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## The Scope and Limits of Public Reason

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freed of these, or in a better position to diffuse them when they might again and again arise, present thinking will stand ready to invent the present. The full constrictions on our capacities to breathe, walk and digest reality will gradually be diffused and the nascence of the new will appear in the fullness of its spontaneity – if also therefore the fullness of its confusion. Ripeness is all. At any rate, it is all we have at the moment.

Now I have suggested that the condition of philosophy is already generalised to the entire university. Ripeness is everywhere. This is therefore an argument for the essential unity of the university. For while philosophy is blind – abstracted from reality – if it does not make its thought concrete by reference to history, sociology, politics, law, the arts, neuroscience, psychology and the other disciplines, other disciplines become calcified, fundamentalist, or blindly technocratic if they do not take utterly seriously their philosophical state of being. We do not want to produce little student clones ready to strike it big, eat their way to the top and drive their BMWs at 180km an hour, one stereotypical image of the South African middle classes. Nor do we want to train students to repeat the fundamentalisms of present (much less past!) South African politics. We want them to slow down and think, which means, on the Nietzschean model, to *listen*, that is, to participate in the work of change.

We may therefore venture the following slogan, not unrelated to the marketing of Ubuntu: *It takes an entire university to educate even a single student*. To make good on the meaning of *that* slogan would be an experiment in the field of Africanisation, also in the field of Europeanisation, worth risking.

## Interpretations of the Dogma Soviet Concepts of Nation and Ethnicity

Irina Filatova

The Soviet theory of nation and ethnicity has for decades featured prominently in the South African debate on these issues. Few parties of different ideological denominations have not referred in some way to the Soviet experience of nation building and to the underlying principles; many used various aspects of this theory in their own theoretical constructs.

During the 1920s and 1930s South African communists were involved in the debates on 'the national and colonial question' within the Communist International. In the late 1950s Soviet academic Ivan Potekhin actively participated in the same debate within the ranks of the Communist Party of South Africa.<sup>1</sup> Joe Slovo's publications on the concept of nation began with a tribute to Stalin's theoretical achievements<sup>2</sup> and Mzala, another SACP-ANC authority on the issue, referred to Stalin's characteristics of nation in his article.<sup>3</sup>

Black Consciousness authors often used Soviet terminology, dealing with the notion of nation,<sup>4</sup> and Rowley Arenstein, once an adviser to the leader of Inkatha, stated in an interview: '...Until Leninist principles about national groups are accepted... there will be no peace in South Africa... You have to go back to Stalin's work on the national and colonial questions...'.<sup>5</sup> The idea of self-determination (which had certainly come into existence long before Marxism but is now firmly associated with Lenin's theory of nation) attracts much attention of the supporters of Volkstaat. In 1996 the Volkstaat Council organised an international conference on self-determination<sup>6</sup> and prepared a survey of the nature, development and application of this phenomenon.<sup>7</sup>

All this does not mean, of course, that the participants of this debate accepted the Soviet theory of nation as a whole or even the elements which they referred to. Suffice it to say that Slovo considered Stalin's concept to be inapplicable in African conditions and that his own definition of the South African 'nation in the making' drastically differed from Soviet theoretical thinking<sup>8</sup> – a fact of which he was fully aware.<sup>9</sup>

What emerges from some of these references to the Soviet conceptualisation of nation, however, is lack of understanding or knowledge of what it was about. The Soviet theory of nation is not dead: its ideological legacy is very much alive both in Russia and in South Africa. This is the reason why it is still important to look into what it stood for, how it evolved and what it resulted in.

### Lenin's Mysterious Theory and Stalin's Theoretical Dogma

Soviet sources date the appearance of the term *ethnicity* (or rather *ethnos*, an ethnic group<sup>10</sup>) in the Russian language by the beginning of the twentieth century<sup>11</sup> and usually associate both the term and the first academic study of the phenomenon behind it with S.M. Shirokogorov who published his *Ethnos: The Study of the Main Principles of Transformation of Ethnic and Ethnographic Phenomenon* in 1923 in Shanghai.<sup>12</sup> Together with many other Russians Shirokogorov had escaped to China from the civil war. He then made it to Europe and in 1935 published another book, *Psychomental Complex of the Tungus*, in London. His influence on the conceptualisation of the notion of *ethnos* by social anthropologists and ethnographers of that time is now widely recognised.

Both before 1917 and during the early 1920s Russian ethnographers did many field studies. A specialised academic journal *Zhizn natsionalnostei* (*The Life of Nationalities*) was published. Academics and politicians were involved in a lively theoretical debate on the nationality problem. Neither *ethnicity* nor *ethnos* featured in the debate; the participants operated with such terms as *nation*, *people*, *nationality* and *tribe*, usually avoiding to substantiate their meaning. Gradually, however, the debate died under the pressure of official ideology coupled with political repression.

After the death of the 'father of nations' (one of Stalin's semi-official titles) some Soviet Marxists began to attribute the Soviet theory of nation to Lenin. As recently as 1989 a high-ranking Soviet academic still accused Stalin of appropriating Lenin's priority in defining characteristics of nation and introducing the notion of the *socialist nation* into Marxist theory.<sup>13</sup>

Stalin did, indeed, appropriate many of Lenin's theoretical postulates but as far as his theory of nation is concerned Lenin's theoretical legacy was not his source. Stalin actually borrowed some of his

theoretical constructions in this field including the definition of nation from Austrian Marxists, Karl Kautsky and Otto Bauer, whose views he simultaneously denounced.

Lenin did not advance any definition of nation. It must be stressed here that the meaning of the word 'nation' in Russian ('natsia') significantly differs from its meaning in English. The Russian term 'natsia' stands mainly if not exclusively for *ethnicity*, an *ethnic community*, and only in exceptional cases for *state*, while in English 'nation' is more often used to indicate the entire population of a *state* which is usually a *multi-ethnic community*.

Lenin used this word loosely, often as a synonym of such terms as *nationality*, *people* and *narodnost*.<sup>14</sup> He quoted Kautsky on two characteristics of nation, language and territory (disapproving of one) and criticised Bauer for outlining only one such characteristic, a national (i.e. ethnic) character, although later he recognised the importance of this phenomenon. Lenin did mention 'socialist nation' but he also wrote about 'imperialist nations' which term has not become part of the official Soviet concept. He stressed the role of bourgeoisie in consolidating contemporary nations but he also spoke of nations referring to pre capitalist societies – while according to the official Soviet theory nations came into existence only with the advent of capitalism (being nationalities before this).<sup>15</sup>

Lenin did, however, contribute several principles to the Soviet interpretation of nation, three of which, well known and much discussed in Marxist writing, were of central importance.

*The right of nations for self-determination and secession.* This principle became part of the 1903 Program of the Russian Social democrats. In 1913 it was augmented to the extent that the right for secession did not imply the desirability of this act. The Bolshevik party assumed its right to look into every case of secession individually and to work out its policy according to the specific circumstances.<sup>16</sup>

The slogan of self-determination was a convenient instrument in the struggle against Tsarism but it is a well known fact that after the Bolsheviks came to power they never used it again. Compelled to recognise the independence of Finland and Poland they were nevertheless determined to keep the rest of the former Russian Empire. To quote just one example of Stalin's attitude to it, in April 1918 he wrote to V.P. Zatonsky, Ukrainian Bolshevik and Head of the Soviet administration of independent Ukraine: 'You have been toying with

your [independent – I.F.] government and your republic far too long. Enough of this, time to stop.’<sup>17</sup>

*The prevalence or dominance of class, class values and interests over those of nation.* Both before and after 1917 the Bolsheviks saw the nationalities question as subordinate to the task of building socialism. The nationalities problem itself was attributed to capitalist order and imperialist policy and it seemed logical to think that once socialism is achieved it will cease to exist.

The idea of the right of nations for self-determination left many Party members with an uneasy feeling for it could be interpreted as a right of all classes of a nation to participate in formulating its political future. To exclude such an interpretation Lenin wrote in 1903: ‘We... care about the right for self-determination not of peoples and nations, but of the proletariat of every nation’.<sup>18</sup> In 1917 he supported Stalin’s interpretation of the slogan of self-determination which was very close to his own. Stalin formulated it at the IIIrd Congress of the Soviets: ‘The right of nations for self-determination must be the means of struggle for socialism and should be subordinate to socialism’.<sup>19</sup>

However, faced with the realities of ruling a multinational (multi-ethnic) state after the 1917 Bolshevik revolution, Lenin changed his approach. At the VIIIth congress of the Russian Communist Party in 1919 he stood out to defend ‘self-determination of nations’ against his associates, first of all N.I. Bukharin and G.L. Pyatakov, who offered to substitute this formula with exactly the one Lenin himself had defended in 1903: ‘self-determination of the working classes of every nationality’.<sup>20</sup>

Before 1917, Lenin was a staunch anti-federalist. He wrote: ‘It is not the business of proletariat to preach federalism and national autonomy... immediately leading to the demand of forming an autonomous class state’.<sup>21</sup> Lenin carried this adherence to the idea of a ‘centralised big state... inseparably linked to socialism’ through all his life<sup>22</sup> although he had to adjust it to political realities. Even though from 1919 he defended federation ‘of the states of the Soviet-type’ as ‘one of the transitional forms on the way to full unity’<sup>23</sup> he still insisted on the centralised Party structure in the whole territory of the former Russian empire, i.e. in the newly born independent states. ‘We shall not tolerate Austrian abomination here’, he wrote,<sup>24</sup> meaning the slogan of ethno-cultural autonomy which had been put forward by Austro-Hungarian Social Democrats.

*The progressive nature of ethnic integration or (as Lenin put it) assimilation.* Lenin often stressed that assimilation was in the interests of labour since capital, having created the myth of nation (ethnicity) to divide the workers, was itself united against them. In 1913 he wrote: ‘Not only does proletariat refuse to defend the national [ethnic – I.F.] development of every nation, but, on the contrary, it warns the masses against these illusions... it welcomes every kind of assimilation of nations, with the only exception of forced assimilation, or assimilation based on unilateral privileges’.<sup>25</sup> Lenin thought that under socialism nations (i.e. peoples, ethnic groups) would get closer and finally merge through their utmost growth and development.<sup>26</sup>

Thousands of books have been written in the Soviet Union interpreting Lenin’s ideas on nation and merging them into a theory which Lenin himself had never claimed to be the author of. It was not Lenin but Stalin who was responsible for the official Soviet definition of nation, for the implementation of Soviet nationality policy and even for much of the later Soviet and post-Soviet theoretical writing on the issue.

Stalin’s theoretical heritage on the subject consisted of two articles. The first, *Marxism and the Nationality Question*, was published in 1913 and played an important role in Stalin’s political career, turning him into the main Party authority in the field and later on securing him the position of the People’s Commissar (Minister) for Nationality Relations. It was in this article that Stalin gave his definition of nation as ‘an historically formed stable community of people which comes into existence on the basis of a common language, a common territory, a common economy and a psychological character which manifests itself in a common culture’. He insisted that all four criteria were necessary for a ‘community of people’ to be a nation. ‘It is clear’, wrote Stalin, ‘that a nation, as well as every other historic phenomenon, is subject to the laws of change, and has its own history, its beginning and its end’.<sup>27</sup> Later on he described this definition as ‘the Russian Marxist theory of nation’.<sup>28</sup>

Lenin never expressed any doubts about the validity of this definition but in fact Stalin’s message was somewhat different from his own. Stalin stressed language, culture, territory and economy as endemic characteristics of nation as opposed to class or social criteria stressed by Lenin. Nation was perceived as a stable albeit an evolving organism. Assimilation was not entirely left out, but was seen as a distant target rather than an unfolding process.

In this first article Stalin counterpoised nation – ‘an historical category’, against tribe – ‘an ethnographic category’. Several decades later nation, *narodnost* and tribe were all granted the status of ‘historical communities of people’. Stalin outlined this new approach in his second article, *Marxism and the Problems of Language Studies*, which was published in 1950 and made a significant impact on Soviet concepts of ethnicity thereafter. The main idea of the article was that historically ‘clan languages’ developed into ‘tribal languages’, ‘tribal languages’ [into the languages of the *narodnosts*, and the latter] into the national (i. e. ethnic) languages.<sup>29</sup>

However ridiculous even at the time when it was published Stalin’s formula put an end to the debate on the nature and stages of the historical evolution of nation. This debate, although limited by the framework of Marxist theory of social formations and Stalin’s earlier writing, lingered on during the 1930s and even in 1947 at least one historian offered his own scheme.<sup>30</sup> After the publication of Stalin’s article his ‘triad’ (tribe-*narodnost*-nation) became the only possible scheme of the historical evolution of nation.

The triad theory was not challenged, nor even discussed, for by the beginning of the 1950s academics had come to know only too well where theoretical discussions with Stalin could lead. Instead it was instantly accommodated within the Marxist theory of social formations. It was assumed that during the pre-class stages of social development mankind was organised into ‘tribal historical entities’; during the slave and feudal stages these evolved into *narodnosts*, and with the advent of capitalism the latter developed into nations (i.e. ethnic nation) to become socialist nations under socialism. The final version of this theory was formulated in the most authoritative Soviet work of the time *Essays on General Ethnography* by S.P. Tolstov, M.G. Levin and N.N. Cheboksarov.<sup>31</sup>

Stalin’s theorising had a deep and lasting effect on Soviet studies of nation and ethnicity. For almost four decades after Stalin’s death the debate on these issues developed entirely within the framework of Stalin’s doctrine. Even in the late 1980s when the theory of socialist formations itself came under fire the majority of Soviet analysts of nation and ethnicity were still defending the core of Stalin’s dogma. Critics attempted to adjust certain aspects of the doctrine to stubborn reality but they did so from the position of accepting the construct as a whole. Valid field research was still done by Soviet academics but the debate was unfolding not around the new data emerging from it but around interpretations of the same old schemes.

### The Talent for Interpretation

There were two distinct directions in this debate on interpretation. The first presented an attempt to patch up inconsistencies in the theoretical legacy of the two officially recognised classics of Russian Marxism and to convert it into a coherent theory. The second was a search for viable and universally accepted definitions and descriptions of various components of this legacy (historical stages of ethnic development; correlation of these stages with social formations; characteristics of ethnicity at every stage, etc.).

One of the problems was the incorporation of Lenin’s idea of assimilation into Stalin’s scheme. It was finally accepted that socialist nations would eventually merge and die away. Accordingly assimilationist tendencies within the Soviet society were considered to be a progressive phenomenon and promoted. Contrary to the early Russian Marxist thinking, however, it was considered that the process of assimilation would take a very long time and would be preceded by ‘full development’ of every nation and flourishing of cultures, ‘national (i.e. ethnic) in form and socialist in contents’. In the late 1970s the whole construction was supplemented with the ‘super-national (i. e. super-ethnic) community of a new type – Soviet people’ which was said to have come into existence already.

The concept of the ‘super-national community’ signified that assimilation had already occurred for ‘the Soviet people’ was declared to be an ethno-cultural, not just a socio-historical category. At the same time it signalled a further delay in the completion of the assimilation process for all efforts to apply Stalin’s characteristics to the new community failed and it became obvious that ‘the Soviet people’ was and was bound to remain a state nation (multi-ethnic or multi-national community within the borders of one state as opposed to nation-state – a mono-ethnic or mono-national state) for a long time.

Another problem was to find a general term which would embrace all ‘historical entities’ of Stalin’s triad since ‘nation’ was now historically limited to capitalism and socialism. Theoretical debate on this problem unfolded during the late 1960s and early 1970s in the pages of several academic journals – *Sovetskaia etnographiia*, *Voprosy filosofii*, *Voprosy istorii*, *Priroda*. This debate brought about all the ideas and almost all the names that dominated the field throughout the 1970s and 1980s and persisted into the 1990s. Among those who started the debate and later on carried it further were S.A.

Tokarev, V.I. Kozlov, N.N. Chebokarov, L.N. Gumilev, K.V. Chistov and Yu. V. Bromlei.<sup>32</sup>

There were, in fact, several official interpretations of Stalin's dogma coined by different authors, similar but not the same. One was, however, clearly more official than the rest. The author of this most official concept was Academician Yulian Bromlei. For almost a quarter of a century Bromlei was Director of the Institute of Ethnography of the Soviet Academy of Sciences and occupied several senior positions in the Academy. He was, for example, Chairman of the Scientific Council for Nationality Problems. These positions, however, were not the only reason for his prominence in the field of ethnicity studies. He had a real talent for interpretation which he effectively used to overcome some of the inconsistencies of Stalin's theory and to convert it into a more coherent albeit an empty scheme. Some of his colleagues claimed that he deftly absorbed, used and reinterpreted their ideas, thus basing his publications on what was the result of a collective effort.

Bromlei formulated his concept in *Ethnos and Ethnography*, which was published in 1973.<sup>33</sup> It was updated, augmented and called a theory (although not substantially developed) ten years later in *Essays on the Theory of Ethnos*.<sup>34</sup> Bromlei's most important theoretical achievement was the reintroduction of the term 'ethnos' into Russian academic language. Shirokogorov's term which had completely disappeared from the debate on nation (ethnic nation) and the related problems was now used to define common features of the triad: tribe, *narodnost* and nation. It seems to have re-emerged first as an adjective ('ethnic community', etc.), then, in 1967, Lev Gumilev discussed and defined the new term.<sup>35</sup> At the beginning of the 1970s, Bromlei intercepted the initiative in interpreting it and began to introduce it into Soviet ethnography on a large scale – which in fact only he was in a position to do.

To overcome the irrelevance of Stalin's definition of nation which became increasingly obvious to ethnographers and historians alike Bromlei suggested the distinguishing of two forms or two levels of ethnoses. The first was 'ethnos in the broad sense' or 'ethno-social organism' – ESO, as Soviet academics used to call it for convenience. Bromlei did not provide any definition of ESO except as 'something in common between the tribe, the *narodnost* and the nation'.<sup>36</sup>

As to 'the ethnos in the narrow sense', Bromlei suggested calling it 'ethnicos' (from the ancient Greek word 'people's', 'characteristic of a people'). He gave several definitions of 'ethnos in the narrow

sense'. In his first book it was defined as a 'historically formed community which has relatively stable cultural features (including language) and psychology and is aware of its belonging to one entity'.<sup>37</sup> In the second book the definition became more complicated:

Ethnos per se (or ethnos in the narrow sense) may be defined as a stable intergenerational community historically formed in a definite territory and having not only common features but also a relatively stable specific culture (including language) and psychology as well as the realisation of its commonality and of its distinction from other similar groups (self-consciousness) fixed in its self-name (ethno-name).<sup>38</sup>

In other words Bromlei ascribed all Stalin's characteristics of nation except one – common economy – to ethnos 'in the narrow sense' which made this category even more primordial than Stalin's nation. Ethnos 'in the broad sense' remained an obscure generalisation which included socio-economic and politico-economic aspects of Stalin's definition.<sup>39</sup> Thus the awkward result of Stalin's theorising – theoretical existence of two German ethnic nations, socialist and capitalist, after the Second World War – could now be overcome by stating that there was one German ethnos 'in the narrow sense' (ethnic nation) but two German ethnoses 'in the broad sense' (socio-economic nations) for clearly the socio-economic nature of the two countries was indeed different.

Bromlei discussed each characteristic of ethnos in detail and this discussion proved useful for clarifying his views although it made the theory even more complicated. Discussing territory, for example, Bromlei recognised the obvious fact that not every ethnos had its own territory and that some of them had more than one.<sup>40</sup> But according to his interpretation of ethnos 'in the broad sense', every ethno-social organism should have not only a territory but also an administrative political unit.<sup>41</sup> If an ESO in question was a nation the corresponding administrative political unit is a state; in the case of *narodnost* it is an administrative unit of a lower level, such as an autonomous region.<sup>42</sup> In case an ethnic group did not have an administrative unit it could not have the status of an ESO but only of ethnos in the narrow sense, or ethnicos. According to this logic Soviet Germans in the Volga-basin, for example, were an ESO, in this case *narodnost*, before 28 August 1941 but lost this status to become an ethnicos on this date when the German Autonomous Region was abolished. (They could not be part

of either the bigger German ethnicos in Germany because their language and culture were different, or of any of the two German ethnoses for their territory, economy and social structure were different).

As far as ethnos 'in the narrow sense' was concerned territory was not substantial for its existence. According to Bromlei, territory was a vitally important precondition only for its formation but not for functioning.<sup>43</sup>

Culture and psychology turned out to be the most difficult characteristics to interpret. Bromlei discussed each at length never mentioning, however, which of his two ethnoses he attributed them to.<sup>44</sup> On the one hand they could doubtless be attributed to ethnos 'in the narrow sense', on the other Bromlei repeatedly spoke about 'ethnic per se' characteristics of nation<sup>45</sup> – and nation, according to him, was ESO, ethnos in the broad sense. He may have meant some other 'ethnic per se' characteristics but it is difficult to imagine which.

The reader was left puzzled by Bromlei's discussion of biological and racial characteristics of ethnos. Soviet specialists in ethnicity used to like to denounce their Western colleagues for 'biologisation of nation'.<sup>46</sup> Even Bromlei who was usually careful to avoid propaganda made his contribution to this campaign when he commented on the merger of the British Ethnological and Anthropological Societies in 1871.<sup>47</sup> Bromlei insisted that the object of study of Soviet ethnography was ethnoses which were a social, not a biological (racial) category (this time, obviously, stressing 'the broad sense' of the term) and that this distinguished his discipline from social anthropology which studied physical, i.e. racial features of different groups of humankind.<sup>48</sup> Having said that, Bromlei, however, included chapters on 'Endogamy as an Ethnic Stabiliser' and on 'Ethnic Functions of Endogamy' in both his books which, if ethnos to him was really only a social category, should not apply.

One characteristic of ethnos, environment, did not appear on Bromlei's list in his first book but was extensively discussed in the second one.<sup>49</sup> Bromlei connected the process of ethno-genesis not only with a particular territory but with a particular environment and stressed the importance of these factors for the development and survival of ethnoses. On the one hand environment made such a powerful appearance in Bromlei's theory because of the growth of ecological consciousness in the Soviet Union; on the other it was, no doubt, prompted by the growth of ethno-territorial nationalism in various regions of the country.

It has already been mentioned that Bromlei's ethnos 'in the broad sense' seems to be no more than a general term to comprise Stalin's triad.<sup>50</sup> However, in an attempt to achieve some conformity between this artificial scheme and non-complying socio-historical realities Bromlei offered some new interpretations of the components of the triad. The concept of tribe presented most difficulties for from the 1960s it came under criticism and by the early 1980s was discredited as an academic term. Bromlei could not drop it (because it was an integral part of Stalin's theory) but suggested that only the tribes that had internal political structures could have the status of ESOs; 'tribes without rulers' remained, in his opinion, ethnoses 'in the narrow sense' - ethnikeses. Conveniently, no explanation of what was meant by 'political structures' was offered. Instead the author introduced more new terms, suggesting to call the former, politically more advanced group of tribes 'co-tribal entities' or 'tribal families'.<sup>51</sup>

According to Bromlei, 'tribal families' of the classless societies developed into 'narodnosts of the slave holder formation' during the 'slave holder' social formation and into 'feudal narodnosts' under feudalism. Narodnosts could be either ESO or ethnikos, depending on whether they had territorial and administrative units. Bromlei offered to retain the term nation for ESOs under capitalism and socialism but suggested the term 'nationalities' for ethnikeses of these two stages of development.<sup>52</sup>

Characteristics of socialist and capitalist nations were the same but the 'new historical community – the Soviet people' appeared at the top of the evolutionary ladder.<sup>53</sup> This term was not Bromlei's creation – other authors later on wrote that it was imposed on academics by Party ideologists – but the top Soviet ethnographer certainly added a theoretical background to this idea.

In his *Essays* Bromlei mentioned another curious theoretical phenomenon – 'socialist narodnosts', which according to his own scheme could not exist but had to be accommodated because it derived from Stalin's practice of grouping Soviet peoples into two different kinds of communities – nations and narodnosts.<sup>54</sup> This practice and the term itself obviously contradicted the logic of the triad according to which *narodnost* could only exist in slave holder and feudal societies. This contradiction had been ignored until it came under attack in 1986.

Bromlei offered two ways of dealing with this problem. The first was to define slave and feudal *narodnosts* as 'formational types of ethnic entities', while bourgeois and socialist narodnosts were to be

called 'subtypes of ethnic entities of definite formational belonging'. The second was to introduce new terms for both ESOs and ethnoses of slave and feudal social formations – 'paleos' and 'mesos' (accordingly) for ESOs and 'paleocos' and 'mezocos' for ethnoses.<sup>55</sup>

Bromlei's theory is much more complicated than that. I have not mentioned, for example, his deliberations on metha-ethnoses, sub-ethnoses, fragments of ethnoses, ethnographic communities and other forms of ethnicity for I am afraid that even without these my readers' patience is exhausted. I hope that enough has been said to show the logic of Bromlei's theory (although the theory itself may be obscure) as well as his method of dealing with problems not by resolving them but by juggling with new empty terms and definitions. Contrary to the proclaimed Marxist principle of the necessity to change theory if it does not reflect reality ('contradicts practice') Bromlei dealt with inconsistencies by supplementing the core of (Stalin's) theory with scores of new Greek terms, while the 'practice' was taken care of by other agencies of the Soviet state.<sup>56</sup>

### Other Versions

Bromlei was not the only Soviet academic to interpret Stalin's dogma, although he certainly was the most skilful and able among the interpreters. Many of his colleagues scrutinised the components of the triad and Stalin's definition of nation, offering their logic for either substantiating different aspects of the theory or eliminating some of them – all of these, however, within the framework of the theory itself. Here are some examples of their theoretical search.

One component of Stalin's theory, *narodnost*, provoked most concern. Already in 1964, in the wake of Khrushchev's thaw that made the debate possible. S.A. Tokarev wrote that the concept of *narodnost* did not correspond to the logic of the theory because the underlying social and economic structures of slave holder and feudal formations were different for which reason the nature of the corresponding ethnic communities should differ as well. He suggested a new term, 'demos', for ethnic communities of slave holder formation. Tokarev seems to have been the first to challenge the validity of Stalin's idea that an ethnic group should satisfy all four criteria of nation to be considered a nation. At the same time Tokarev remained one of the staunchest supporters of the formational interpretation of ethnicity in

the spirit of Stalin's triad and defended common territory as one of the indispensable characteristics of nation (i.e. ethnic nation).<sup>57</sup>

V.I. Kozlov, who was rumoured to be the major intellectual force behind Bromlei's ideas, brought the logic of the formational approach to ethnicity to the level of tautology. He suggested calling ethnic communities of classless (primitive) societies 'ethnoses with the primitive (pre class) social structure'; ethnic communities of slave holder societies 'ethnoses with the social structure of slave holder society', then accordingly, 'ethnoses with the feudal social structure' and 'ethnoses with the capitalist and socialist structures'. Each of these received the corresponding abbreviation (like ESO): EPS, ESS, EFS, SCS, ESS.<sup>58</sup> In his earlier work Kozlov wrote that territory was an indispensable characteristic of ethnic communities while common economy was not.<sup>59</sup>

A.G. Agaiev enriched the formational approach with the idea of distinctions between internal social ties within different types of ethnic communities. For clan and tribal communities these were kindred ties; for *narodnosts*, territorial; for nation, economic. Since Agaiev's work was devoted to the 'theory of *narodnost*', this particular type of ethnic community enjoyed the author's special attention. Agaiev wrote that *narodnosts* appeared most often in the era of the disintegration of primitive societies but that often they came into existence later, under feudalism and capitalism. These were accordingly called 'slave holder society *narodnosts*', 'feudal *narodnosts*' and 'capitalist *narodnosts*'.<sup>60</sup>

N.N. Cheboksarov wrote about 'socialist *narodnosts*', defining them as 'economically less consolidated and numerically smaller ethnoses' (than nations).<sup>61</sup> In a later work Cheboksarov and S. A. Arutiunov distinguished between the *narodnosts* that came into existence during pre-capitalist stages of social development and those that were formed under capitalism and socialism. The former were to be considered 'primary', the latter, 'secondary' or 'associated'.

In the same work Cheboksarov and Arutiunov suggested a new approach to the historical evolution of ethnic communities. They based their interpretation of the formational approach on the 'levels of density of informational ties'. The informational ties, they argued, had different levels of density at every stage of historical development. According to them internal ties in the tribal communities were close and simple and external virtually non-existent. *Nardnosts* had more complicated and dense internal ties and developing external ties



which were sometimes more important for their existence than their internal ties. Nations had the densest network of international ties.<sup>62</sup>

Arutiunov and Cheboksarov developed their concept over the years. It was enriched by the notion of vertical (historical memory; traditions, etc.) and horizontal (information per se) ties. *Inter alia*, this enabled the authors to substantiate their vision of the distinction between capitalist and socialist nations. According to them, horizontal ties were characteristic of capitalist nations and vertical, of socialist.<sup>63</sup>

V.V. Pimenov's 'system approach' to ethnicity may be the best example of Soviet theoretic scholasticism. His definition of ethnos, for example, could be applied to nearly any social phenomenon. 'Ethnos is', he wrote, 'a relatively isolated, complicated, dynamic self-reproducing and self-regulating social system the structural components of which represent no less complicated sub-systems; the latter are mobilely interconnected by numerous and diverse ties'.<sup>64</sup> These 'sub-structures', according to Pimenov, comprised demography, space, geography, economy, society, language, culture, way of life and psychology, all of which were 'interconnected at different levels by various numerical, directional, power, coordinational, and subordinational relations' to make 'the system the functioning and development of which is in the end determined economically'.<sup>65</sup>

There were many more Soviet definitions and characteristics of ethnicity but the examples offered here are sufficiently representative to demonstrate the scope and mode of the debate on the theory of nation which prevailed in the Soviet Union for more than three decades. To sum up, Soviet academic concepts of nation and ethnicity, however different, almost invariably interpreted 'ethnos' as a primordial and highly hierarchical (both historically and socially) phenomenon. A. Kuper, editor of the *Current Anthropology* journal, had every reason to write in 1987: 'It is a strange irony that the ethnos theory born by late German romanticism remains intact only in the anthropology departments of Moscow and Pretoria'.<sup>66</sup>

With all this in mind I would, however, like to turn to the defence of the Soviet school of ethnography. Over the decades Soviet academics did many innovative and revealing studies, field studies among them, of ethnic consciousness, attitudes and identities, demographic tendencies, migrations and assimilation, way of life, traditions, mixed marriages, language usage etc. among the Soviet peoples in various regions of the country. Unlike social anthropologists in the West, Soviet ethnographers – an ethnically diverse group in itself – studied

not only foreign but first of all Soviet ethnic cultures and processes including those of the dominant Russian population. These studies were sometimes published and sometimes concealed from the broader public. In both cases they were ignored by the authorities. There were also valid theoretical works not connected with the theory of ethnos.<sup>67</sup>

In other words, there were many good Soviet ethnographers with deep knowledge of their discipline and only a few considered it worth their while to indulge in a debate on the theory of nation or ethnos. Those who did had no chance to say what they really thought. Lectures for a narrow academic circle given by some prominent participants of the debate drastically differed from their writing.

The debate on nation was allowed only within the rigid framework of Stalin's orthodoxy. It was possible to criticise but not everyone could be criticised. Even in the era of Gorbachev's perestroika, in 1989, the Humanities Division of the Presidium of the Academy of Sciences at its special meeting on nationality problems passed a resolution against 'the attempts to revise the basic categories of the Marxist Leninist theory' – which in the 'speak' of top Soviet academic bureaucrats was a euphemism for Stalin's dogma. The menacing resolution was the Academy's response to the publication in the *Communist* journal of an article which questioned the Soviet official theory which justified the malpractice of nationality policy.<sup>68</sup> The top academic body miscalculated the situation for nothing happened. Moreover, after Bromlei's death, V.A. Tishkov, the author of the article, at the time Deputy Director of the Institute of Ethnography, became its Director.

The outcome would have been completely different a few years, perhaps even a few months, earlier. An author denounced by the Presidium of the Academy of Sciences would have had no hope of any academic career and might even have lost his job. Earlier still, such a denunciation would have resulted in the death sentence. It took a great deal of courage to question the validity even of the term *narodnost*, let alone more sacred aspects of the theory. It is not the fault of Soviet academics but their tragedy that their minds and lives had to be so misspent.

### The Talent for Imagination or Perestroika's Bitter Fruits

Not all Soviet academics agreed either to keep their ideas on nation and ethnicity to themselves or to express them within the framework of the dogma. The Soviet era had its heroes and its martyrs in this field as well as in other spheres of life. The most outstanding among dissident theoreticians of nation was Leo Gumilev, son of two great Russian poets, Nikolai Gumilev and Anna Akhmatova. An able historian and a talented writer, Gumilev specialised in the history of nomads of Middle Asia.

Gumilev's father was executed by the Bolsheviks in 1921 for alleged participation in the conspiracy against the Soviet government and his poetry was banned from that time until the late 1980s. For Stalin's authorities this fact alone was a sufficient reason for Leo Gumilev's two detentions, one during the 1930s, the other in the late 1940s and early 1950s. These detentions were the cause of constant suffering for his mother who was never imprisoned but was publicly denounced by A.A. Zhdanov, the official Party ideologist after the Second World War, and prevented from publishing her poetry. Gumilev was released by Khrushchev and saw his mother regain her public glory. She lived to see him defend his two theses and develop into a prominent academic.

Gumilev was always interested in the theory of nation and ethnicity (and, as has already been mentioned), it was he who reintroduced the term 'ethnos' into the Soviet academic debate. He formulated his concept of ethnic nation in two articles which were published in 1967 and 1970.<sup>69</sup> After this his career of a theoretician came to a standstill. Bromlei strongly criticised Gumilev's approach in all his major publications, particularly his 'biologisation' of ethnicity, as a result of which Gumilev could no longer publish his theoretical works. During the 1970s Gumilev published several books on the nomads of Middle Asia and the ancient Turks but not a single theoretical article on nation. His main theoretical work, *Ethnogenesis and the Biosphere of the Earth*<sup>70</sup> (which had been written in the middle 1970s), did not find a publisher. In 1979 the manuscript was half-legalised: one copy was deposited in a special library for restricted usage by those who could obtain permits by proving that they needed it for their academic work. But in the early 1980s several members of the editorial board of the journal *Priroda* were sacked for publishing an article which popularised Gumilev's concept.

Repression, a famous name and a literary talent placed Gumilev's theoretical writing on the list of the most fashionable semi-legal reading of Soviet intelligentsia during the late 1970s and early 1980s. Several thousand copies were illegally made from *Ethnogenesis and the Biosphere of the Earth*. Gumilev's popularity grew with the upsurge of nationalist tendencies and the revival of religion in Soviet society – and at the same time he became one of the most influential protagonists of these tendencies.

By the end of the 1980s all Gumilev's major works were published, some more than once,<sup>71</sup> but the demand exceeded the supply well into the 1990s. Until recently Gumilev's books were not readily available even in academic libraries. Gumilev gave public lectures, participated in TV programmes, spoke over the radio. He was a member of the non-governmental Council for the Nationality Relations established by *Druzhba Narodov*, one of the most popular literary magazines of the late 1980s. Gumilev's ideas certainly reached the masses. They belong to the post-Soviet era but in fact they were the product of the Soviet theory of nation and of Soviet realities inspired by the same political, intellectual and emotional climate that gave rise to Bromlei's theory.

Gumilev aspired to much more than the creation of a new theory of nation. In fact, he offered a new (for the Soviet school of thought) concept of the development of mankind. There was no definition of ethnicity, nor of ethnos or nation in Gumilev's theoretical book. The following passage may pass as the closest to a formal definition: ethnos is:

a system of social and natural entities with some particular elements intrinsic in them. Ethnos is not just a community of people who have some similar features but a system of personalities with different tastes and abilities, the products of their activity, traditions, the accommodating geographic environment, as well as definite tendencies dominating the development of the system.<sup>72</sup>

According to Gumilev, ethnic history was a history of separate ethnos each connected with a corresponding 'accommodating landscape' and culture. All manifestations of ethnicity in all its historical forms are brought about by two major forces: the 'activity of the natural landscape' which results in the 'fluctuations of the biosphere'; and the 'social form of the substance movement' which results in the

'logic of events'.<sup>73</sup> Gumilev seems to have believed that landscapes were more important for the process of ethnogenesis and that there were 'more ethnogeneous' and 'less ethnogeneous' landscapes.

Like Stalin and Bromlei, Gumilev also had his three stages of ethno-national development but these differed drastically from those of Stalin. He called them 'passeism, actualism and futurism'.<sup>74</sup> These were not, however, historical periods or stages of the development of different forms of ethnicity. Gumilev's triad may be understood as the reflection of the objective ethnographic process in the human mind since passeism, for example, was defined as 'a perception of time according to which past is the only objective reality' and actualism, 'a perception of time according to which present is the only objective reality'.<sup>75</sup> Gumilev did have his own stages of historical development of ethnos, based on different criteria, and we shall return to these later.

Apart from geographic and social dimensions Gumilev's concept of ethnicity had a clearly expressed biological dimension. He did not declare this and even criticised Shirokogorov's biological definition of ethnos. Bromlei, however, was right: biological aspects of ethnicity were very important for Gumilev himself. It was obvious from his assumption that ethnicity was part of the 'biosphere of the Earth'<sup>76</sup> and from his notion of 'ethnic fields'. 'Ethnic field', wrote Gumilev,

that is the phenomenon of ethnos per se, does not concentrate in the bodies of mother and child. It exists between them. The child who had established the tie with his mother by his first cry and his first act of sucking her milk, enters her ethnic field. His existence in it forms his own ethnic field which later on is only modified by his contact with his father, relatives, other children and the whole people...<sup>77</sup>

However, the most important biological characteristic of ethnicity in Gumilev's writing was passionarism.<sup>78</sup> According to him, ethnoses have a primary push or an impulse to start them. He claimed that such an impulse (factor X as he called it) comes from 'passionarism', a specific kind of energy which is 'a divergence from the [existing] species' norm but this divergence is not pathological'. It is this energy that

constitutes the background for anti-egoistic ethics where a collective interest, even if wrongly interpreted, prevails over the lust for life and the

care about offsprings. Under favourable circumstances specimen who possess this energy commit (and can not refrain from committing) such acts that break the inertia of tradition and initiate new ethnoses.<sup>79</sup>

Gumilev did not conceal the fact that for him 'passionarism was a biological phenomenon'.<sup>80</sup> He described passionarism as 'an effect of influence of nature on ethnic communities'<sup>81</sup> and asserted that 'the primary impulse breaking the inertia of stability was the emergence of a generation containing a certain number of passionaristic specimens'.<sup>82</sup>

'Passionarism', wrote Gumilev,

is the ability and desire to change the surrounding... The impulse of passionarism is sometimes so strong that passionaries, the carriers of this quality, can not consider the results of their actions... Passionarism is an attribute of subconsciousness, not of consciousness, an important quality which expresses itself in the specificity of the structure of nervous activity. The amount of passionarism [in different societies] varies but a historically visible quality requires a great number of individual passionaries. This means that passionarism is not only an individual but also a populational characteristic.<sup>83</sup>

Among Gumilev's examples of passionaries were Napoleon, Alexander of Macedon, Sullah and several other historic personalities. Passionaries, obviously, constituted a minority in every society. Other members of each society were subdivided into two groups, 'harmonic but not super-active specimen' and subpassionaries such as tramps and mercenaries.

According to Gumilev, every ethnos went through several historical stages which reflected the amount of passionarism in its midst: passionarian upsurge; passionarian overheating (acmatic stage); fracture; inertia; obscuration; homeostasis; depopulation.<sup>84</sup> The phase of passionarian upsurge in his opinion was preceded by the passionarian impulse. The academic offered a 'hypothesis' that these impulses were directly connected with cosmic radiation.

Gumilev did not condescend to prove either this 'hypothesis' or the existence of the 'passionarian effect' which he claimed to have discovered. He just selected and organised historic facts in such a way that the reader was led to believe that 'there must have been something'. Accepting Gumilev's theory was an act of faith, not of logic.

Mysterious, cosmogenic and biological concepts of history and ethnicity exist in many regions of the world but it is a sad irony that the academic community of the former country of 'victorious socialism' where Marxism has for decades been the official and the only allowed ideology, offers so little to counterpoise against them. There are several reasons for this, the most important of which is, perhaps, the popularity of Gumilev's ideas among general readership. I would not go into the reasons for the present upsurge of primordial nationalism or rather multiple nationalisms among the entire 'super-national community of the new type' for this is a different topic altogether. But I wish to stress the power of a drive for political correctness of a particular moment behind academic research of any kind in any country. It is often forgotten how difficult it is to go against a prevailing ideological tide even when there is no immediate danger of repression.

Another reason may be that Gumilev had, indeed, been a martyr and that the simple logic of human decency put him in a position above criticism, not only among the broader readership but also among the academic community.

Most important, however, is the fact few academics have much to disagree with in Gumilev's concept. The Soviet era has left Russia with two concepts of ethnicity: formational and cosmogenic-ecologico-biological. There seems to be no point in common between them – yet Gumilev openly accused Bromlei of stealing his [Gumilev's] concept of ethnos and Bromlei's colleagues glaringly failed to disprove this. It would, indeed, have been difficult to do so for if one thinks better of it there was not much difference between the two.

Both were highly hypothetical and very far removed from historical, geographic, ethnographic and social realities. Both interpreted ethnos as a homogeneous and integral community which satisfies a particular set of criteria, although the criteria differed. Both completely ignored the role of contacts, influences, migrations, ties, mergers, etc. in the history of ethnic communities. Both conceptualised historical evolution of ethnic communities although for Gumilev it was a secondary issue while for Bromlei it was the core of the Soviet theory. Biological and ecological elements were present in both although they occupied a peripheral place in Bromlei's theory while for Gumilev's concept they were of vital importance. They differed about the roots of ethnicity in that the formational theory did not offer any and Gumilev put forward his idea of passionarism – but this did not in any way change the primordial nature of both concepts.

It is not important whether the theft of theory had actually taken place or not. The important fact is that there was so little difference between the two concepts that Soviet theoreticians of nation brought up in the spirit of the first found little to argue about in the second. The new era uncovered not only deep conservatism of the perception of ethnicity among former Soviet citizens in general but also utter emptiness of the academic theoretical horizon in the field.

### Theory and Practice

Soviet concepts of nation and ethnicity with their difficult wording and pseudo-academic spirit would not have been worth looking into if it were not for the role they played in the Soviet practice of dealing with the nationality problem. I shall not discuss nationality relations or nationality policy in the former Soviet Union for this topic goes far beyond the influence of any theory. However, to conclude this survey, I shall give several examples of how theoretical dogma aggravated the situation and substantiated malpractice.

One of the major grievances of many Soviet ethno-national communities against the Soviet regime was their unequal official status. The practice of allocating a particular status to a particular group seemed to be devoid of any logic but was in many cases politically motivated. I shall quote only two examples in the almost endless line. The majority of several Soviet peoples, such as Armenians, Azeris, Cherkesses and Germans, lived outside of the borders of the Soviet Union; two of the corresponding minorities within the borders of the former USSR (Armenians and Azeris) had the status of nations, one (Cherkesses) was considered a *narodnost*, one (Germans), a 'nationality group'. Two Northern peoples, Khanty and Mansi, who inhabited one and the same 'national-territorial district' and whose cultures were similar had, despite this, different status.

The difference of status itself would be sufficient to provoke political problems. But the official status of a particular group was associated with an official status of its corresponding territorial administrative unit (nations with the Soviet republics – in theory, federal states; *narodnosti*, with the autonomous republics, etc.) and this involved a particular set of political rights and different structures of government.

This practice is now traced back to Stalin's 1921 paper *On Further Tasks of the Party Concerning Nationality Policy* which was pre-

sented to the Xth Congress of the CPSU. The paper classified and subdivided Soviet nationalities into nations, *narodnosti*, nationality groups, etc. each being allocated a particular administrative unit.<sup>85</sup> Stalin's idea was strongly criticised at the Congress, for example by G.V. Chicherin<sup>86</sup> but later nobody dared to repeat his arguments. Academics were thus not responsible for introducing this discriminatory practice but they helped to entrench it by substantiating and developing Stalin's idea for decades.

Of no less practical importance was the principle that territory was one of the most important, indispensable characteristics of ethnic communities. The concept of ethnic territories implicit in the ethno-territorial nature of the former Soviet republics brought about the notion of 'indigenous' and 'non-indigenous' nationalities. Uzbeks, for example, were considered to be 'non-indigenous' in Tadzhikistan where they lived for centuries; the Russians in Latvia, the Lithuanians in Russia, etc. Officially this distinction did not involve any discrimination but it was always a factor in sensitive situations (high education, appointments, promotions, etc.)

Still worse was the situation of those communities whose ethno-territorial units were not federal republics but autonomous republics and regions, national-territorial districts, etc. within the borders of federal republics. They were perceived and treated by the majority as perpetual foreigners in their own country. There were more than twenty such units in the Russian Federation alone – no wonder that nearly all of them now want their full and complete independence.

The situation of the Soviet Jewish population was in this respect particularly tragic. Soviet Jews were granted their own 'national-territorial district' in the Far Eastern part of the Soviet Union which was too small, too far removed from the main regions of Jewish settlement and, most important, offered few occupations except agriculture – an activity which was alien to the highly urbanised Soviet Jews. No wonder they did not move there, preferring to plough their way to the top of many prestigious professions and occupations in big cities through semi-concealed but very real discrimination. The fact that during the 1970s and 1980s Soviet authorities allowed them to emigrate to Israel ('to return to their historical Motherland') – a unique option closed to all other nationalities – did not make the situation of those who stayed any better. On the contrary, it strengthened the perception of the Jews as traitors and aliens which helped to justify discrimination.

The position of ethnic groups which did not have territorial units or had them outside the borders of the Soviet Union was no less problematic. Eighteen such peoples (Germans, Poles, Koreans, Bulgarians and Greeks among them) who together constituted a sizeable minority of more than five million were even excluded from the category of 'Soviet peoples' in the population censuses. Unlike Jews, however, they were not offered a chance to return to their corresponding Motherlands.

The decades (in fact, centuries, for Tsarist policy in this respect was exactly the same) of living within the framework of administrative structure based on ethno-territorial principles doubtless strengthened the popular belief in its validity and entrenched prejudices in this respect. It has become one of the most important driving forces behind ethnic mobilisation which finally led to the disintegration of the Soviet Union and is now threatening to explode the existing state structures in its former territory.

Ethnicity had been further entrenched by the fact that it was registered in the identity documents. Moreover, official recognition of one's nationality (ethnicity) rested entirely on the biological principle for it was defined by the ethnicity of parents, i.e. by blood and not by culture, language, place of birth or any other criteria. At some stages of Soviet history nationality (ethnicity) of a person was defined by his or her mother's nationality, at other stages by the father's. Later it became possible to choose a nationality of one of the parents if these differed – but only in the case they did and only between these two. This was a *de facto* acceptance of the idea that a person can have only one ethnic identity which is biologically defined. As far as identity documents were concerned the much publicised 'super national community of a new type – Soviet people' existed only in the passports which were issued to Soviet citizens travelling abroad.

A registered nationality was not a matter of purely academic interest for the Soviet authorities. It was part and parcel of hundreds of official forms that a Soviet citizen filled in during his lifetime. It could be a blessing or a curse and in many cases was the decisive factor behind admissions, appointments, awards, distribution of special privileges, etc.

Lenin's idea of assimilation of nations (ethnic nations) as a progressive phenomenon widely shared by socialist movements and readily accepted by Soviet ideologists also contributed to aggravating nationality relations in the Soviet Union. Although the process of ethno-cultural integration in the Soviet Union was, indeed, going fast,

field material collected by ethnographers often showed the opposite tendencies or the problems and difficulties involved. These facts were, however, either restricted or interpreted in the spirit of Lenin's theory<sup>87</sup> which provoked still more grievances. Moreover, Soviet authorities used the slogan of assimilation for its Russification policy.

To sum up, it would have been enough to say that the Soviet theory of nation and ethnicity provided pseudo-academic justifications for malpractice and contributed to entrenching ethnic prejudices, silencing some grievances and creating others. But in fact it did even more harm than that. It was an official theory of the repressive totalitarian state which moulded and used it in its own interests with devastating results for people and, paradoxically, for itself. Another paradox was that this connection with the totalitarian state proved fatal for the theory as well for its official status precluded challenge or debate and this was, in the final analysis, one of the major roots of its weakness.

### NOTES

1. L.A. Forman, *Trumpet from the Housetops. Selected Writing*, (ed. by S. Forman and A. Odendaal), Zed Books, Ohio University Press and David Philip, 1992, pp.190-216.
2. J. Slovo, 'The Working Class and Nation-building', in M. van Diepen (ed.), *The National Question in South Africa*, London & New Jersey, 1988; A modified version of the same text in J. Slovo, *The South African Working Class and the National Democratic Revolution*, An Umsebenzi Discussion Pamphlet Published by the South African Communist Party, n.p.: n.d.
3. Comrade Mzala, 'Revolutionary Theory on the National Question in South Africa', in M. van Diepen (ed.), *The National Question...*
4. See, for example, D. Nkululeko, 'The National Question and the Rise of Imperialism in Azania. Views and Opinions', in *Resist, Defend, Advance. Black Consciousness Movement of Azania*. London, n.d. [1985]; B. Tsotsi, 'On the National Question', *Solidarity*, 1982, no. 9.
5. *Sunday Star Review*, 6 January 1991, p.9.
6. International Conference: *Self-determination: a Contemporary Phenomenon*. 6-7 March 1996, Somerset-West.
7. Volkstaat Council. *Draft Report on Self-Determination: its nature, development and application - a survey*. February, 1996.
8. J. Slovo, *The South African Working Class...*, p. 30
9. J Slovo, Interview with the author, Johannesburg, 11 August 1992.
10. One of the main difficulties of writing about Soviet concepts of nation and ethnicity in English is translation of the terminology. Many Russian terms in this academic field have been borrowed from other languages but used in a different sense so that back-translation into English or German distorts their meaning in

- Russian. One of the most vivid examples is the term *nation* itself – in Russian *natsiia* – which, although ostensibly the same, stands for an ethnic group rather than a state. Some terms can not be translated at all and are usually transliterated.
11. M.M. Mogiliansky, 'Etnographia i ieio zadachi' (Ethnography and its Tasks), in *Vestnik Russkogo antropologicheskogo obshchestva*, St. Petersburg, 1909, vol. 3.
  12. S.M. Shirokogorov, *Etnos. Issledovanie osnovnykh printsipov izmeneniia etnicheskikh i etnographicheskikh iavlenii*, Shanghai, 1923.
  13. *Kommunist*, 1989, no. 3, p.86.
  14. There are at least three Russian words which can be vaguely expressed by the English term *nationality*. The first is *natsiia* (nation). The second is *natsionalnost*, which has four meanings (citizenship; a person's ethnic affiliation as he or she understands them; a person's ethnic affiliation as registered in his or her identity document – which does not necessarily coincide with the previous one; a people). The third is *narodnost* (from *narod* – a people). This last term cannot be translated and is usually transliterated in the academic literature. For a Russian speaker it means something like a small, or smaller people or nation, or perhaps even a less developed people or nation.  
I would not have bored the reader with this linguistic exercise but for the importance of both terms for Soviet theory of nation and the ongoing debate, as well as for Soviet political practice in the sphere of nationality relations.
  15. M.V. Kriukov, 'Chitaia Lenina. Razmyshleniia etnographa o problemakh teorii natsij' (Reading Lenin. Thoughts of an ethnographer about the theory of nation). *Sovetskaia etnographiia*, 1989, no. 4, pp.5-19.
  16. *KPSS v rezolutsiiakh i resheniiakh s'ezdov, konferentsij i plenumov TsK (CPSU in the Resolutions of its Congresses, Conferences and Plenary Sessions)*, Moscow, 1970, vol. 1, pp.387-389.
  17. M.S. Kulichenko, *Borba Kommunisticheskoj partii za reshenie natsionalnogo voprosa v 1918-1920 gg (The Struggle of the Communist Party for the Resolution of the Nationality Question in 1918-1920)*, Kharkov, 1963, p.440.
  18. V.I. Lenin, *Sochineniia (Collected Works)*, Moscow, vol. VI, p.293.
  19. I.V. Stalin, *Sochineniia (Collected Works)*, Moscow, vol. VI, p.32.
  20. *Protokoly VIII s'iezda RKP(b) (Minutes of the VIIIth Congress of the Russian Communist Party [Bolsheviks])*, Moscow, 1959, p.48.
  21. V.I. Lenin, *Sochineniia*, vol. VI, p.293.
  22. V.I. Lenin, *Sochineniia*, vol. XX, p.9.
  23. *Protokoly VIII s'iezda RKP(b)*, pp.499-504.
  24. V.I. Lenin, *Sochineniia*, vol. XXXV, pp.58-59.
  25. V.I. Lenin, *Sochineniia*, vol. XX, p.19.
  26. For example, V.I. Lenin, *Polnoie sobranie sochinenij (Complete Works)*, Moscow, vol. 24, pp.125, 127.
  27. I.V. Stalin, *Sochineniia*, vol. II, pp.296-297.
  28. M.V. Kriukov, 'Chitaia Lenina...', pp.7-8.
  29. I.V. Stalin, *Marxism i voprosy iazykoznaniiia*, Moscow, 1951.
  30. V.V. Mavrodin, 'K voprosu o skladyvanii velikorusskoj narodnosti i russkoj natsii' (On the Question of the Formation of the Great Russian Narodnost and the Russian Nation), *Sovetskaia etnographiia*, 1947, no. 4.
  31. S.P. Tolstov, M. G. Levin, N. N. Cheboksarov, *Ocherki obshchei etnographii*, Moscow, 1957.

32. See, for example: S.A. Tokarev, 'Problema etnicheskikh obshchnostei. K metodologii problem etnographii' (The Problem of Ethnic Communities. On the methodology of the problems of ethnography), *Voprosy filosofii*, 1964, no. 11; V.I. Kozlov, 'O poniatii etnicheskoi obshchnosti' (On the Concept of Ethnic Community), *Sovetskaia etnographiia*, 1967, no. 2; N.N. Cheboksarov, 'Problemy tipologii etnicheskikh obshchnostei v trudakh sovetskikh uchenykh' (The Problems of Typology of Ethnic Communities in the Works of Soviet Academics), *Sovetskaia etnographiia*, 1967, no. 4; L.N. Gumilev, 'O termine "ethnos"' (On the Term 'Ethnos'), in *Doklady otdelenij i komissij Geographicheskogo obshchestva SSSR (Reports of the Departments and Committees of the Geographic Society of the USSR)*, Leningrad, 1967, vol. 3; Yu. V. Bromlei, 'Ethnos i endogamiia' (Ethnos and Endogamy), *Sovetskaia etnographiia*, 1969, no. 6; L.N. Gumilev, 'Ethnogenez i ethnosfera' (Ethnogenesis and Ethnosphere), *Priroda*, 1970, nos. 1, 2; Yu. V. Bromlei, 'K voprosu o sushchnosti ethnosa' (On the Question of the Essence of Ethnos), *Priroda*, 1970, no. 2; Yu. V. Bromlei, 'Ethnos and ethnosotsialny organism' (Ethnos and Ethno-social Community), *Vestnik AN SSSR*, 1970, no. 8; V.I. Kozlov, 'Ethnos i ekonomika. Etnicheskaja i ekonomicheskaja obshchnosti' (Ethnos and Economy. Ethnic and economic communities), *Sovetskaia etnographiia*, 1970, no. 6.
33. Yu. V. Bromlei, *Ethnos i etnographiia*, Moscow, 1973.
34. Yu. V. Bromlei, *Ocherki teorii ethnosa*, Moscow, 1983.
35. L.N. Gumilev, 'O termine "ethnos"'.
36. Yu. V. Bromlei, *Ocherki...*, p.45.
37. Yu. V. Bromlei, *Ethnos...*, p.37.
38. Yu. V. Bromlei, *Ocherki...*, pp.57-58.
39. *Ibid.*, pp.44-46.
40. *Ibid.*, p.35.
41. Yu. V. Bromlei. *Ethnos...*, pp.41-42.
42. *Ibid.*, part I, chapter VI.
43. Yu. V. Bromlei. *Ocherki...*, p.50.
44. *Ibid.*, essays 5, 6.
45. For example, *ibid.*, pp.64-65
46. See, for example, T.V. Tabolina, 'Biologizatsiia etnicheskogo v amerikanskoj etno-sotsiologii' (Biologisation of Ethnicity in American Ethno-Sociology), in *Rasy i narody (annual)*, Moscow, 1985.
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48. Yu. V. Bromlei, *Ethnos...*, p.28; *Ocherki...*, p.21.
49. Yu. V. Bromlei, *Ocherki...*, pp.212-232.
50. *Ibid.*, part III.
51. *Ibid.*, essay XI.
52. *Ibid.*, essay XII.
53. *Ibid.*, pp.38-39.
54. To my knowledge the term 'socialist narodnost' was first used by I. Tsamerian, in 'Natsiia i narodnost' (Nation and narodnost), *Bolshevik*, 1951, no. 1, p.61.
55. Yu. V. Bromlei, 'Eshcho raz k voprosu o tipologizatsii etnosotsialnykh obshchnostei' (Once Again on the Question of the Typology of Ethno-Social Communities), *Sovetskaia etnographiia*, 1986, no. 5, pp.60, 63.

56. As far as I can judge, Bromlei's major works have not been translated into English. This is unusual for his official position certainly enabled him to have them translated. My guess is that Bromlei was worried about the value of his theoretical achievements outside the aura of 'foreign' terminology for it would be much less foreign in any European language and might even show the shallowness of his theoretical constructions. Moreover, he might have shunned the prospect of losing the respect of his Western colleagues, for he had to deal with them often and was, no doubt, aware of the fact that the primordial approach to ethnicity on which his constructions were based had fallen out of fashion among respectable academics in the West.
57. S.A. Tokarev, 'Problema etnicheskikh obshchnostei...', p.43-44, 49-52.
58. V.I. Kozlov, 'O klassifikatsii etnicheskikh obshchnostei: sostoianii voprosa' (On the Classification of Ethnic Societies: current debate), in *Issledovaniia po obshchei etnographii (Studies in General Ethnography)*, Moscow, 1979, p.15.
59. V.I. Kozlov, 'O poniatii etnicheskoi obshchnosti...', pp.106 et al.
60. A.G. Agaiev, *K voprosu o teorii narodnosti (On the Question of the Theory of Narodnost)*, Makhachkala, 1965, pp.40-41, 56, 65.
61. N.N. Cheboksarov, 'Problemy tipologii...'
62. S.A. Arutiunov & N. N. Cheboksarov, 'Peredacha informatsii kak mekhanizm sushchestvovaniia etnosotsialnykh i biologicheskikh grupp chelovechestva' (The Transfer of Information as a Mechanism of the Existence of Ethnic and Biological Groups of Mankind), in *Rasy i narody (annual)*, 1972, no. 2, pp.23-26.
63. The authors developed their theory in several publications. It was finally summarised in S.A. Arutiunov, 'Narody i kultura', *Razvitiie i vzaimodeistvie (Peoples and Cultures. Development and Interaction)*, Moscow, 1989.
64. V.V. Pimenov, 'Sistemnyi podkhod k ethnosu. K postanovke problemy' (System Approach to Ethnos. On the formulation of the problem), in *Rasy i narody (annual)*, 1986, no. 16, p.13.
65. V.V. Pimenov, 'Yeshcho raz ob opredelenii poniatii "ethnos"' (Once Again on the Definition of the Notion of 'Ethnos'), *Voprosy arkheologii Urala*, vol. 13, 1975, p.29.
66. A. Kuper, 'United Nation?', *Politics*, 1987, 12 June.
67. For example, I. S. Kon, 'Psikhologiya predrassudka' (Psychology of prejudice), *Novyi mir*, 1966, no. 9; I.S. Kon, 'K probleme natsionalnogo kharaktera' (On the Problem of National Character), in *Istoriia i psikhologiya (History and Psychology)*, Moscow, 1971.
68. V.A. Tishkov, 'Narody i gosudarstvo' (Peoples and the State), *Kommunist*, 1989, no. 1; V. A. Tishkov, 'O novykh podkhodakh v teorii i praktike mezhnatsionalnykh otnoshenii' (On the New Approaches to the Theory and Practice of the Relations between Nationalities), *Sovetskaia etnographiia*, 1989, no. 5.
69. See footnote 32.
70. L.N. Gumilev, *Ethnogenez i biosfera semli*, Leningrad, 1989.
71. All except *Ethnogenesis...* were historical.
72. L. N. Gumilev, *Ethnogenesis...*, p.101.
73. *Ibid.*, p.437.
74. *Ibid.*, p.98.
75. *Ibid.*, pp.477, 479.
76. *Ibid.*, p.91.

77. Ibid., p.295.
78. 'Passionarism' (in Russian, 'passionarnost') was one of Gumilev's neologisms. It derives from the English word 'passion' and stands for 'the new type of energy – ethnic energy' which Gumilev claimed to have discovered.
79. L.N. Gumilev, *Ethnogenesis...*, pp.252, 253.
80. Ibid., p.272.
81. Ibid., p.263.
82. Ibid., p.272.
83. Ibid., pp.257–258.
84. Ibid., Part 8. See also L.N. Gumilev, *Drevniaia Rus i velikaia step (Ancient Rus and the Great Steep)*, Moscow, 1989, pp.756–757.
85. I.V. Stalin, *Sochineniia...*, vol. 5, pp.24–26.
86. M.V. Kriukov, 'Chitaia Lenina...', p.11.
87. The best example of such an interpretation was Bromlei's third and last book: Yu. V. Bromlei, *Ethno-sotsialnyie protsessy: teoriia, istoriia, sovremennost (Ethno-Social Processes: theory, history, modernity)*, Moscow, 1987.

## Liberal Values and Socialist Models

### Reply to Darrel Moellendorf

Anton D. Lowenberg

In a recent issue of this journal, Darrel Moellendorf evaluates three socialist models of economic organisation in terms of their efficiency and equity attributes (Moellendorf 1997). From the perspective of the cogency of the arguments made within the worldview accepted by Moellendorf, his contribution must certainly be judged a scholarly and thoughtfully written piece. However, as a free market economist I find the central claim of his article – that *any* of the three socialist models discussed can successfully reproduce or even approximate the individual freedom and economic efficiency of a private-property rights system – implausible to say the least.

All three of Moellendorf's socialist models necessarily abandon the incentive structure inherent in entrepreneurial activity and residual claimancy which comprise the essence of a market organisation of society. Firms 'managed by teams elected by the workers' (Moellendorf 1997:67), for example, cannot compete with one another and maximise profits in the meaningful sense of privately-owned firms because the incentives confronting management committees are fundamentally different from those of owners.<sup>1</sup> That central planning could ever aspire to determine 'the overall allocation of available resources, primary input prices, major investments, sectoral coordination, and regional distribution' (Moellendorf 1997:66) in a way consistent with efficiency seems incredibly presumptuous, symptomatic of an Hayekian 'fatal conceit', and of course at odds with all we have learned in recent years from the failed socialist economies of central and eastern Europe. Part of the reason for Moellendorf's optimism no doubt stems from his remarkable sanguinity regarding the quantity and quality of information possessed by planning agencies: 'Bodies of negotiated coordination have a wealth of information at their disposal about needs' (Moellendorf 1997:71). This view ignores the Austrian argument that planners are fundamentally incapable of gaining access to the tacit knowledge which is embedded in market