

Russian Ethnonationalism*

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Ethnic communities throughout the world are increasingly making clear their demands, their interests, and their readiness to act in the name of these interests. This is particularly true in the republics that were formerly part of the Soviet Union. These republics are experiencing a wave of ethnic renaissances and ethnically based nationalism among the titular nationality groups, minority nationality groups, and the numerically, politically, and economically dominant Russian population.

The modern rebirth of ethnic nationalism has prompted a reevaluation of the concepts of nation, nationality, and nationalism in many parts of the world. I use *nation*, *nationality*, and *ethnic group* as virtually synonymous and, using Gellner's definition, define them as ethnically based communities that possess common ideas, values, and interests – that is, the characteristics of ethnic consciousness (1).

The concept of ethnic consciousness includes both the notion of self-identification and popular perceptions concerning the ethnic or national characteristics that relate to one's own and different groups. Ideas about a group's origin, history, language, culture, traditions, standards of behavior, customs, and arts all play a role in the formation of these stereotypes and

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form the basis of the image of a collective «we». Additionally, areas of traditional habitation, territorial extent, and a history of national sovereignty can influence the development of ethnic consciousness. The positive emotional aspects of ethnic consciousness include pride in a group's achievements and a strong interest in and connection with its past, the negative aspects can include hostility to nongroup members, chauvinism, and racism.

In this chapter I focus on the development of Russian ethnic identification and consciousness and the politicization of that consciousness in ethnic nationalism. Although most of the developments discussed in this chapter occurred within the framework of what is now the Russian Federation, it is important to note at the outset that 25 million Russians live outside the borders of the Russian Federation, in areas that were once part of the former Soviet Union but now constitute the «near abroad» (2).

Most analyses of the recent upsurge in ethnic nationalism focus on processes unleashed by the far-reaching social and political transformation initiated by Gorbachev's attempt to reform the USSR. Despite the fact that *perestroika* and *glasnost* played critical roles in enabling ethnically based intelligentsias to gain access to the mass media and mobilize populations around national ideas, the origin of national and ethnically based demands and interests should be sought well before the 1980s.

The source of these demands can be found in the tremendous increase in the numbers of intellectuals, professionals, and creative and scientific workers in every national group in the Soviet Union. Despite the great harm inflicted on all nations by the Soviet regime, it should be recognized that the vast majority of the population received modern educations under Stalin and his successors, resulting in a substantial increase in the size and ethnic diversity of the intelligentsia. Soviet «affirmative action» strategies resulted in the creation of national intelligentsias, capable of articulating national needs and expressing national interests. As a result, from the late

1970s on, the traditionally dominant Russians were confronted with increased competition for socioeconomic status and political position from members of non-Russian groups. As the socioeconomic potential of the non-Russians increased, so did their demands for participation and a greater share of the system's rewards.

This situation is hardly unprecedented. Throughout the globe, when the socio-economic status of territorially contiguous ethnic communities has changed, ethnically based frictions have been aggravated. Canada and Belgium offer two of the most obvious examples. When one ethnic community begins to approach the economic, social, and cultural levels of another, heretofore dominant group, the first community invariably articulates new demands, while the second becomes increasingly anxious about the loss of its former status.

Despite these harbingers of change, the ideology of the Russian patriotic movement found little general support in the 1970s and early 1980s. Only a small part of the intelligentsia was even aware of the ideological struggle between the magazines *Molodaia gvardiia* and *Novyi mir* in 1969–70 or of the controversies over «The Lay of the Host of Igor» and Olzhas Suleimenov's «Az i ia» during the mid-1970s. The popular consciousness of the majority of Russians remained relatively tranquil throughout the 1970s, and interethnic attitudes toward the other nations of the Soviet Union remained neutral or favorable. According to the findings of ethnosociological studies in which I participated in the 1970s in a series of Russian cities including Leningrad (now St. Petersburg), Saratov, Kalinin, and Krasnodar, as well as cities such as Tashkent and Kishinev (Chisinau), most Russians (generally constituting more than 80 percent of the population) were favorably disposed toward other national groups. Although these studies demonstrated that Russians did not feel as comfortable in Tallinn as they did in Moscow and that they were aware of ethnically based competi-

tion in Tbilisi, there were no overt indicators of an upsurge in Russian ethnic consciousness. At that time, over 70 percent of the Russian intelligentsia declared themselves favorably disposed toward other ethnic groups (4)

Wherever they lived, whether in their own ethnic surroundings or among other nations. Russians usually identified themselves as a group primarily on the basis of their common language, in Russian cities, as well as in Tbilisi and Kishinev, approximately two-thirds of the Russian population considered language to be the primary basis of their sense of ethnic identity. Shared traditions and customs ranked second, while the level of their «professional culture» was generally cited in third place. Common traits of character and history, as well as place of residence and physical appearance, ranked fourth through seventh, respectively. It is worth noting that only 25 to 60 percent of Russian respondents named a particular feature, such as language or culture, as an essential attribute of ethnic consciousness, whereas 70 to 80 percent of Georgians, Moldovans, and Estonians did. Fully one-quarter of the Russian respondents could not identify any particular trait as common to Russians as a group, and many had difficulties in answering the question (5).

Before the recent upsurge of national movements, what might be termed an «imperial mentality» could be observed among ethnic Russians. Whereas 80 percent of Georgians and Uzbeks named their titular republics when asked what they considered their «motherland» in the late 1970s and the early 1980s, Russians, regardless of where they lived (Moscow, Kishinev, or Tashkent), in most cases (70 percent and up) damped all the territories included in the Soviet Union. When *perestroika* unleashed an explosion of national feeling among the non-Russian peoples, however, many Russians responded by reorienting their sense of group identity away from this imperial mass consciousness.

Growing dissatisfaction with the worsening economic situation, along with disgust at the general political and moral decay revealed by *glasnost*, was directed against the all-union center in Moscow. This anti-imperial sentiment spilled over into a generalized anti-Russian sentiment, since most non-Russians identified the center with Russia and Russians. Anti-Russian sentiments in turn prompted a Russian nationalist backlash. The Russian population maintained that they had suffered as much as other groups from the depredations of the Soviet. administrative-command system, and they were far from willing to assume the obligations of supplying compensation, moral or economic, to others. Russian ethnic consolidation can therefore be seen, at least in part, as a means of disassociating Russians from the accusations being directed against the center and the administrative-command system.

Perestroika introduced two essentially new factors that promoted the growth of Russian national consciousness. The first was the extraordinary growth of national movements and interethnic conflicts throughout the country: in the Baltic republics, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Ukraine, and Belarusia. The efforts of Tatarstan, Bashkiria, Yakutia, and Tuva to separate themselves from Russia and attain union republic status also contributed to this process. The national movements in the periphery not only produced a psychological chain reaction among Russians but provided models of organizational forms for the pursuit of ethnically based goals. In the Russian case these largely took the forms of Interfronts and workers' collectives.

The second factor connected with *perestroika* that drastically affected Russian national consciousness was the aggravation of sociopolitical conflicts within the Soviet Union and the Russian Federation. Both conservatives and radicals began to appeal to «the national idea» and to make use of the national patriotic feelings of Russians as a means to gain popular sup-

port. In the pro-1989 stages of *perestroika*, the ideology and policies of Gorbachev's team and those of the so-called left radicals (such as the group gathered around *Moscow Tribune* and the Inter-Regional Group) were not oriented toward national ideas but were concerned with social and political democratization.

The right-wing Russian national patriotic movement focused almost exclusively on national ideas and concerns, but it had little popular support in this early period. Whereas in the non-Russian republics national movements raised issues of sovereignty, economic independence, and the priority of national culture and language from the outset, the major issues were formulated differently in Russia. Demands were put forward for the establishment of a Russian Academy of Sciences, a Russian national capital, and a Russian Communist Party. At that time, Russians as a whole, including those within the Russian national patriotic movement, focused their attention on ecology, the renewal of Russian culture, and problems of historical memory.

One of the earliest organizations to adopt a militant nationalist position was Pamyat («Memory»). Originally a defender of Russian culture, it acquired a scandalous notoriety under the leadership of the right-wing radical Dimitry Vasil'ev as it searched for «enemies» in the persons of «conspiring» Jews and «Freemasons.» Pamyat fanned the embers of Russian chauvinism and contributed to the aggravation of anti-Semitic feelings. Newspapers such as *Komsomol'skaia pravda* and *Moskovskie novosti* openly opposed this movement. It is indicative of Pamyat's general lack of mass support that during the election meetings in Moscow in the spring of 1990 Pamyat was unable to muster more than a few hundred supporters. Of course, this did not mean that some of Pamyat's ideas were not shared by larger portions of the population. This was particularly true in St. Petersburg, where Pamyat meetings had a higher attendance and their participants

were more aggressive. Still, according to surveys conducted in December 1989, only 5 percent of those polled in Moscow declared themselves to be «ready to struggle against non-Russians and 'cosmopolitans' in favor of Russia.» (6)

Other elements within the Russian patriotic movement concentrated on different issues. These included an emphasis on the uniqueness of Russian historical development, a general hostility toward liberal democratic tendencies, and the rejection of the feasibility of applying Western economic models in Russia. Western liberal tendencies were explicitly attacked in periodicals such as *Nash sovremennik* (the circulation of which doubled between 1987 and 1990), *Molodaia gvardiia*, and *Literaturnaia Rossia* (7). Polls demonstrated, however, that the public at large was not even aware of these disputes in Moscow, where Pamyat was very active.

Nonetheless, the historical consciousness of Russians was clearly increasing, manifesting itself for the most part in a concern for the protection of historical monuments. According to polls carried out by the USSR Academy of Sciences Institute of Ethnography, the majority of Muscovites believed that the restoration of historical monuments should be funded despite shortfalls in funding for health care and an acute housing shortage.

Various clubs, unions, and national fronts supporting *perestroika* and radical reforms first appeared in 1987. Such organizations proliferated in 1988, and by the end of 1989 there were close to fifty such organizations in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Yaroslavl, Kuibyshev, Sverdlovsk, Omsk, Cheliabinsk, Nizhnii Novgorod, and other cities. Unlike similar organizations outside Russia (particularly in the Baltic and Armenia), the idea of nationality and the promotion of national themes was not part of their political and ideological agenda. As but one indicator of this, until October 1989, all attempts to create an All-Russian Popular Front were unsuccessful.

By the end of 1989, however, it had become apparent that the democratic movement would have to employ Russian national ideas if it were to compete successfully for popular support. On the eve of preparations for the elections to the RSFSR Congress of Peoples Deputies, a Confederation of the Popular Fronts and Democratic Movements of Russia was founded, and the idea of reviving Russia played an important role in this national consolidation.

Simultaneously, informal Russian patriotic organizations such as *Otechestvo* (Fatherland), *Rossia Molodaia* (Young Russia), *Nevskaia Bitva* (Neva River Battle), *Rosstiskoe Obshchestvo Spravedlivosti* (Russian Society of Justice), *Tovarishchestvo Russkikh Khudozhnikov* (Association of Russian Artists), *Rossy*, and five factions of Pamyat were created. The RSFSR Writers' Union also became an outspoken proponent of chauvinist Russian nationalism. Belligerent anti-Semitic declarations at the Sixth Plenum of the RSFSR Writers' Union management board evoked widespread alarm and prompted criticism in the liberal press. The Writers' Union responded to its critics by sending a letter to the CPSU Central Committee asserting a need for urgent and extraordinary help from the United Nations and the Security Council to counter widespread discrimination against Russians. The letter expressed one particularly ominous warning: «The moral blackmail of the patient and good-natured Russian people, ever sensitive to the misfortunes of their neighbors, a blackmail which hurts Russian national pride, has reached such a degree that the provocateurs should not count on Russian forgiveness and endurance» (9).

The Russian national patriotic movement was far from ideologically homogeneous. Four groups are of particular interest. The Union for the Spiritual Regeneration of the Fatherland, a national patriotic federation that included associations in Moscow, St. Petersburg, the Volga region, the Urals, Siberia, Belarusia, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan, as well as representa-

tives of the Russian Orthodox Church, first became active in March 1989. In its political platform, the federation supported a socialist variant of *perestroika*. In contrast, the St. Petersburg group *Spasenie* (Salvation) and its members can be described as cultural environmentalists, and its activities were directed toward the rescue of historical and cultural monuments. The *Russkoe Znamia* (Russian Banner) society could also be classified as a historical patriotic group. It campaigned for the reinstatement of Russian national symbols such as flags and state insignia, the reestablishment of the old names of Russian cities, and the creation of a Russian Academy of Sciences. Finally, on the eve of republic and local elections in the RSFSR, an Association of Russian artists took the initiative in creating a Joint Council of Russia (OSR), a group that included various Russian patriotic groups, cultural and educational organizations, clubs, societies, funds, and fronts. The OSR also included the Interfronts of the Baltic republics and Moldova (10).

Until the end of 1989, the national patriotic platform focused on demands for a specifically Russian path of development that would bring about a reversal of the harm done to Russian culture, demography, and the economy during the Soviet period (11). After 1989, a new set of ideas was advanced: Russian sovereignty, economic and cultural independence, the reinstatement of the previous national name (Great Russians), and separatism (12). The necessity of protecting Russians in the non-Russian republics became a particular focus of attention: «Not one hair shall fall off anyone's head. Not one tear shall drop. The Russian population will not be held hostage by national and political intrigues» (13). For the first time, the idea of using the army to defend Russian statehood also became part of nationalist discourse (14).

The Russian national idea made increasing inroads on mass consciousness and began to penetrate ever further into Russian political life.

While the official publications of the Russian patriotic movement had a circulation of only 1.5 million, the strongly nationalist mass media, such as *Sovetskaia Rossiia*, reached far broader audiences (15). Content analysis of *Sovetskaia Rossiia* reveals that, in comparison with 1957-58, the use of the term «Russian patriotism» increased fivefold and old Russian folklore terms increased fourfold by the end of the 1980s (16). Central Television established a special Russian channel, and the Russian government created a popular magazine, *Rodina* (Motherland), to focus on issues of concern to Russians (17). Long before the coup attempt, Gorbachev began to take Russian national patriotic feelings and ideas into account; his invitation to the nationalist writer Rasputin to participate in the Presidential Council was particularly significant in this regard. The elections for the RSFSR Congress of People's Deputies represented a turning point in the role that Russian patriotic and nationalist ideas played in the conduct of Russian politics. For the first time, the radical democratic movement formally incorporated these ideas, which had long been «knocking at their door,» into their program. Boris Yeltsin actively employed the call for Russian sovereignty in his political campaign and in the summer of 1990 made effective use of the notion that Russians were disproportionately contributing to Soviet coffers. During his visits to various regions of the RSFSR, he proclaimed that «we cannot go on living in such conditions. Seventy billion rubles are being taken from Russia. Where are they going?» (18). Other radical democrats, such as Galina Starovoitova, specifically condemned the harm done by the totalitarian system to the Russian people and referred to past repressions of the Russian intelligentsia and peasantry. In this way, Russian national concepts, albeit devoid of references to a special path of Russian development or «hidden enemies,» were used for the first time to broaden support for the democratic movement.

The campaign for national sovereignty increasingly radicalized the political situation in the early summer of 1990. For the first time, members of the RSFSR Congress of People's Deputies promoted the economic sovereignty and independence of Russia. The majority supported the precedence of the republic's laws over all-union legislation and the republic's control of Russian resources. In so doing, the Russian government repeated actions taken two years previously by the Baltic republics, Georgia, Moldova, and Azerbaijan, actions that had prompted severe criticism from the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

The adoption of the Declaration of Russian Sovereignty, albeit in a softer form than originally proposed, was of principal importance. The adoption of this measure meant that relations between the republics and the center would have to change fundamentally. So-called vertical or hierarchical arrangements between the center and the republics were increasingly replaced by horizontal agreements between the republics themselves. These were viewed as more efficacious because they were based on the free choice of the parties to the agreement and reflected the direct interests of the republics. Such agreements were signed in the summer of 1990 between the Russian Federation and the Baltic republics and, following their example, by Azerbaijan and Belarus, Azerbaijan and Georgia, and Moldova and Latvia.

In the same period a number of other, less benign, trends were becoming manifest within the nationalist movement. Opponents of *perestroika* increasingly turned to the national idea in their efforts to counter reform. Supporters of right-wing trends in the all-union government apparatus, in the CPSU, and in the army tried to use the national feelings, and sometimes the national prejudices, of Russians for their own ends. Russians, like other groups in the population, found themselves in an increasingly difficult and unfamiliar economic environment and unprepared for political pluralism.

Anxiety and uncertainty made them vulnerable to scapegoating, chauvinism, and old, familiar, ideological nostrums. The Initiative Congress of the Communists of Russia, held in St. Petersburg in 1990, was quickly followed by the convening of a Congress of the Communist Party of the RSFSR. These events were particularly important because they marked the initiation of open cooperation between the previously relatively unpopular Russian chauvinist movement and the conservative wing of the CPSU.

Sociological investigations conducted at the end of the 1980s showed that the attitudes of Russians toward other nationalities had taken a negative turn. In comparison with ethnosociological studies carried out in the 1970s, polls taken at the end of the 1980s demonstrated that the proportion of Russians expressing ethnic prejudices had almost doubled. Anti-Semitic feelings in particular were on the rise. Opinion polls carried out by a joint Soviet-American team of socioethnologists in 1990 showed that such feelings could be detected among one-fifth to one-third of the residents of Moscow and St. Petersburg, areas where anti-Semitism appeared to be most pronounced.

The events of August 1991 served to increase these trends toward greater Russian self-identification. Even as he defended democracy, Yeltsin appealed to the ethnic feelings of Russians. At that time, the White House (the Russian parliament building) became a symbol not only of democratic reform but of Russian freedom. During a victory demonstration on August 24, the tricolored Russian flag was raised over the parliament building; Yeltsin unveiled a new coat of arms for Russia and reestablished the Order of Saint George. One could sense the feelings of Russian pride during the demonstrations of August 20 and 24.

The agreement reached between Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus in December 1991 at Belovezhskaia Pushcha dealt the final blow to the Soviet state. The collapse of the USSR had a major impact on the development of

Russian national consciousness. Many people responded emotionally and were unable to imagine Russia without its historical territories: others feared the consequences of severing the economic links between republics, the disruption of transportation routes to Europe and Asia, and the loss of material resources. Still others feared that the process of decentralization would lead to the dissolution of Russia itself, a prospect that seemed particularly likely in 1992 and the beginning of 1993.

Although it may seem paradoxical, neither expressions of mass shock nor public demonstrations followed the dissolution of the USSR. People's attention was mostly focused on the political infighting between Yeltsin's supporters and his opponents, the changes in economic relations, and the need to adapt to new realities, to devise «ways of surviving.» Russian ethnic consciousness was manifested and ethnic relations became increasingly strained, but types of identity other than ethnic were paramount.

Critically, Russian nationalist ideas became a weapon in the internal political struggle going on in the Russian Federation. In 1992-93, the major arena of this struggle was at the center, between the parliament and the executive. The opposition, which dominated the parliament, accused Yeltsin of engineering the collapse of the Soviet Union and blamed him for all the misfortunes experienced by the 25 million Russians «abandoned» in the «near abroad.» They also played on fears that Russia would follow the path of Yugoslavia into civil war. Yeltsin had to deal with separatism and outbreaks of armed conflict not only in Russia but elsewhere in the former Soviet space, particularly in South Ossetia and Abkhazia in Georgia. The opposition also attempted to inflame national sensitivities concerning the dispute with Ukraine over the Black Sea Fleet and Crimea.

In his confrontation with the Supreme Soviet, Yeltsin cultivated the support of the republics (i.e., the former autonomies) within the Russian Federation. In May 1993, he convened a Constitutional Assembly to draft a

constitution outside the purview of the Supreme Soviet. But the intertwining of political and ethnic interests was clearly visible in the deliberations of the assembly. The representatives of oblasts and krajs with majority Russian populations demanded equal rights with the republics (i.e. the former autonomies) and rejected the draft's reference to the republics as «sovereign states.» They also refused to include a right to self-determination, up to and including separation from the federation, in the new constitution.

The democratic reformers (henceforth democrats) attempted to prepare the way for these constitutional innovations even before the assembly opened. They used the print media to advance the argument that fears of the collapse of the Russian state were a myth being used by the leaders of the republics for their own ends. Whereas in the USSR non-Russians had constituted almost half of the population of the state, in the Russian Federation they made up less than a fifth (18 percent). Ethnic groups with their own state formations made up even less, only 12 percent of the population, and since large numbers of them lived outside the boundaries of «their» titular states, the relevant share of the population was much less. In more than half of all the republics (thirteen of twenty-one) of the federation, the titular ethnic group does not constitute a majority. The Tatars form the second-largest ethnic group in the federation, but even so they constitute only 7 percent of the total population. More important, almost three-quarters of all Tatars live outside Tatarstan.

The democrats also argued against the terms of the Federal Treaty. They called it «a corpse» and asserted that it divided up the population according to different brands instead of uniting them as citizens. They argued that «an asymmetric federation doesn't have a chance for existence or development» and insisted that it was «necessary 'to equalize' the federation [by granting absolutely equal rights to all subjects of the Federation].» (19)

In his effort to secure the passage of the new constitution, Yeltsin offered various concessions to the leaders of the republics. In one of the first presidential drafts, the twenty-one republics were allotted the same number of seats in the upper house of the parliament as all of Russia's kraia and oblasts put together although there were twice as many of the latter as there were of the former. At a meeting with the leaders of the republics on May 26, 1993, and again at the Constitutional Assembly in June, Yeltsin supported a provision that would allow republics that did not wish to sign the Federal Treaty to regulate their relations with the federation by means of bilateral treaties, which would then be incorporated into the treaty. He even approved of the formula holding that «the republic is a sovereign state» (20). Nevertheless, the leaders of the republics refused to adopt the new constitution, and Yeltsin shifted his support to provisions prohibiting secession.

This phase of political struggle ended with the events of October 3–4 and the adoption of the new constitution by popular vote in December 1993. In February 1994, the federal government concluded a bilateral treaty with Tatarstan, the republic that, with the exception of Chechnya, had proceeded farthest along the path to independence. The antireform opposition's accusations that the president and the democrats were following a path that would lead to the disintegration of Russia were effectively refuted by the successful conclusion of this treaty.

But the parliamentary elections of December 1993 demonstrated the potency of appeals to nationalism, patriotism, and the need for a strong state. The self-designated «patriots» of the right, the communists, and Zhirinovskiy all profited from their use of these slogans. As a result, the president and the democrats were forced to recognize that they had «willy-nilly conceded to their political opponents some very important values, respected by the people and able to consolidate them in the struggle for the

future,» and that «the ideals of patriotism and statehood» were among them. The political scientist A. Kiva argued that «it is inexcusable that democrats abandoned the ideas of statehood and patriotism to those who in the end are neither patriots nor statist» (21).

Democratic political analysts and actors have attempted to counter the accusations and claims of national patriots and communists and reveal the falsity of their claims to embody the ideal of patriotism. Yegor Gaidar denounced the claims of the national patriots in an article entitled «The Greatest Danger to Russia Comes from the National-Patriots.» He wrote: « . . . the greatest threat to my Motherland and her people comes from [Zhirinovsky]. Responsible politicians must do everything possible to burst this soap bubble as soon as possible» (22). Other democrats have countered the communists' claim to represent Russian national values, arguing that they destroyed the best of the Russian nation, ruined Russian living standards and folk culture, suppressed Russian culture, strangled Russian national consciousness, and demoralized the Russian army and actively worked for its defeat in World War 1. They have also sought to place the blame for the collapse of the USSR on the communists, asserting that «communist apparatchiks behaved so rigidly . . . - that [they] made many of the republics of the former Soviet Union run as far as possible» (23).

Yeltsin's presidential team began actively to defend the interests of Russians in the neighboring states of the «near abroad» in 1992. In September 1992, Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a statement at the United Nations protesting the violation of the human rights of Russians in the Baltic States. On October 30, 1992, Yeltsin declared that the withdrawal of Russian forces from the Baltic would be suspended pending the negotiation of a withdrawal schedule and measures to ensure the welfare of members of the military and their families pending their removal (24). The withdrawal of Russian forces continued, but the declaration was generally

understood as part of a new policy. On the eve of the Eighth Congress of People's Deputies of the Russian Federation, then presidential adviser Sergei Stankevich asserted that Russia was concerned about the fate of ethnic Russians outside its borders and that it had the right to act in their defense just like other states, such as Germany and Turkey.» The Russian government also called on world public opinion to condemn Estonia's Law on Foreigners and Latvia's Citizenship Law, which violated the civil rights of Russians in those states.

In the wake of the December 1993 elections, the shift to a more nationalistic and overtly patriotic policy line by the president, the Russian government, and the majority of democrats became so pronounced that avowed national patriot A. Nevzorov accused them of repeating ideas that he and his fellow thinkers had advanced two years earlier. In an article in *Nash sovremennik*, K.. Dushenkov cited Gaidar's promotion of Russian «national interests,» along with his proposal that Russia's Choice become «the party of Russian national dignity,» and called attention to Kozvrev's recent «Russophilic passages» (26). Aleksandr Prokhanov noted that Chernomyrdin, «having expelled Chicago's fat cats from his milieu. had suddenly revealed his national nature, his fundamental Ural Russianness» and sarcastically suggested that what we have now is «a Russian cabinet that will pursue a Russian course» (27).

Although the president, the Russian government, and the democrats in general began to follow a more overtly nationalistic course, they did not attempt to stereotype non-Russians or create «images of the enemy» as scapegoats. Nevertheless. they have not passed up opportunities to use Russians' anti-semitic feelings in the struggle against their political opponents. Concerning Zhirinovskiy, Yegor Gaidar wrote: «Personally. I do not like this man at all ...As a result of abnormal social conditions, [and] state anti-semitism, he went to such a disgusting length as to renounce his own

father for the sake of his career . . . [and] in the attempt . . . - to hide his origins . . . appropriating a pseudonym...» (28). In a television interview on November 14, 1994, Ivan Rybkin asserted that Zhirinovskiy, whom he referred to as «Vladimir Volfovich,» emphasizing the non-Russian patronymic, «could not be the President of Russia» (29).

In a similar fashion, the Yeltsin team has attempted to manipulate Russians' negative feelings and stereotypes concerning various Caucasian people and the Chechens in particular to garner support for the effort to unseat Dudayev. The government's campaign against various forms of discrimination against Russians in the Baltic also made use of negative images of Estonians, Latvians, and sometimes the Baltic people as a whole.

Convergence

Although many analysts noted the Yeltsin camp's shift to a more nationalistic stance, few recognized a complementary shift toward the center among certain segments of the national patriots. During 1992, but most evidently in the wake of the December 1993 elections, a certain convergence was observable between the ideas expressed by the Russian government and those of liberal and centrist elements (hereafter referred to as the moderate center) within the Russian national patriotic movement.

Both in the ideological themes pursued and in the tactics proposed, the moderate center of the national patriotic movement began to express an orientation similar to that of many democrats. Just as the proponents of reform in Russia had to take into account the events of October 1993, and more particularly the outcome of the elections in December, the moderate center found it necessary to reevaluate public sentiments and realign certain of its ideological positions in order to obtain mass support. A. Kazintsev, writing in the premier ideological journal of the national patriotic movement, *Nash sovremennik*, stated: «The saddest thing is that we do not have

the active support of the masses... all that the patriots have today is – the Idea» (30). Distancing themselves from the radical rightists and leftist opposition the moderate ideologues of the national patriotic movement concentrated on the importance of building a strong state, an idea clearly shared by the president and his team.

Statism and a desire to defend Russia's «national interests» formed the basis for what might be termed a secret partnership between these two formerly antagonistic groups. Kazintsev termed the Memorandum of Accord approved by the State Duma «the path to national reconciliation,» while V. Isakov discovered a number of theses previously promoted by the opposition in the president's message «On Strengthening of the Russian State» (31). Even the pages of *Nash sovremennik* saw calls for search for «compromise with the most clear-thinking part of the present political leadership» and the pursuit of an evolutionary path of development (32). In supporting Chernomyrdin's continuance in office as prime minister and reaffirming of Grachev and Erin as defense and interior ministers in November 1994, the Duma faction representing the national patriotic moderate center effectively confirmed this tactic with their actions.

The moderate center also began to reorient its ideas concerning Russia's «special path.» Isolationist aspects of the concept were dropped, as were any references to commonalities between the ideas of the communists and traditional Russian *sobornost'*. Zor'kin declared that Russia's rebirth would depend on «the harmonious combination of elements of capitalism and socialism, tradition and modernity, democracy and authoritarianism, national identity and global values.» He also stated that «the development of true democracy in Russia is predicated on patriotism and statism.» Zor'kin is a serious and well-educated representative of the moderate centrist orientation, and he is clearly attempting to unite elements of liberalism with Russian statist values. In justifying this amalgam, he has referred to an

earlier proponent of a similar line. Peter Struve, and his dictum: «I am a Westerner, and therefore a nationalist» (33).

According to Zor'kin, the ideology of Russian rebirth must be based on enlightened patriotism and on «the achievements of our native culture together with the best exemplars of world culture.» As Konstantin Dushenkov, the press secretary of the Metropolitan of St. Petersburg and Ladoga, noted: «Zor'kin possesses an image of 'the enlightened patriot' and if he can combine national-patriotic and liberal-patriotic doctrines in the framework of the ideology of liberal imperialism,' the 'supreme task of the moment (*sverkhzadacha*)' will be fulfilled» (34).

Representatives of the moderate center of the national patriotic movement describe the new doctrine of «liberal imperialism» as combining the best features of democratic and authoritarian traditions in the structure of the state. The idea that Russian imperialism was «predominantly based on a peaceful gathering of the lands» is also advanced by this group to demonstrate the viability of such a concept (35). The proponents of liberal imperialism reject the idea of reestablishing the USSR. Their desired goal is a new union of Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan on a voluntary basis. Other state formations with compact Russian populations that might wish to join the new union could be considered for inclusion as well (36).

The intellectual and ideological repertoire of the national patriotic movement has noticeably increased with the addition of liberal concepts. Ideas advanced by V. Solov'ev, P. Struve, and I Il'in have been incorporated into their program. Zor'kin has even advanced certain ideas concerning social justice. But other, less benign elements have also gathered momentum. The geostrategic threat posed by the United States is being augmented with fears about the hostile intentions of China, Turkey, and Iran, and there is a recrudescence of concern about the threat of the internal enemy, as some writers worry about the notion that «Russians are a divided people» (37).

Still, liberal and centrist elements of the national patriotic movement have demonstrated an unexpected flexibility, absorbing many liberal democratic ideas. Whether they will be able to dominate the movement as a whole and redirect support away from its more dangerous ultranationalist and extremist elements remains to be seen. Much will depend on circumstances, but they undoubtedly stand a good chance of doing so. The following material derived from more recent public opinion surveys supports this conclusion.

The significance that ethnic Russians attach to ethnicity, and the extent of ethnic solidarity they experience, varies with their place of residence. Survey results obtained from Russian respondents living in Moscow in 1992 indicated a high degree of ethnic solidarity; more than 60 percent agreed with the statement «a person must feel himself to be part of some national group» (38). When Russians living in other republics within the Russian Federation, including republics experiencing strained ethnic relations, were asked the same question in 1994, the responses were quite different. In Sakha only 34 percent agreed, in Tatarstan 39 percent. North Ossetia 37 percent, and Tuva 43 percent (39). The timing of the two surveys was not identical, but the difference should not be considered significant because both followed the widespread development of mass-based nationalist movements and the demise of the USSR.

Although ethnic Russians living in the republics did not demonstrate a heightened sense of ethnic solidarity, they did demonstrate a strong sense of ethnic identity. When asked «how close do you feel» to this or that social party, religious community, or ethnic group (specific organizations, social strata, and groups were named), Russians overwhelmingly cited their ethnic group. In Tatarstan, Tuva, North Ossetia, and Sakha, this was true for more than 90 percent of the Russian respondents. The difference in the responses to the two questions leads to the conclusion that while Russians

in the republics experienced a strong sense of affinity with their ethnic group, this did not produce conscious demands for ethnic solidarity (40).

In the first half of the 1990s, Russians in neither the capital city nor the republics demonstrated a strong sense of attachment to any particular state formation. In Moscow in 1992, only 54 percent considered Russia their Motherland, while 27 percent named the USSR. It is interesting to note, however, that of the cohort 18-29 years of age, 63 percent considered Russia to be their Motherland. In the republics, only 30-36 percent claimed an attachment to Russia, while 35-50 percent considered themselves equally attached to their republic and Russia. In a different survey, conducted by the All-Russian Center for Public Opinion Research (VTsIOM) in 1993, only 41 percent of those questioned identified themselves with the new Russia (41).

As yet another indicator of the distance between the views of the ideologues of the radical right and those of most Russians, only a relatively small proportion of respondents supported isolationist positions. Concerning the most appropriate path of development for Russia, 76 to 80 percent of Russians in the republics said that Russia should choose its own path, but they also said that it should take into consideration the experience of other peoples. Similarly, the majority of Muscovites supported the statement that «there is something to be learned from other peoples.» In terms of choosing business associates, 78 percent of Muscovites stated that they were indifferent to nationality. Responses varied in the republics: 74 percent agreed in Tatarstan, 65 percent in Ossetia, 54 percent in Sakha, and 53 percent in Tuva.

But there were also indications of increased interethnic hostility, particularly toward people from the Caucasus and Central Asia. According to VTsIOM, in 1993 approximately one-third of Russians were convinced that non-Russians living in Russia were to blame for Russia's problems. The

same survey revealed that 53 percent believed that Russians should have greater rights in Russia than other peoples (42).

Nevertheless, extreme nationalist slogans found little resonance among the Russian public. According to VTsIOM's data, only 3 to 5 percent of the population supported the nationalist parties and their bloc. Even when support for the nationalist communists is factored in, the level of support remained at about 8 to 12 percent (43).

The results of our research in the republics of the Russian Federation indicate that Russian nationalist parties and blocs have an almost insignificant influence. Most people know nothing about these parties. The communists, of course, are well known and still maintain a certain influence, especially in North Ossetia. But even there, Ziuganov garnered more support among the Ossetians than he did among Russians (18 percent of urban and 36 percent of rural Ossetians versus 7 percent of Russians). Zhirinovsky received some support, but only 4 to 7 percent, which is largely attributable to poor living conditions and resentment toward the government.

Although many analysts have identified a potential social base for extremist radical nationalism among the disaffected, frustrated, and socially dislocated Russian population, our research does not bear this out. Even in urban areas experiencing plummeting living standards and increased ethnic tensions, we found little evidence of support for extremist views and policy prescriptions. There is, however, a wider base of support for moderate or centrist nationalism, with its calls for a strong state, protection of Russian national interests, and Russian nationals in the «near abroad.»

As long as the tendencies identified here under the rubric of convergence continue to dominate and to promote a moderate form of Russian nationalism, we find little reason to associate Russian nationalism with fascist ideologies or to anticipate apocalyptic political outcomes.

Many moderate and center-right groups, such as the Congress of Russian Communities (KRO) and even Gaidar's Russia's Choice, have adopted elements of the patriots' vocabulary (Gaidar now refers to his party as «the party of national dignity»), but this does not mean that they have succumbed to ultranationalist influence.

The intellectual sophistication of the moderate Russian right has increased over time; they display greater flexibility in their arguments, and they have absorbed some of the more popular elements of liberal democratic thinking. This is reminiscent of the way in which the ideological seeds sown by contributors to *Nash sovremennik* developed sturdy offshoots. Whether the moderate right will attract more support than the more dangerous ultranationalists, however, remains to be seen, as this depends on the development of a complex set of circumstances, but it is entirely possible.

It is remarkable that the journal of the «spiritual opposition,» *Zavtra*, in September 1993 commended the pre-electoral materials of the patriotic movement. Whom were they endorsing? The Community Party of the Russian Federation (Ziuganov), the Congress of Russian Communities (KRO), Ruskoi's party Derzhava (Power), and the Liberal Democratic Party of Zhirinovskiy. But they gave their greatest attention to the KRO. They published not only the party's program but a lengthy article as well. According to Yuri Skokov, leader of the KRO, Russia must be both a democratic and a federal state. It must base its activity on its own strength and should have a market economy, albeit one with a large state sector. His party's slogans (for example, «Russians unite, we are at a perilous point!») stress the idea that Russia will not be able to resolve its difficulties at the expense of other peoples, or in opposition to others' interests.

In Russia's thirteen regions as well as in the republics (and especially in the Volga region), numerous electoral organizations are being formed around the ideas of Skokov and the party's standard-bearer, General Lebed.

However, if they do not succeed in attracting a substantial number of voters away from Ziuganov and Zhirinovskiy, and the forces of Russian extremism-fascism do come to power, the consequences for interethnic relations will be serious.

Democracy can complicate interethnic relations in multiethnic states as it opens opportunities for new and diverse voices to make claims on the political system. It can also provide the most fertile conditions for developing cultural pluralism and overcoming ethnic discrimination. Russia's future, in terms of both interethnic relations and democratization, will be determined by the course of its political and economic development during this difficult transition period.

NOTES

1. Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983).

2. Almost 70 percent live in two republics: 11,340,000 in Ukraine and 6,226,000 in Kazakhstan. Anatolii Vishnevskii and Zhanna Zaionchkovskaia, «Internal and International Migrations in the Former Soviet Space», paper produced by the Center of Demography and Human Ecology, Institute for Employment Studies. Russian Academy of Sciences, 1994, p. 4.

3. *Zvezda*, no. 6 (1976), and *Molodaia gvardia*, no. 10 (1975).

4. The ethnographical data cited in this chapter are taken from interrepublican sociological surveys conducted in the cities and villages of the Russian Federation, Uzbekistan, Georgia, Moldova, and Estonia in 1971–75; and in the capitals of the union republics in 1980–81 and 1991–92. These surveys were conducted by the Department of Ethnosociology of the Institute of Ethnography of the USSR Academy of Sciences (now the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology of the Russian Academy of Sciences) as part of its project on 'The Optimization of the Sociocultural Conditions of the Development of the Nation.» The director of the study was Yu. Arutiunian. I was co-director of those portions of the study dealing with ethnic identification and interethnic relations. In the 1971–75 study, 16,251 Russians and members of titular nationalities were interviewed. In 1979–81, 4,440 individuals from the same ethnic groups were surveyed in the

capitals of the republics and the city of Saratov, and in 1991-92, 5,007 individuals were surveyed in republic capitals: Moscow, Tallinn, Tashkent, Kishinev, and Saratov. These samples were representative of the adult urban population in terms of sex, age, and ethnicity. Electoral lists and *kholkhoz* registration books were used to identify respondents.

5. «The Optimization of the Sociocultural Conditions of the Development of the Nation.»

6. The Center of Applied Sociological Research conducted this survey, polling 900 people by telephone. The results were published in *Argumenty i Fakty*. no. 7 (1990): 6.

7. V. Rasputin, «Zhertvovat' soboiu dlia pravdy,» *Nash sovremennik*, no. 1 (1988) and A.G. Kuz'min, «K. kakomu khramu my ishchem dorogu,» *Nash sovremennik*, no. 3 (1988); and others.

8. Leokadia Drobizheva, «Natsional'noe samosoznanie: baza formirovaniia i sotsial'no-kul'turnye stimuly razvitlia,» *Sovetskaia etnografiia*, no. 5 (1985); and idem «Kul'tura i natsional'noe samosoznanie,» in *Mnogoobrazie kul'turnoi zhizni narodov SSSR*, ed. Yurii Arutiunian and Leokadia Drobizheva (Moscow, 1987).

9. *Literaturnaia Rossiia*. no. 9 (1990).

10. *Neformal'naia Rossiia* (Moscow, 1990), p. 307.

11. *Nash sovremennik*, no. 1 (1990): 168-76; no. 2 (1990): 9-11; no. 3 (1990): 88; and no. 4 (1990): 140.

12. A. Gulyga, «Russkii vopros» *Nash sovremennik*, no. 1 (1990): 168, 176.

13. Aleksandr Prokhanov, «Zametki konservatora,» *Nash sovremennik*, no. 5 (1990); 103.

14. Ibid., p. 98; and Karem Rash, «Armia i kul'tura,» *Nash sovremennik*, no. 5 (1990): 103.

15. *Literaturnaia Rossiia*. 1990, p. 9.

16. *Russkie: etnosotsiologicheskie ocherki* (Moscow, 1992), p. 396.

17. *Rodina. Rossiiskii istoriko-publitsisticheskii zhurnal*, established by the government of the all-Russian Federation, January 1989.

18. Speech at a meeting in Karaganda, August 18, 1990.

19. *Nezavisimaia gazeta*. April 27, 1993, p. 3, and May 6, 1993, p. 5.

20. E.A. Pain, «Separatizm i federalizm v sovremennoi Rossii,» in *Kuda idet Rossiia?* (Moscow, 1994), pp. 165, 167.

21. A. Kiva, «Drugaiia Rossiia,» *Rossiiskaia gazeta*. January 5, 1994.

22. *Izvestina*. May 17, 1994, p. 5.
23. A. Kiva, «Pogovorim o patriotizme,» *Prezident*, August 30 – September 5, 1994.
24. *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, November 1, 1992.
25. *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, November 6, 1992.
26. *Nash sovremennik*, no. 7 (1994): 129.
27. *Zavtra*. no. 17(1994).
28. *Izvesliia*. May 17, 1994, p. 5.
29. Interview with Karaul on «Moment of Truth,» November 14, 1994,
30. A. Kazintsev, «GKChP-3,» *Nash sovremennik*. no. 4 (1994): 182.
31. Ibid. *Sovetskaia Rossiia*. February 1, 1994.
32. *Nash sovremennik*, no. 7 (1994): 131.
33. V. Zor'kin, «Proshchanie s mifami» *Nash sovremennik*, no. 9(1994): 147.
34. Ibid., pp. 140, 149, 150.
35. K. Dushenkov, «Osnovnye tendentsii obshchestvenno-politicheskoi zhizni sovremennoi Rossii,» *Nash sovremennik*, no.7(1994): 134.
36. Ibid., p. 141.
37. Ibid., pp. 153, 155; and *Nash sovremennik*. no. 9(1994): 144.
38. The Moscow survey was directed by Yu. V. Arutiunian of the Institute of Ethnography and Anthropology of the Russian Academy of Sciences. The aggregate sample included 1,600 people and was representative in terms of geographic distribution and social stratification.
39. The republic survey was directed by L. M. Drobizheva and was part of a project on «Post-Communist Nationalism, Ethnic Identity, and Conflict Resolution in the Russian Federation» conducted by the Institute of Ethnography and Anthropology of the RAS. In the republic surveys the sample totaled 1,000 people, including members of both Russian and titular ethnic groups. The sample value had a possible bias error of 5 to 6 percent.
40. «Post-Communist Nationalism, Ethnic Identity, and Conflict Resolution in the Russian Federation.»
41. K. Mialo, «Konets stoletii: russkii vyzov,» *Nezavisimaia gazeta*. April 12, 1994, p.5.
42. L.D. Gudkov, «Russkoe natsional'noe soznanie: potentsial i tipy konsolidatsii,» *Kuda idet Rossiia?* (Moscow, 1994), p. 179.
43. Ibid., p.184.