, definitions of ethnicity, anthropology, primordialism, constructivism

Аннотация

Смена парадигмы в науке сопровождается ревизией основных терминов и понятий. В статье показано, как этот процесс происходит в российских антропологических исследованиях, маркируя переход от этнографии описаний к теоретической этнологии. Показаны преемственность и различия между различными парадигмами, доминирующими в настоящее время в Российской этнологии, в том числе примордиализмом и конструктивизмом, а также авторами статьи выдвинута новая версия понимания этноса, инструментов его изучения, его природы, корневого постулата (аксиомы) этничности. Сделана попытка очертить основные контуры принципиально иной парадигмы этнологии через новое определение феномена этничности (этноса).

Ключевые слова: научные парадигмы, определения этноса, этничность, этнология, примордиализм, конструктивизм

Introduction

Ethnography (ethnology, social anthropology) studies ethnicities, but what constitutes an ethnicity remains to this day an open question. The concept of “ethnicity” entered scientific usage towards the turn of the 20th century, and the development of ethnicity as a concept was helped along by precursor research conducted by G.G. Morgan, A. Bastian, Zh.V. Lyapuzh, Zh. Deniker, N.M. Moglianskii, and M. Weber.

In Russia, the word “ethnicity” also first appeared a notably long time ago, but only began to be used with any regularity in Soviet scientific literature starting from the end of the 1960s – before this, words such as “people” (*narod*) or “nation” (*natsiya* – in the sense of a people formed around a government) had been used. The word “people” has many meanings: it can, for example, indicate not only ethnic groups, but sociopolitical ones as well, such as “workers” and the like. At the same time, however, given their failure in defining “ethnicity,” many academics in Russia have recently suggested avoiding the common use of the term “ethnicity” and argue instead for a turn away from this foreign word and a return to the deeply Russian definition of “people” (*narod*).

Some authors go as far as to reject the very existence of ethnicities or the possibility of providing them with a definition. “A specific understand-

ing of the ethnic in the social sciences is unavailable today – and it will not be worked out in the future,” a Russian philosopher has speculated, representative of the new constructivism (Elez, 2009).¹

Of course, a vast amount of work has been written on the subject of what constitutes an ethnicity, and at this point it would be largely meaningless to attempt to craft something principally new. Nor do we aim to provide definitive answers to all possible questions associated with this theme. We set before ourselves the humbler goal of suggesting an approach that to some degree differs from the dominant understanding of “ethnicity” as employed in academic literature, as well as to demonstrate the validity and value of this alternative view. We believe that the term “ethnicity” can be used to indicate both ancient and modern societies, yet we suggest new content for this term. The factual material employed here may be said to have a slight emphasis on the ethnology of the peoples of Central Asia, as this region has a rich and ongoing history of movement from ethnic factionalism to ethnic consolidation.

In 1922 S.M. Shirokogorov wrote that in Russian the term “ethnography” had just been established, whereas in other European countries the concept “anthropology” was already in wider use.² The meaning of the term “ethnography,” however, remained undefined, a fact that may be explained by the very instability of the concept of “ethnicity” (Shirokogorov, 2011, p. 12). In his own research S.M. Shirokogorov repeatedly demonstrated that there was every reason to operate in academic circles on the basis of this very concept, insofar as ethnicities had existed from the first organization of human collectives. The definition of ethnicity provided by S.M. Shirokogorov at the end of his book includes the marker of shared background – about which we will discuss later – together with more physical and cultural markers and people’s general way of life (Shirokogorov, 2011, p. 122). Yet it is impossible to entirely agree with this definition, especially in light of the fact that physical (or more exactly, anthropological) markers are not ethnically related, but are rather part of the division of humanity into “races.”

¹ Also see the same author’s work, *Kritika etnologii*, from 2001.

² Prior to Shirokogorov the Russian academic standard had been to use the adjective “ethnic” in relation to such works.

Our current study has employed a wide spectrum of theoretical work. On the side of the fence (primordialism) there are those who argue that an ethnicity has a “right” to its own independent existence (Tokarev, 1964; Semenov, 1966; Kozlov, 1967; 1979; 1999; Bromlei, 1973), while of the other side there is the constructivist understanding of ethnicities, currently widespread in Western academia, which defines an ethnicity as a form of social organization that is achieved purely through the manipulation of group members’ self-awareness by political or other outside actors. Those authors who add to the basic constructivist model people’s own imagination may complicate matters, but are also equally part of the broader constructivist trend. In other words, people imagine an ethnicity for themselves; ethnicity is a product of social creation.

In this study, we propose to consider any and all variations on “ethnicity” as “ethnic units,” whether the group under discussion is a people, a nation, a tribe, caste, or otherwise – and without regard to the particular historical period from which the “ethnic unit” is derived. In the modern parlance, these can also be thought of as “ethnic groups,” that is collectives that are in principle equal in terms of the mechanisms of their formation and with equivalently specific structures. These collectives most obviously differ in terms of their size, and beyond quantitative differences one can find various levels of internal ethnic hierarchies, variegated cultures, and so forth – but the central framework remains amongst them the same. In other words, there is no legitimate differentiation between “tribal” and “national” cultures: they are simply different cultures, equally bound by the general laws of ethnic development.

The differences in the spectrum of “clan-ethnicity-nation” are little more than differences between equivalent ethnic units, each born in different historical periods, but continuously existing in parallel to and in support of one another up and through the modern era. These differences are moreover connected to the form and method of power’s organization – in pastoral, statist, or other format – over the relevant ethnic groups. Yet this, too, is a quantitative difference. We are left to suggest that either these are the sort of differences that do not carry with themselves any particular meaning, or those differences that demand particular explanation and proof for their basic existence, much as the constructivist school argues

when it claims that nations, rather than ethnicities, should be considered artificial constructs.

In our own work we will herein work to clarify and pull apart the limitations of both schools, and at the same time present our own vision of a definition of “ethnicity” and the instruments needed to study ethnicities (including horizontal connections and vertical relationships). In addition, we will touch upon the nature of “ethnicity,” its various exoticisms, the underlying axioms and paradigms on which ethnicities are conceptualized, its central characteristics and the anti-theses of its development.

Denying ethnicity

Amongst the works in which the central views of the second group of academics – the “new direction,” post-Soviet school, constructivists, or however they might be called – are provided in a concentrated format, we can particularly pick out S.N. Abashin’s doctoral dissertation. His name will be noted herein more than once, and we have also employed material from his candidate dissertation (Abashin, 1997). – a work that, as we see it, differs quite principally on a number of points from his doctoral dissertation. In the latter Abashin relies on the theoretical and methodological publications of a number of modern Western authors and attempts to avoid the term “ethnicity,” instead referring to such groups as “legitimate or artificial collectives.” He argues that disagreements over ethnic signifiers (language, territory, anthropological type, and so forth) unavoidably end up going nowhere, insofar as those arguing always get stuck on a different question: which signifier should be considered the most important, or rather from which signifier do ethnic relations arise? (Abashin, 2008, pp. 7, 16)

Notwithstanding progress made and the furthering of ethnic studies, academics again and again end up stuck arguing, frequently even backtracking in their own arguments and admitting to their own inability to move forward. Towards the end of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s a movement influenced by foreign (primarily American and English) anthropologists arose in the Russian academy that called for a rejection of the “ethnie” (*etnos*) category in favor of “ethnicity” (*etnichnost*). V.A. Tishk-

ov's *Rekviem po etnosy* (Tishkov, 2003) can likely be considered this movement's main manifest.

In his dissertation, S.N. Abashin notes that an ethnicity is a certain amalgamation of signs, "a community that is in possession of one or another characteristic" (Abashin, 2008, pp. 3, 8, 16). Abashin avoids defining "ethnicity," warning at the same time about the conditional nature of existent formulations. If in fact matters stand as thus, then ethnographic work from previous generations (that is, thousands of them) appear to turn into experiments without an object, empty rhetoric, or simply societally demanded fluff. It does end up a bit amusingly: ethnographers, including those in charge of leading academic institutions, reject the object of their own academic discipline, decline the possibility of its existence, and dedicate the whole of their efforts to proving that the "ethnic" has been made up.

In Abashin's doctoral dissertation, however, the "nation" is linked to neither ethnographic nor ethnic categories and stands somehow apart as the object of academic and politicians imagination and creation. "Imagination" and "creation," in fact, are two of the most central ideas in Abashin's methodology (2008, pp. 3, 5, 7). The members of nations (and, accordingly, ethnicities, serving as they do as the nucleus from which nations are formed) do not always come into immediate contact with one another, and thus certain western academics have come to consider them "imaginary" or "imagined" communities, following the terminology first employed by Bernard Anderson (2001, p. 24).³ At the same time, a number of Russian ethnographers, also following Anderson, have taken this definition as the basis for further work. This group includes Abashin. We would like to ask, however, to what degree this framework stands up to criticism. In many different societies direct contact between members is strictly speaking unnecessary – much as in the case with citizens of one or another government. Does this then mean that governments and societies are simply the stuff of imagination, and not real objects, even while they have been "constructed" by the actions and will of millions of people and turned over to new generations, which for their part can no longer dictate by their desires

³ It may be worth noting that according to one of Anderson's former PhD students, the title of Anderson's most famous work was meant to be at least partially ironic, and perhaps not to be understood in a literal fashion.

the existence or lack thereof of these constructions? Of course not. Especially in the realm of ethnicity – an exceedingly conservative, even stagnant form of human organization – this sort of personal contact between individuals does little to define the overall phenomenon.

Towards the end of his most recent work Abashin writes that not only nations, but even the ethnicities that make them up are collected, artificial, and created phenomena. He places the word “ethnogenesis” in quotations and in this form uses it with the lexical term “nation.” Choosing not to stop there, Abashin comes to an altogether stupefying conclusion: until its inclusion into the Russian Empire, Central Asia was without ethnicities (!). Apparently, Russia created the ethnographic classifications apparent today, along with the underlying ethnicities that were then used during the Soviet period to construct nations. Abashin argues somewhat ironically against the idea of “ethnic (ethno-cultural) development,” promoted during the Soviet Union by T.A. Zhdanko and others, as well as against the concept of “ethnic processes” as a whole.⁴

On the basis of Abashin’s recent work, however, we can see more fully see the central mistake made by adherents of the western “constructivist” approach to ethnicity. Here ethnicities are studied through the application of two connected, yet at the same time quite different, theoretical assumptions. First, the constructivists – understood here as Anderson and others of similar mind – insist that identities are singular and that, apparently, an individual is not capable of being both a member of one or another nation (political construction) and at the same time retaining in himself all of the characteristics beholden to him from his multifaceted history and hardly one-sided sense of self. This, for example, is the main thrust of the argument made by Ernest Gellner, one of the leading modern authors favoring a constructivist approach, who notes that in our current world nearly all

⁴ Research into ethnic processes as a field of scientific endeavor was outlined in some detail in the beginning of the 1960s. The theoretical framework for such research was developed by V.I. Kozlov, L.V. Khomich, and Yu. V. Bromlei (Kozlov, 1968; 1969; Khomich, 1969; Bromlei, 1973, pp. 153–176). In 1977, moreover, the second edition of a fundamental collective work entitled “Modern Ethnic Processes in the USSR” was published in Moscow. The authors of this tome – all academics from the Institute of Ethnography of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR – were awarded the State Award of the USSR (Naumova, 1991).

individuals that are members of one or another nation or ethnicity are, with the assistance of the powers that be and with the goal of economic growth, flattened into a single and singular mass (Gellner, 1983). Here, too, we can clearly denote the second mistaken assumption made by western constructivist theorists – the theoretical “shift” in identities in Western Europe that occurred over the course of the 18th and 19th centuries and gave rise to the nation as a political construct. This thesis is most clearly outlined in the work of Eric Hobsbawm (1990), but is equally present in nearly all modern constructivist works, including in Anderson’s book “Imagined Communities.” The key point here is the “singularity” of identity, which when combined with the above “shift,” leads to the conclusion that until the appearance of national identities in the 18th or 19th centuries no sort of broader “ethnic” identity could have been present. Identity, it is moreover implied, can only appear in a context where it fulfills a political need.

In this theoretical framework everything to which people were attached before the arrival of politically directed “nations” cannot in fact be a legitimate base for these nations. A nation, the theory goes, is a modern concept – and one that entirely replaces all that had come before it. If modern individuals today hold on to certain shared feelings of connectedness to the other members of their “nations” or ethnicities, then this too should be understood as nothing more than one part of the broader political national program, which is aimed at melding all of the members of group in question into one standardized body. Working under the influence of Anderson and other Western authors’ related theories, Abashin falls prey to the idea of a “singular and historically replaceable identity,” a concept that denies the possibility that people might have had fully formed national or ethnic identities before the arrival of the modern era’s political nations. As Abashin would have it, no matter how they might have identified or named themselves, Kazakhs, for example, only became Kazakhs when they became a nation. The same might then be said for Turkmen or any other Central Asian people. In this framework a nation is a historically unique event and appears as if from emptiness. Without a basis in historical reality, then, nations themselves are less than fully “real,” and should be understood as phenomena either imagined by peoples themselves or constructed by politicians – or perhaps some combination of the two.

The constructivists consider ethnicities to be unnatural constructs: subjective products of the human mind that are first imagined and then brought into reality. The working concept of an ethnicity, then, is used both by those in the sciences for the purposes of classifying, and those promoting ethnic ideology, whether members of an ethnicity or from amongst those powers standing behind it (external colonial administrations, et cetera). To some degree, the idea holds weight, insofar as a belief in the ethnic is as much as anything else the product of one's consciousness. For its part, of course, consciousness can only be understood as the interpretation of reality for individual purposes, rather than a full reflection of reality. In the colonial era native peoples forcibly adopted new first and family names. More importantly, however, is the fact that in the post-Colonial era we have already seen the start of a backwards process, as peoples and names return, often without significant struggle, to their original positions.

Academics overstate the influence of "social construction" and "imagination" on ethnicities' formation – reflecting their view that ethnicities are a political product and, as this would imply, that there could theoretically exist a "non-ethnic" society. Taking a close look at history, however, it becomes clear that this sort of society has never existed, not counting certain temporary or particularly marginalized groups. All the same, for constructivists, such as V.A. Tishkov, the main concern remains the "social construction" (Tishkov, 2003) of the ethnic – even though it should be clear to all that traditional societies are based not the construction, but rather the routine repetition of particular acts, traditions, and norms over the course of centuries. Of course, these traditions gradually change, but this is caused in the first place by something quite other than peoples' own desire or ability to change their environment, to imagine themselves and construct their identity. Changes primarily occur as the result of a group's adjustments to new living conditions, environmental factors, or other, deeply external and outwardly-driven elements of its objective existence.

Distorting ethnic definitions

Russian ethnologists have suggested rejecting definitions of “ethnicity” that are based on a list of characteristics, insofar as this sort of list is always amended by such an extensive number of conditions that it essentially becomes meaningless. It should also be noted in passing that the word “characteristic” means nothing other than something external and describable. More frequently than not, an object’s internal, fundamental, or objective properties can only be known through extensive and specialized research methods, rather than simple outside description. While description cannot fully a phenomenon’s content, it can at least assist in pinning down the proper contours. In addition, by employing a descriptive method, a researcher may be able to determine, amongst all of the outward-facing characteristics he or she identifies, that which has played a leading role in an ethnicity’s transitional phase of development. Ultimately, those properties that are identified through observation, description, and survey can assist ethnographers in seeing an ethnic group’s particularity and divergence from others.

For constructivist ethnographers, descriptive characteristics (collective territory, language, physical appearance, names, and so forth) are part of the broader constructive process by which ethnicities and nations are built. They believe, for example, that one need only delineate the borders of a national territory, develop a literary national language, direct the future nation in question, together with its divided tribes, towards a defined economic structure of “all-Union specialization within the macroeconomic complex” (*vsosoyuznaya spetsializatsiya narodnokhozyaistvennogo kompleksa*, a term for the economic positions held by various Republics within the USSR) – and that all of this will come together and lead to the emergence of a new ethnicity or nation. At the same time this is hardly the case.

This emerging confusion should be understood as just one of many consequences related to the ongoing and difficult transition from descriptive to analytic anthropology (*narodovedeniye*), from ethnography to ethnology. S.M. Shirokogorov was amongst the first to recognize the necessity of transitioning from the descriptive to the analytic, and the first to note the need of shifting from referring to the field as “ethnography” to thinking of

it as “ethnology.”⁵ The descriptive method retains a number of weaknesses when it comes to defining ethnicities:

- Communities that are bound together by researchers in terms of language, territory, physical similarities, economic activity, cultural, or religion remain in all cases at least partly *nominal* communities. The researcher has defined them, but they may or may not have any immediate relation to social reality.
- All of the noted characteristics are treated as equally important, yet no one of them can be used as a universally structuring factor; it is unclear which, if any, of the descriptive characteristics might be considered a sustainable back-bone for a nation or ethnicity.
- At its heart, academic (fundamental, theoretical) anthropology (*narodovedeniye*) or ethnology is focused on seeking out those consistent patterns that hold true for all ethnicities. In the present case, ethnology ought to presumably be aimed at determining the underlying qualitative nature of all ethnicities – a nature that would remain constant no matter the language spoken by a particular group, its place of habitat, physical appearance, diet, housing, clothing, or any other externally described characteristics.

We will consider in some further detail the ways in which descriptive characteristics are poorly suited for defining ethnicity’s underlying nature. The overwhelming majority of all ethnicities are heterogeneous, which can be easily seen in terms of one or another group’s varied physical appearance. Various circumstances over the course of human history have always led to intermarriage with members of outside groups. The very survival of one or another ethnicity, moreover, was commonly determined by a frequent violation of endogamy, notwithstanding the supposed emphasis placed in tribal communities on such principles. In fact, endogamy was not so much violated as simply mixed with exogamy: prohibitions on marriage within a group dictated marriages outside of it, but in strict accordance with social norms and with members of neighboring and related groups. In addition, when faced with a shortage of women, groups frequently un-

⁵ Later came the period in which his work was forgotten; only following the collapse of the USSR was the Institute of Ethnography reformed as the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

dertook extreme measures, and the female ranks of a group might be filled as the result of war, large-scale displacement, or overwhelming migration. It thus becomes clear that endogamy – the consistent rule of emphasizing marriages within “one’s own” group, and what might at first glance have seemed a significantly important ethnic factor – cannot be taken to be the defining factor providing for ethnicity’s underlying nature.

Attempts have also been made – much as in the case of collective territory, language, or physical appearance – to find a base definition for “ethnicity” using the concepts of self-identification or self-reference. Yet these searches have proven equally fruitless.

As it turns out, the age of an ethnicity or nation’s name does little to prove the ancientness of the ethnicity itself. On the hand, it is quite possible that the name given to a group might be much older than the group itself in its current makeup; on the other, the peoples who make up a particular ethnic group might be much older than the collective name given to this group. A.Yu. Yakubovskii’s claim that peoples are always older than their own names is correct in the sense that the modern Turkmen (either as a nation or as an ethnic collation of tribes) are the descendants of peoples who carried much more ancient names. Or, as it sometimes done today, one can interpret Yakubskii’s words quite in the opposite fashion: that the Turkmen have supposedly existed since time immemorial, simply having different names in different epochs. No matter what one makes of the latter claim, there seems little doubt modern ethnic Turkmen descendent and developed, historically and ethnically, on the base of earlier groups. The degree to which a group may have consistently self-defined or failed to self-define over time, however, does not a convincing argument make about their status as an ethnicity: this all tells us very little about what it is that defines Turkmen as Turkmen, or the underlying factor that defines them as an ethnicity.

For some researchers (and many constructivists) however, self-reference and self-identification are taken to be amongst the most fundamental of structures on which to base ethnicity (Tishkov, 2003, pp. 114–115). This may be due to the fact that names given to ethnicities and individuals’ sense of identification with them can manipulated from outside. It can seem, moreover, that self-identification holds a great deal of potential as an independent and consistent variable. Representatives of one another eth-

nicity can be scattered across varied territories and speak different languages – yet all the same continue to identify themselves and name themselves as sharing one heritage and belonging to one shared ethnicity. Yet this particularized and delicate level of self-identification, such as we can see amongst the Jewish people today, ought not to be considered in isolation from the lower levels that remain part of the larger structure of ethnic self-identification. Together with higher-level ethnic self-identification there exist a host of national, ethnic-territorial, local (the Jews of such and such a city, for example), and family-based levels of self-reference. It is clearly impossible to apply the very same structure to all ethnicities, but there is little doubt that that this basic concept will hold weight for nearly every larger ethnicity. We should also remember that at the beginning stages of ethnic development the strongest sense of self-identification is that which based on blood relations and familial interaction. This self-identification hardly disappears as the higher levels of ethnic reference emerge, but rather continues to exist in parallel to the other referents noted above.

An individual's self-reference is as equally hierarchical as the structure described above. Depending upon particular situations different levels of self-identification can arise and take the fore (Brusina, 2001, pp. 127–136; Osipov, 1993, pp. 22–23). An individual can refer to himself as a representative of one another clan, or of an ancient people, or of the particular ethnic group to which he or she actually belongs, or to which political power might belong at the present moment. This individual might identify with a diaspora, a nation, or a “super-ethnicity,” for example, the Soviet people. It is also worth recognizing the possibility of “false” identifications, claimed for the purposes of prestige, political benefit or other reason unconnected to the underlying nature of one's ethnicity.

When speaking of self-identifications, it is additionally worth noting that the peoples of the Middle Ages or ancient epochs are quite likely not to have called themselves by the same names that were later attached to them in historical written works (both narratives and official works of documentation). The overwhelming majority of ethnic identifications related to peoples of the Middle Ages are in fact not indigenous, but rather sobriquets: they were given either by outside groups or in honor of the political actors that founded dynasties or proto-governmental structures (amongst many other examples – Nogai, Uzbek). It also remains unclear to what de-

gree the peoples of the Middle Ages or ancient epochs took the names attached to them as groups to have meaning. Altogether, we can see that self-identification, especially with group names, is overwhelmingly situational, multivariable, and frequently unsustainable.

Manipulating self-identification is much very the construction of an imagined community, but this construction takes place strictly in the heads of its builders, in their imaginations, and often enough remains little more than lines on the page – and with little effect on reality. As the “early” S. N. Abashin wrote, “I am only suggesting that we avoid turning theoretical constructions developed in typological situations into some sort of reality.” Today, however, Abashin confirms the opposite: that only in the case of a theoretical model can there arise an ethnicity; without a model there simply cannot be an ethnicity (Abashin, 1997, p. 8).

To fully work out an individual’s or group’s ethnic identification, it is important not only to know how they name themselves, but also from whence they arose, their blood relations, cultural particularities, and many other factors. It also seems to be deeply important the degree to which other members of an ethnic nucleus, rather than an individual him or herself, may consider one or another individual part of the ethnicity in question. Whether or not these “central” members of an ethnicity accept the individual in question or reject their relation to him or her, notwithstanding the individual’s strivings, can do much to determine who ultimately is included in the ethnic group.

The vertical, or political, start given to an ethnicity can initially seem of principle importance. It would appear as though the very fact that ethnicities can be said to be politically or vertically organized – to contain a certain hierarchy – would inherently lead to the conclusion that they come about as the result of political will.

Yet this is hardly the case. Ethnic groups that exist over hundreds of year prove their resiliency through interaction with tens of differing ruling regimes and in the context of changing state and political structures. One can of course speak about the political modification of ethnicities, and we might draw particular attention to the influence of outside rule – both direct (colonial) and indirect (postcolonial) – on the process of ethnic development. This interaction or interrelation, however, is part of a broader process of mutual compromises and concessions, throughout which the

ethnic group's main goal remains the retention of its ethnic uniqueness. Ethnicities react and adapt quickly to changing political systems, increasing their odds of self-preservation; they are much longer-lived than these systems, whether or not they themselves are in some manner constructed. We can, for example, consider that Turkmen, Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Sarts, Kyrgyz, Uighurs, Tajiks, and others all lived simultaneously in the Khiva and Kokand Khanates and Bukhara Emirate. All of these groups both preceded and outlived the political systems under which they then existed, and if any policies of cultural leveling were undertaken in these three states, they proved generally unsuccessful.

When considering the role taken by politics in the formation of an ethnicity, one has to remain aware of the following factors:

- Any initial political actions take place inside an already existent ethnic group (one that may have grown from a “clan,” or come together in another fashion in a defined territory). The social institutes that regulate behavior are inherently built into an ethnic group's framework, and are by definition the product of this ethnic group, not any outside force. In other words, in their initial form the political and the ethnic form an indivisible whole: people are at the same time both the objects of regulation and its driving force by way of the social institutes that develop in one or another group. These can include patriarchies, military dictatorships, popular assemblies, councils of elders, or any other number of possible frameworks – but through the principle remains the same.
- All political acts of construction are bound to consider people's interests, their culture, beliefs, and religious views in order to have any real possibility of success. Ultimately, politicians are bound to adhere to certain already defined and existent social boundaries, which cannot in fact be changed; in this sense, politicians are equally slaves to the same conditions they are attempting to affect or amend. Politics comes not to dominate, but to comply with the demands of the ethnic, which are understood by politicians to be the underlying and undeniable baseline for the political “game.” Violating ethnically-defined social regulations or frameworks can mean losing influence and authority – and, for a politician, losing the right to implement changes in the very social structure to which he or she is bound.

- Politics constructs, but is far from always constructive. Frequently enough, politics represents little more than violence. Politics may take as its goal the domination of the ethnic, the breaking of an ethnic culture for political purposes, or the control of the ethnic through the principle of “divide and conquer” (less commonly: “combine and conquer”). Any struggle for power over people and resources is capable of changing a great deal, but it will in fact prove the side that relies upon the most powerful and dominant ethnic group that ultimately wins: rather than ignoring the ethnic, political struggles are frequently based in it. This is also the base for one mechanism of vertical ethnic development, whereby one ethnic group becomes increasingly dominant in society in relation to others.
- Highly unpredictable and unplanned consequences can result from the interplay between an ethnicity’s own internal development and the restrictions or conditions placed on this development by politicians who may be attempting to modify or control this ethnicity.
- On many occasions foreign rulers – invited to rule over an ethnic majority or having seized power over this majority – have been forced to assimilate and become part of the local ethnic majority for political, pragmatic, and even deeply personal reasons. Rather than assimilate, these rulers retained the possibility of remaining true to their own ethnic group and even attempting to affect ethnic or cultural change amongst the group they control; very few have chosen the latter path.

Claims to shared identity become personified in political societies around the figures of particular leaders or groups of elites. These individuals come to use the idea of kinship as a bond in ethnic societies, and as a rule have little qualm about employing it speculatively: it can be important not only to consolidate members of one, internally consistent ethnicity, but also wider groups that can contain multiple ethnicities at once. One is reminded of Stalin’s call to the Soviet people in the first days of World War II – “Brothers and sisters!” There is an additional similarity here between the ethnic and the political, insofar as both revolve around the concept of certain sacraments – almost analogous, in their way, to religious beliefs. At the core of the ethnic lies the mythologization – the idealization, as it were, if not the deification – of kinship. To the degree that ethnic so-

cieties become transformed in political nations, the sacrament of political power (emperor, overlord, ruler) comes to be inculcated within the structure of kinship bonds. Such political sacraments are clearly opportunistic and are unlikely to complete in the long term with the embedded ethnic belief in the sacrament of kinship. While the Uzbeks take their name from the political leader Khan Uzbek, no Uzbek has been known to actually deify this Khan.

SHOKHRAT KADYROV, Doctor of Historical Sciences

Institute of Eastern Studies
Russian Academy of Sciences
Rojdestvenka 12, Moscow, Russia 107031
stepa54@mail.ru

OLGA BRUSINA, Candidate of Historical Sciences

Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology
Russian Academy of Sciences
Leninskii prospect 32A, Moscow, Russia 119991
brusina@inbox.ru

ISAAC SCARBOROUGH

London School of Economics and Political Science
University of London Senate House, Malet Street, London, WC1E 7HU
isaac.scarborough@gmail.com

Bibliography

- Abashin, S.N. (1997). *Sotsial'niye vzaimootnosheniya v sovremennom uzbekskom kishlake (po materialam Ferganskoi doliny)* (Dissertation submitted for the degree of Candidate of Historical Sciences). Moscow.
- Abashin, S.N. (2008). *Etnograficheskoe znanie i nacionalnoe stroitelstvo v Srednei Azii ("problema sartov" v XIX – nachale XX vv.)* (Avtoreferat diss. na soisk. uch. st. d.i.n). Moscow.

- Anderson, B. (2001). *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. New York: Verso.
- Bromlei, Yu.V. (1973). *Etnos is etnografiya*. Moscow.
- Brusina, O.I. (2001). *Slavyane v Srednei Azii. Etnicheskiye i sotsial'niye protsessy. Konets XIX-konets XX vv.* Moscow.
- Elez, A.I. (2009). *Filosofsko-metodolicheskiye problem etnologii*. Moscow.
- Gellner, E. (1983). *Nations and Nationalism*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Hobsbawm, E. (1990). *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Khomich, L. V. (1969). O sodержanii ponyatiya "etnicheskiye protsessy". *Sovetskaya etnografiya*, 5.
- Kozlov, V.I. (1967). Nekotoriye problem teorii natsii. *Voprosy istorii*.
- Kozlov, V.I. (1968). Tipy etnicheskikh protsessov i osobennosty ikh istoricheskogo razvitiya. *Voprosy istorii*, 9.
- Kozlov, V.I. (1969). Sovremenniye etnicheskiye protsessy v SSSR (K metodologii issledovaniya). *Sovetskaya etnografiya*, 2.
- Kozlov, V.I. (1979). O klassifikatsiyii etnicheskikh obschnosti (sostoyaniye voprosa). In Yu.V. Bromlei (Ed.), *Issledovaniya po obshei etnografii*. Moscow.
- Kozlov, V.I. (1999). *Etnos. Natsiya. Natsionalizm. Sushnost' i problematika*. Moscow.
- Naumova, O.V. (1991). *Sovremenniye etnokul'turniye protsessy u kazakhov v mnogonatsional'nykh raionakh Kazakhstana* (Dissertation submitted for the degree of Candidate of Historical Sciences). Moscow.
- Osipov, A.G. (1993). *Osnovniye napravleniya izmeneniya v samosoznanii i kul'ture akhalsikhskikh (meskhetinskikh) turok. 20-e gody XIX-v. – 90-e gody XX v.* (Dissertation submitted for the degree of Candidate of Historical Sciences). Moscow.
- Semenov, P.G. (1966). Natsiya i natsional'naya gosudarstvennost' v SSSR. *Voprosy istorii*, 7.
- Shirokogorov, S.M. (2011). *Etnos: Issledovaniye osnovnykh printsipov izmeneniya etnicheskikh i etnograficheskikh obyektov* (2 ed.). Moscow.
- Tishkov, V.A. (2003). *Rekviem po etnosu. Issledovaniya po sotsial'noi i sotsial'no-kul'turnoi antropologii*. Moscow.
- Tokarev, S.A. (1964). Problema tipov etnicheskikh obschnosti (K metodologicheskim problemam etnografii). *Voprosy filosofii*, 11.