Politics of Ethnogenesis in the USSR and after

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民族起源論の政治学，ソ連時代とその後

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The ethnic past was effectively used for shaping identities in the USSR where ethnicity was politicized due to ethnic discrimination embedded in the asymmetrical Soviet federal structure. Under severe censorship ethnic rivalry for access to political power and economic resources expressed itself in attempts by local intellectuals to emphasize the special role of their own ethnic groups in history. Being deprived of any personal political freedom people linked their own future with that of their ethno-administrative unit or the political status of their ethnic group. Therefore any changes in ethnic identity or status were very sensitive issues for people. Symbolically this status was bound up with an authentic culture, distinct language and history, and even population size. Discussion of all these issues served as a code language, which was commonly used to discuss the political status of particular ethnic groups and their future prospects. Discussions of what has happened in the remote past also served this sort of language, which could be used to express concerns and anxiety about contemporary issues such as the unjust actions of the authorities, interethnic tensions, territorial losses, and the like. These concerns manifested themselves in hot disputes about the ancestry of contemporary ethnic groups, the localization of their homelands, the size and shape of their former territories, and their ancestors' glorious feats and outstanding achievements. Ethnogenetic myth is defined as a narrative of ethnic roots, the glorious life of remote ancestors and their feats, the ancient people being represented by a mighty warrior or even culture hero. In this context the history of ethnogenetic studies in the USSR is analyzed.

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　民族的弁別が非対称的な連邦構造に組み込まれていたソ連においてエスニテ
シティが政治化した際，民族としての過去はアイデンティティの形成において
効果的なものとして用いられた。厳しい検閲体制下において，政治的力と経済
的資源を求めての民族間の競合は，ローカルな知識人達によって，自らの民族
集団としての歴史の特殊な役割を強調するかたちで示されてきた。政治的自由
が奪われた中にあって，人々は自らの未来を，（ソ連内の）民族行政単位ある
いは自らの民族集団の政治的地位の未来と重ね合わせたからである。それゆえ
に民族のアイデンティティそしてその地位に関するいかなる変化も，人々の琴
線にふれるものであった。象徴的には，民族の地位は本質的な文化，はっきり
と識別される言語と歴史，そして人口サイズによってすら規定されていた。こ
の種のすべての問題に関する討議は，ある特殊な言葉の使い方の確立に寄与し，
そのコードでもって特定の民族集団の政治的地位とその未来が論じられたので
ある。遠く離れた過去に何が起こったのか，その討論で役に立ったこの種の言
語コードは，現在の諸問題──権力側の非正当な行為，民族間の緊張，領土の
喪失など──に対する関心と不安を表明することに用いられた。そこでどんな
風に考えられているかは，今日在る民族集団の祖先，そしてその祖先達の故地
の特定，さらにその領土の大きさと形態，さらに祖先達の栄光なる偉業と際だっ
た業績についての熱烈な論争を通して判然となった。民族起源の神話とは，民
族ルーツ，遠く離れた祖先の輝かしい生活とその偉業，強大な戦士はてまた文
化英雄として表象される古の人々に対する語りとして定義される。本稿はこの
文脈に即しながら，ソ連における民族起源論研究の歴史を分析しようとするも
のである。

1　Ethnicity and State in the USSR

　　Two approaches are commonly exploited to study developments in scholar-
ship and scholarly production—the internalist and the externalist. The internalist
approach focuses on the internal logic of a scientific development and is heavily
based on the nature of the raw materials, the analytical methods and the scholarly
ideas and concepts. By contrast, the externalist approach emphasizes the social and
political milieu. It explores the feedback relationships between scholars on the one
hand and authorities, politicians and the general public, on the other. The questions

it asks are what the demands are for scholarly productions from society at large, including its particular groups, how scholars meet those demands, how politics and especially its crucial re-orientations affect scholarship, how the scholarly outlook affects the general public, by what particular means and with what results, and how public emotions for their part make scholars change their views and revise their theories. All these issues are especially relevant with respect to humanitarian knowledge which is closely connected with people's identities. It is especially pertinent to put those questions nowadays when identity has comes to be a hot issue. The externalist approach might be especially productive with respect to highly authoritarian regimes under which scholars have to serve the state ideology. Moreover, it is hardly possible to understand such scholarship, especially crucial changes in paradigms, while neglecting their close links with a broader social and political context. That is why, while studying the development of Soviet views of the past, I dwell heavily on the externalist approach.

The ethnic past was effectively used for shaping identities in the Soviet Union. Indeed, ethnic identity was the most significant factor there, which accompanied an individual throughout his or her entire life. It was closely linked to the ethnic discrimination embedded in the asymmetrical Soviet federal structure, which was based on different levels of ethno-territorial autonomy. Some ethnic groups were granted their own full-fledged Soviet Socialist Republics, others Autonomous Republics, still others Autonomous Regions; while a great many ethnic groups were deprived of any autonomy at all and felt subordinated to alien *others* (Carrère d'Encausse 1992; Coppieters 2002: 101–103; Gleason 1990; Martin 2001: 413; Pipes 1964; Smith 1999; Suny 2001; Tishkov 1997: 31–35, 55, 241). Financial support was distributed unevenly between the various ethno-territorial units, and so-called titled peoples were privileged in their own republics. Thus, different ethnic groups had different access to political power, social benefits and finances that resulted in inter-ethnic rivalry, which expressed itself in attempts by local intellectuals to emphasize the special role of their own ethnic groups in history. A common way to achieve this goal was by representing the great antiquity of one's own group and its particular historical and cultural traditions and achievements, connections and merits. All this was especially important for numerically small ethnic groups whose political rights were significantly restrained. They tried to compensate for this by reference to historical and cultural traditions romanticized through mythologization.

I define an ethnogenetic myth as a narrative of ethnic roots, the glorious life of remote ancestors and their feats, the ancient people being represented by a mighty warrior or even culture hero. His activity has to build up a legitimate basis for his descendants' claims for desired resources, namely territory, social privilege, political status, and the like. The myth is developed by professional ethnic intellectuals, and its message is closely connected with the particular ethnopolitical situation. A modern ethnogenetic myth is usually developed along the following lines:

1) An unconditional association of ethnic group with language, since this is frequently considered the main ethnic attribute (*myth of linguistic continuity*);

2) Claims for the deep roots of one's own ethnic culture and language, in general, and in particular in the modern ethnic territory, that are sometimes referred to in order to claim first settler rights (*myth of indigenous origin*);

3) A willingness to extend the modern ethnoterritorial borders and the modern ethnopolitical situation as deeply into the past as possible (*myth of homeland*);

4) An exaggeration of ethnic cohesion in the remote past and a neglect of tribal sub-divisions and their social role (*myth of cultural homogeneity*);

5) Treatment of one's own modern ethnic territory as the main area of formation not only of one's own ethnic community but of other related ethnic groups as well, the latter being treated as "younger brothers" (*myth of ethnic family*);

6) Sometimes the image of an alien enemy is invented, whose onslaught is believed to have caused ethnic consolidation. At the same time past events are frequently treated through the mirror of interethnic or international tensions that exist at the present time or took place quite recently (*myth of the bloody enemy*);

7) Attempts to identify one's own ethnic ancestors with some famous ancient people, well known from written records or oral tradition (*myth of glorious ancestors*);

8) Claims for the historic superiority of certain elements of one's own culture (for instance, writing, architecture) or political organization (state or the like) over those of one's neighbors. Hence, a cultural mission commonly ascribed to remote ancestors or their contemporary descendants (*myth of the cultural mission*).

Serving as a valuable political resource, ethnic identity was recognized and even promoted by the Soviet authorities—it was recorded on both birth certificate and passport. This made it an essential marker, which was, in contrast to traditional (Barth 1969) or Western models (Jenkins 1996: 65–66), virtually unchangeable. Actually, this is a special case of what Pierre Bourdieu meant by saying that "the political field in fact produces an effect of censorship by limiting the universe of political discourse, and thereby the universe of what is politically thinkable" (Bourdieu 1992: 172). Hence, ethnic primordialism, deeply embedded in the Soviet mind. Deprived of any personal political freedom, people linked their own future with that of their own ethno-administrative unit or the political status of their ethnic group in general. Therefore any changes in ethnic identity and status were very sensitive issues.

Symbolically this status was bound up with an authentic culture, distinct lan-

guage and history[1], and even population size. Therefore, a discussion of all those issues served as a code language, which was commonly used to discuss the political status of particular ethnic groups and their perspectives for the future. While discussing the views of the past developed by ethnic intellectuals in the Soviet and post-Soviet days, one can easily reveal to what a major extent those views reflected the contemporary social and political environment. To put it another way, from the very beginning ethnogenetic studies were by no means a value free field in the USSR; they brought along a distinct political message and were effectively exploited by ethnic intellectual elites as an important symbolic political resource (Shnirelman 1993, 1995a, 1995b, 1996a, 1996b, 2001, 2002; Slezkine 1996; Tishkov 1997: 8–15; Uyama 2002).

Thus, as in other political contexts (Baumann 1999: 10), the Soviet state's constructive activity was aimed at the consolidation of ethnic boundaries and strengthening of ethnic identities. To understand the ethnopolitical process in the USSR and after, one has to appreciate that only indigenous people (with some exceptions such as, for example, the Kalmyks) could hope to be granted political autonomy[2]. In order to gain indigenous status an ethnic group had to demonstrate its cultural and linguistic authenticity. It was even more beneficial if it was able to claim some ancient state and to trace a deeply rooted continuous political tradition[3]. Since contemporary Russia has inherited an asymmetrical federal structure and as bargaining still serves an important strategy in center-periphery relationships (Solnick 1998), the politics of the past is an important element of the post-Soviet political process. It is in this context that early history and even prehistory obtained a political value. As elsewhere (Rowlands 1994), even archaeology became a "political science" in the Soviet Union and post-Soviet Russia where, over the recent decades, various ethnic groups struggled for their indigenous and/or glorious ancestry. At the time of the "great friendship," under the Soviet regime, discussions of what happened in the remote past served as a code language, used to express concerns and anxiety about contemporary issues such as the unjust actions of the Soviet authorities (including mass deportations), interethnic tensions, territorial losses, and the like. These attitudes manifested themselves in hot disputes about the ancestry of contemporary ethnic groups, the localization of their homelands, the size and shape of their former territories, their ancestors' glorious feats and outstanding achievements, and even the ethnic identity of famous historical figures including philosophers and poets.

When studying a historiography, one has to bear in mind a sharp difference in the positions and goals of the cultural actors (including scholars!) on the one hand, and those scholars who are not involved into the local politics on the other. By cultural actors I mean those who, by virtue of their intimate bonds with the given cultural milieu, are pressed or deliberately chose to be loyal to the given cultural community at any cost and to follow the communal values in their professional activity[4]. Regardless of their fair intention to stay within the bounds of scholarship

and to follow professional rules and methodologies, cultural actors are highly vulnerable to a social and political environment that restricts their freedom of thought and action[5]. Thus, when dealing with a would be scholarly production coming out of such a milieu, one has to be ready to analyze ethnocentric myths, built up by the scholars together with amateur authors. An approach which views highly politicized ethnocentric constructions of the past as myths removes them from a purely academic discourse and transfers them to a multi-disciplinary field, which involves not only archaeologists, anthropologists and historians but political scientists as well (Connor 1994: 74–76). The place of social anthropology is determined by the fact that "most anthropologists would rather concentrate on showing the ways in which particular historical accounts are used as tools in the contemporary creation of identities and in politics" (Eriksen 1993: 72).

Indeed, people are interested in their own remote past, including the ancient state formed by their ancestors, and not only out of curiosity. They are searching for positive values and models of conduct which they might follow for their own benefit. Moreover, in the view of Anthony Smith, "the collective appropriation of antiquity, and especially of shared memories of the 'Golden Age,' contributes significantly to the formation of nations. The greater, the more glorious that antiquity appears, the easier it becomes to mobilize people around a common culture, to unify the various groups of which they are composed and to identify a shared national identity" (Smith 1997: 39).

A seminal book by Lowell Tillett has illuminated how Soviet historiography tried to legitimate the dominance of ethnic Russians and the Russian state (Tillett 1969). My field is different. I analyze the role of what are called ethnogenetic studies and origin myths in the shaping of ethnic identities and their contribution to ethnopolitics in the former USSR and post-Soviet states. It goes without saying that archaeologists, ethnologists and historical linguists took an active part in this development. I am studying how, under which political environment, for what goals and by whom ethnogenetic myths were and are being built up in the former USSR and in the post-Soviet states respectively. This article is aimed at the chronology of Soviet ethnogenetic studies with respect to fluctuations in Soviet internal policy. The process can be divided into five periods: ethnicization (1920–1929/30), internationalization (1930–1934/36), consolidation (1937–1957), resistance (1957–1985), and onslaught (1986–1993).

2 Ethnicization (1920–1929/30)

Before the late 1920s, illiterate peoples were defined as "tribes" rather than "nations," they were to develop into nations with the help of Soviet power. In the 1920s, the first local historians and ethnologists were developing highly romanticized and somewhat biased versions of the early history and prehistory of their own

ethnic groups—an example of John Armstrong's *mythomoteur* (Armstrong 1982)—in order to shape ethnic identities and to provide ethnopolitical claims with scholarly or pseudo-scholarly foundations. This trend went hand in hand with the politics of the administrative reorganization of the Old Russia, which took ethnic affiliation as a focal point in the 1920s. That was the period of intensive struggle against the survivals of the tsarist heritage, in particular the Russian colonial mentality. The tsarist national policy was stigmatized as a colonial one; the Old Russia was called the "prison of the peoples." By contrast, the Soviet authorities appreciated and promoted the aspiration of particular ethnic groups to develop their own cultures, languages and even to establish their own political autonomies. After the country had been reunited after the civil war, an appropriate internal political-administrative structure had to be developed. It was formed as a response to the powerful ethno-nationalist movements and, thus, based on the idea of ethnic territoriality. As Valery Tishkov teaches us, just after the October revolution the Bolsheviks enriched their program with a doctrine of ethnic nationalism (Tishkov 1994: 15. Cf. Martin 2001). As a result, a struggle between ethnic elites to upgrade their ethno-political status was encouraged. Ideologically this struggle manifested itself through the construction of highly romanticized views of the past, which ascribed to any given ethnic group great pre-colonial achievements and frequently appropriated those of others even when well known from early historical sources. The recent colonial past seemed to be grim, and local intellectuals focused mostly on the periods prior to the integration of their own ethnic groups into the Russian state, representing the pre-colonial past as a Golden Age. At the same time the Russian past was deliberately denigrated as being closely linked with oppressive imperial policy. Thus, the 1920s witnessed a growth of ethnocentric ideologies accompanied by the development of Russian chauvinism (Agursky 1980).

It is worth noting that some of the popular ethnocentric views of the past were rooted in pre-revolutionary historiography. For example, in the Ukraine they admired the famous Mikhail Grushevsky's concept of searching for the roots of ethnic Ukrainians in the Early Medieval, i. e. pre-Kievan, time of the 4th century (the Ant period). Following Vaclav Lastovsky, Belorussian émigrés identified their ancestors with the Slavic tribe of Krivichi, and this idea was taken up by certain scholars in Soviet Belorussia in the late 1920s (Shnirelman 1995a). A struggle between the Kazan Tatars and the neighboring Chuvash for the heritage of the Bulgars was intensively waged in the Middle Volga region (Shnirelman 1996c). Intellectuals of various ethnic origins (Mari, Udmurt, Mordvin, Komi, Abkhaz, Kazakh, and others) developed views of the great early history and even prehistory of their own ethnic groups. These intellectuals were mainly former clergymen, teachers, writers, and less trained scholars. The Soviet authorities encouraged the development of local studies (*kraevedenie*), and many new museums were established in the republics to promote ethnic cultures and their past.

In order to claim political sovereignty local intellectuals exploited two opposite strategies. Some wanted to isolate their ethnic groups as much as possible from related groups by reference to their allegedly different ethnic roots. This was especially characteristic of the Ukrainians and Belorussians, who aspired to isolate their ancestors from those of the Russians in order to claim political autonomy by reference to a distinct historical development. In contrast, certain other intellectuals emphasized the close relations between various groups belonging to a single linguistic stock. They did this in order to build up a strong alliance based on the shared language and culture to strengthen their claims for sovereignty. This strategy was used by the Turkic peoples in particular, and the idea of a pan-Turkic entity was very popular, especially in the early 1920s when certain Turkic political activists put forward ambitious political projects for the establishment of both the Tatar-Bashkir (Idel'-Ural) and Turkistan inclusive autonomies. It is in this context that the Medieval Turkic empires and Tatar Khanates were celebrated.

In both cases, local intellectuals were also searching for their ethnic roots among well known historical peoples famous for their grand achievements, such as the Sumerians, Hittites, Etruscans, Aryans, Scythians, and the like. Many scholars based their conclusions heavily on the migrationist approach, and depicted long wanderings and arrivals of their ancestors from far away. Sometimes they also referred to the racial approach and argued that their ancestors enjoyed "pure blood" in contrast to their neighbors.

Ultimately, all those views were designed to legitimate the claims of particular ethnic groups or ethnic alliances for their own ethno-territorial autonomies, as the Soviet political-administrative system was still in formation and had not yet fossilized. It was a good time for ethnic elites to compete for territory, political status, and access to economic and financial resources. It was still possible to upgrade one's ethnopolitical status through bargaining with the central authorities. It is worth noting that, after an ethnic group was granted its title for territorial autonomy, local intellectuals would shift their emphasis to its local roots. And in order to avoid costly socialist experiments such as, for example, collectivization or sedentarization (for nomadic people), they pointed to the cultural distinctions of their groups as though these demanded a particular form of economic development based on culture-nature relationships. Thus, when the political value of indigenous origin was realized, local intellectuals increasingly shifted from migrationism to autochthonism.

3 Internationalization (1930–1934/36)

The situation changed drastically in the second period, the end of the 1920s and the early 1930s, when the building of the Soviet empire was almost complete and a highly integrative view of the past was in great demand (Shnirelman 1993,

1995b, 1996a). In the early 1930s, all the former ethnocentric views of the past were severely criticized and rejected as incompatible with Soviet Marxism and internationalism. Broad alliances like the pan-Turkic, pan-Finnish, and pan-Iranian were now viewed as aimed against Soviet state integrity and came off the agenda. Local studies were halted, and many historians, ethnologists and archaeologists were persecuted. The leading positions in academia fell into the hands of a new generation which believed in the coming Communist revolution all over the world. Their internationalist ideology demanded the study only of universal regularities in order to demonstrate the development of a uniform world system. The main goal was to confirm that the Russian revolution was by no means a unique phenomenon, but was bound to be followed by socialist revolutions in other countries. The view of multilinear development was also intolerable with respect to uniform economic reconstruction throughout the country. Therefore, researching the particular evolutionary lines of various ethnic groups declined, being treated and persecuted as "bourgeois nationalism."

To oppose migrationism and the culture-historical method that were still popular in the West, the Soviets put forward a theory of socio-economic stages. It was rooted in the hyper-autochthonist approach advocated by academician N. Ya. Marr who developed a "theory of ethnogony" (Shnirelman 1993, 1995; Slezkine 1996). Now one had to search for the local roots of any ethnic group in the territory which it currently occupied. To prove that various ethnic groups participated equally in the universal evolutionary process, Soviet archaeologists rejected the concept of "archaeological culture" as too highly particularized and harmful to the unilinear approach. Instead, "socio-economic formations" were emphasized, which correlated with the universal evolutionary stages. Many students understood ethnogenesis as an endless process of interaction between various ethnic groups that caused one people to turn into another (for example, the Scythians into the Slavs, Finns or Turks) as a result of socio-economic transformation. It was in this way that a regional approach emerged and became popular in Soviet scholarship, focusing on cultural evolution and interaction within restricted culture areas. The authorities believed that the idea of a common origin might relax ethnic tensions. For example, in order to reconcile the Tatars and the Chuvash, M. Khudiakov argued that they were formed on the same socio-cultural foundation (Khudiakov 1935: 123–124). Deviations from this general scheme were severely criticized and persecuted. The purges started in 1929–1930 with the arrests of many Russian and non-Russian intellectuals accused of either great power chauvinism or local nationalism. Afterwards, pan-Turkism, pan-Finnism, and pan-Iranism were permanently treated as hostile ideologies which made local scholars do their best to isolate their own ethnic groups from related ones. Such scholarly views were suspect as aspirations of political separatism.

4　Consolidation (1936–1957)

The third period began in 1934–1936 when a shift from internationalism took place, initially to "Soviet nationalism," and later to regional or ethnic nationalisms as well. In the late 1930s the official ideology deliberately shifted to Russian nationalism masked by Soviet patriotism, or "pan-Soviet nationalism" (Barghoorn 1956: 4–6).

From the late 1930s on, Soviet scholars turned to methodological approaches originally developed by the German archaeologists of the Gustaf Kossinna school. The concept of "archaeological culture," abandoned during the second period, was rehabilitated. After that, Soviet archaeologists intensively and continuously discussed the criteria for, and interpretation of, an archaeological culture (Kamenetsky 1970; Klein 1970); this discussion failed to demonstrate any unanimously shared approach however. Nevertheless, the identification of an archaeological culture with a particular ethnic group became popular among those archaeologists who carried on ethnogenetic studies.

Yet, when used by the Soviets, this approach had to "repulse the bourgeois falsifications of prehistory," as the Soviets had called this academic activity in former days. In fact, this "repulsing" reproduced the German "patriotic" schemes but with a reverse message. To put it differently, in contrast to the German scholars, who emphasized the victorious campaigns of the highly advanced ancient Germans against backward barbarians, including the Slavs, Soviet archaeologists and historians of the late 1930s and 1940s emphatically glorified the ancient Slavs' grandeur and pointed out the backwardness and savagery of ancient Germans. An aspiration to glorify and deepen the Russian people's prehistory and to stress their cultural mission among their neighbors manifested itself during and just after World War II. This trend was inspired in particular by Stalin himself in his speech on May 25, 1945, when he stressed the special merits of the Russian people in the victory against Nazi Germany. In the late 1940s, the Soviet authorities openly promoted Great Russian chauvinism, based on the idea of the Russian people's superiority and cultural mission.

From the mid-1930s onwards, the Russian people were mentioned in various publications only with the adjective "great," and scholars had to stress a long and positive Russian impact on adjacent peoples. For example, the influence of the "great" Russian culture upon the ethnic groups of the Middle Volga region from the pre-Mongol epoch onwards was argued for (Proiskhozhdenie 1948; Smirnov 1958: 49), and the ancient roots of friendship and cultural contact between the Russians and the Baltic peoples were intensively investigated. At the same time scholars were obliged to emphasize that the Germans had brought nothing positive to the Baltic area. Moreover, this strategy was also adapted towards and among the west-

ern neighbors of the Soviet Union. For instance, just after World War II it was commonly used in Hungary and Romania to stress the important political and cultural influence of the Slavs during the Early Middle Ages (Balint 1989: 191; Papacostea 1996: 189).

The voices of local nationalisms were also heard, but they were unwelcome, and their proponents were persecuted. In fact, the third period commenced with a directive letter of Stalin, Zhdanov and Kirov criticizing contemporary history textbooks. The publication of the letter was followed by severe persecutions against Mikhail Pokrovsky's internationalist historical school. Simultaneously, certain students and followers of Marr were also criticized. Purges and persecutions took place in the Middle Volga region, the Caucasus and Soviet Central Asia between 1934 and 1937. Many scholars were arrested, especially in 1937, at the time of the Great Terror.

Meanwhile, the development of the Soviet state demanded a durable historical foundation, and a rehabilitation of the Russian history stigmatized earlier by the revolutionaries was declared. At the end of the 1930s, when, after the new administrative structure based on territorially bounded populations had been introduced by the Soviet Constitution of 1936, all the officially recognized ethnic groups were granted the status of "historical peoples," and the new ethnically-based political administrative units had to gain legitimacy by reference to history. True, a great many of those peoples still lacked their own written history. Therefore, the construction of regional (ethnic) histories was encouraged by the Communist authorities as they aspired to capture the past for their own pragmatic ends. At that time Soviet scholars were obliged to rewrite history textbooks to meet the demands of various ethnic groups. In order to explore and appreciate distinct historical developments ethnology and archaeology were rehabilitated. As the Soviet authorities aspired to annex certain territories both in the West and the South, they wanted to legitimate those plans by references to cultural history also. Thus, the latter was once again on the agenda with an emphasis on the distinct development of the various ethnic groups. In order to meet the demands of the authorities, an ambitious project was launched by the Academy of Sciences of the USSR already in 1939 to provide all the Soviet peoples with a long continuous history. A special Commission for Ethnogenetic Studies was established to achieve those goals (Aksenova and Vasiliev 1993).

In a few years this activity became especially politically important and urgent. In 1943 the German army retreated, the Red Army moved westwards, and Soviet leaders began to think of the future of Europe, including a reorganization of state territories after the war. Views concerning "genuine ethnic territories" and "ethnogenesis" as a legitimization of territorial claims were in great demand. In order to meet these demands the Moscow group of the Institute of Ethnography was established under Sergei P. Tolstov (Tokarev 1995: 185–189, 210; Rabinovich 2005: 209, 212, 215).

Between the 1940s and 1960s many Soviet ethnologists, linguists and archaeologists were engaged in ethnogenetic studies as highly prestigious academic activity throughout the USSR. This resulted in an intensive search for the roots of the Russian state and ethnic Russians most of all. When lacking appropriate written documents, local scholars first began to study oral traditions in the hope of reconstructing a reliable ethnic past. Local epics were intensively collected, analyzed and published in the 1930s and 1940s. Yet, at the beginning of the 1950s they were stigmatized as a both "feudal" and "bourgeois" heritage, which had to be discarded (Bennigsen 1975). Thus, for many ethnic groups archaeology became the main source of information about the glorious past. To justify their own participation in this project Soviet archaeologists used to argue that ethnic roots should be searched for in early history or even prehistory (a *longue durée* strategy which was emphasized in the West by John Armstrong and Anthony Smith). It is obvious that ethnogenesis became a sort of narration that was considered important for a nation-building project. Those narratives made up the basis of history textbooks widely used in public education from the 1940s onwards. They were first introduced in the federal republics, but only from the 1950s and 1960s in the autonomous republics.

Ironically, from the late 1930s till 1950 ethnogenetic studies were still highly affected by the Marrist approach, which resulted in so-called hyper-autochthonism. At the same time, a new, nationalist trend was also coming into being. The latter had won the victory by the end of the period, when Stalin ultimately chose a highly nationalist project, and Marr's internationalist approach lost its credit. In the late 1940s, Soviet scholars focused heavily on the regional approach and fiercely rejected comparative studies, which were accused of "cosmopolitanism" and the undermining of "national cultures." Pan-Turkism, pan-Iranism, and pan-Finnism were once again stigmatized. Scholars had, first, to emphasize the local roots of the various ethnic cultures, especially those of the titled peoples, and second, to isolate them from related cultures in order to avoid accusations of anti-Soviet conspiracy. One had to study cultural interactions within well-circumscribed areas at the expense of relationships between various cultures, especially between Soviet ones and those abroad. The concept of "historic-ethnographic areas" emerged as an offspring of this development (Levin, Cheboksarov 1955). It had to legitimate the Soviet political structure with reference to indigenous cultural roots and cultural symbiosis in the remote past.

For example, while Marr's ideas were still popular the prominent Russian ethnographer S. P. Tolstov formulated the following idea: "…the political history of our country is rooted not in separate widely dispersed political centers that emerged in different areas but in a more complex and powerful political system that opposed, on the one hand, Western political unity—the Roman Empire…on the other hand, a third, Eastern political center of the ancient world—the Chinese Han Empire…" And further on "…One has to consider the ancient history of our country not as a

history of spontaneously interacting particular tribes but as a history of a complex system of political interactions between ancient powerful states that were closely connected culturally and politically with each other and also with related northern tribes that were highly affected by them in terms of economy, politics and culture" (Tolstov 1947: 49, 53). This approach was obviously aimed at arguing that the prerequisites for the emergence of the USSR were already in existence by the early centuries A. D., if not earlier. Indeed, as the same author stated, the Russian people and other "brotherly peoples" of the East came into being from the "same genetic root"—from the Scythian-Massagetae and the Sarmatian-Alan tribal alliances.

Even so, the proclaimed equal rights to the ethnic past were largely ignored between 1944 and 1957, when the "punished peoples" deported from the Crimea, Kalmykia and Northern Caucasus were denied their historical roots, homelands and social memory. Traces of their ancestors were erased from the rewritten histories of their regions. In contrast, the scholars of those peoples who avoided persecution did their best to push their roots as far back into the local past as possible in order to make them "real" indigenes. For example, after the Crimean Tatars were deported from the Crimea in 1944 the brutal act had to be legitimized academically. Archaeological studies in the Crimea greatly benefited in the late 1940s as a result of that. They enjoyed generous financial support, and the best Soviet scholars were engaged to establish Slavic or even Russian historical rights to the Crimean lands with reference to the prehistoric past.

5   Resistance (1957–1985)

The fourth period began in the late 1950s after the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU, which marked the beginning of the "thaw," and lasted until the late 1980s. At that time, nationality policy was by no means as severe as under Stalin; yet ideological control was intact. The period was characterized by a permanent growth of ethno-nationalist ideologies among both Russians and non-Russians that had been impossible in the late Stalin era. Besides increasing resistance to federal center, one could observe a growth of tensions between neighboring ethnic groups dissatisfied with their economic and political status. The main feature of the period was competition between "Soviet nationalism," on the one hand, and regional republican and ethnic nationalisms, on the other. With respect to ethnogenetic studies, the period was marked by a deliberate emphasis on the Slavic past (especially that of the Eastern Slavs) by mainstream scholarship and a conscious downplay or even neglect of those communities who fought against the early Slavs or preceded them and played an important role in the territories occupied by the Slavs later on. It is no accident that the Institute of Archaeology of the USSR Academy of Sciences in Moscow was for several decades headed by Boris Rybakov, a well-known expert in Slavic-Russian archaeology who did his best to discover Slavic roots in the Bronze Age.

In the early 1980s Rybakov put forward "a new concept of the prehistory of the Kievan Rus," which was actually based on the well-known autochthonous approach and was by no means new (Rybakov 1981). To be sure, the hyper-autochthonous approach was rejected by many Russian archaeologists after the late 1950s, but it had and still has strong support in the Ukraine and Belarus. Suffice it to say that an expert in Slavic archaeology, Pavel Tolochko, heads the Institute of Archaeology in Kiev. He is still fighting against Vikingism and supports nationalist-oriented archaeology, although in moderate terms (Tolochko 1990). It is worth mentioning that some Ukrainian archaeologists continue to argue that urn-field antiquities have to be entirely or at least to a large extent identified with the Slavs rather than with the early Germans (Symonovich 1970: 86; Maksimov 1990). In Belorussia Leonid Pobol' has developed an idea of autochthonous Slavic evolution on Belorussian territory since at least the beginning of the Early Iron Age, some of his ideas being very close to those of Lastovsky (Pobol' 1970, 1982). Russian and non-Russian ethnic nationalisms have been growing further since the 1960s. Russian nationalism manifested itself in particular in the establishment in June 1966 of the Pan-Russian Society for the Protection of the Cultural Legacy (Ravikovich 1970: 122; Kozhinov 1994).

It is worth noting that ethnogenetic studies were deliberately promoted by authorities at both federal and republican level to gain their own ends through the support of politically useful views of the ethnic past and, at the same time, the persecution of those alternative views which threatened their position. For example, Soviet historians, engaged in the preparation of a volume on the history of the Kazakh SSR in the early 1940s, found themselves between a hammer and an anvil. On the one hand, they had to reproduce favorably the history of the Kazakh people, emphasizing their struggle against foreign invaders and the national liberation movement against the Russian Empire. On the other hand, at a time when Soviet, i.e. Russian, patriotism was being deliberately promoted by the authorities, it was prohibited to "slander" the Russian Empire or its expansionistic politics. That is why opposing views of the past were thoroughly analyzed in the Central Committee of the Communist Party in 1943 and 1944, and why afterwards historians were instructed how to represent the uneasy aspects of the past of various Soviet peoples (Tillett 1969: 70–76; Pankratova 1988).

After the "punished peoples" were rehabilitated and returned to their homelands, republican histories were rewritten once again. Ironically, this development took place in the background of a state-sponsored program aimed at linguistic Russification and launched in 1958 (Simon 1991: 246). Moreover, the regional histories reflected the ethnic political hierarchy and were aimed at a "reification of the political unit by according its great antiquity" (Kohl 1998: 232). Thus the ethnogenesis of the so-called titled peoples was studied most of all.

The emergence of regional bureaucratic elites as well as of regional schools of

historians, archaeologists and ethnographers in the 1960s and 1970s resulted in a flourishing of the politicized and mythologized ethnogenetic schemes in the former USSR, especially in the Caucasus, former Soviet Central Asia, the Middle Volga region, and the Southern Urals. An intensive search for one's own ethnic ancestors was rooted in dissatisfaction with the current social, economic and political situation, and the insecure future. The phenomenon in question accompanied a growth in the imbalance between the economic and demographic potentials of the republics and various ethnic groups, on the one hand, and their political status, on the other. An emphasis on one's own early history or prehistory was rooted in the desire to obtain psychological compensation, to appeal to the glorious deeds of remote ancestors in order to overcome modern hardships. At the same time different ethnogenetic schemes reflected and articulated the claims of various ethnic groups for the same vital resources. A struggle for the ancestors intensified after the "punished peoples" were released and returned to their native lands in 1957–1958. Their claims for complete political and territorial rehabilitation were manifested with reference to what they considered their Golden Age. In brief, urgent ethnopolitical reasons demanded the building up of highly mythologized views of ethnic history and prehistory.

These histories were still strictly controlled by the authorities, and a presentation of the most sensitive issues such as ethnogenesis was entrusted to "value-free" scholars, mostly ethnic Russians. For the authorities, it was easier to control the productions of the latter rather than those of the non-Russian scholars, especially of those who belonged to the "punished peoples." Yet local scholars also made efforts to develop their own distinct views of the ethnic past. They had to be careful however, and developed views which provided their own ethnic groups with a positive image within the received historical outlook. For example, nomadic cultures were characterized in Soviet historiography as backward, less creative and even predatory. To avoid this humiliating image Azeri scholars made every effort to divorce their nomadic Oghuz ancestors and looked for their ethnic roots among ancient local farmers. By contrast, Kazakh scholars emphasized the high value of the nomadic culture and its creative nature.

Anyway, from that time onwards, the local past proved to be an important means of struggle for political and social rights and privileges, for territory, and for ethnic authenticity. Construction of indigenous histories contributed greatly to a shaping of ethnic consciousness and the development of ethnic nationalism, promoted directly or indirectly by middle-ranking Soviet authorities, paradoxically, side by side with the "struggle against nationalism."

For example, the Uzbek scholar M. Ermatov argued that the Sumerians were the first colonizers of Central Asia, after whom the Iranians arrived, who allegedly suppressed the indigenous peoples of Uzbekistan (Ermatov 1968). Thus, in his view, the latter had had to fight against them continuously from the remote past. Ermatov used this construction to explain particular features of linguistic processes. He

treated the idea of the "Aryan" (Indo-Iranian) origins of the ancient Central Asian population as a "bourgeois falsification." Following academician N. Ya. Marr (Marr 1935: 315), he shared the view that language has a social class nature. Thus, he argued that only the local elite spoke the Iranian language, whereas the commoners were certainly Turkic speakers. In this way he aspired to Turkify the Early Iron Age population and to turn the Turks into autochthones. In turn, the Abkhazian archaeologist I. I. Tsvinariia described "the aggression" of the Kura-Arax archaeological culture against the Western Transcaucasian population, as though the latter had been forcefully assimilated by the newcomers in the Early Bronze Age (Tsvinariia 1990).

All these constructions reflected their authors' anxiety concerning modern ethnocultural and, especially ethnopolitical processes. While Russian archaeologists and historians of the 1940s preoccupied themselves with the German threat, the most painful problem for, say, Ermatov was the incorporation of Uzbekistan in particular and Central Asia in general, first into the Russian Empire, and then into the USSR, accompanied by Russian dominance in various spheres of economics, politics and culture. His views also reflected the continuous struggle between Uzbeks and Tajiks for the regional past. Tsvinariia's book clearly reflected the long Abkhazian-Georgian conflict rooted, in particular, in the deliberate Georgian demographic politics aimed at Megrelian resettlement in Abkhazia that ultimately provoked the social unrest and bloody clashes of 1989.

6　Onslaught (1986–1993)

The fifth period was marked by the growth of ethnonationalist movements in the late 1980s, the breakup of the USSR in 1990–1991, the establishment of new independent states and a search for new identities. In this environment, certain scholars (philologists, ethnographers, archaeologists, historians) took part in the ethnopolitical movements, and many politicians began intensively to use academic and pseudo-academic constructions of the past (Drobizheva 1994: 74–81). Thus, one could observe a flourishing of new ethnogenetic myths all over the post-Soviet area to legitimate nation-state building, territorial claims and the struggle for cultural survival (Shnirelman 1999). It is noteworthy that, Soviet censorship having been eliminated, intellectuals were encouraged by local authorities, especially in the new independent states, to develop useful ethnogenetic myths. Therefore, scholarly constructions were overloaded with political messages at the expense of their academic reliability, demonstrating that simplified ethnogenetic myths are more attractive to highly politicized masses than boring academic arguments. People were searching for symbols of their unity and omens of their great future derived from a great past, and scholarly knowledge lost credibility if it contradicted such political expectations and aspirations. New state emblems referring to the glorious past and ethnic traditions manifested a fascination with the idea of "ethnic and historic originality."

Ethnogenetic myths made up the basis of ethnic narratives, included into school curricula as the core of new ethnocentric ideologies (Shnirelman 2003a).

In contrast to the earlier period, ethnogenetic constructions emphasized epochs when the titled people were independent, accomplished great feats, defeated their enemies, established their own states, and were responsible for outstanding cultural achievements. At the same time, unification with Russia was invariably depicted as brutal colonization followed by cruel exploitation. There was no place for "people's friendship" in these narratives, and the former ideology of class struggle was effectively replaced by that of ethnic struggle. Ethnic tensions and conflicts manifested themselves explicitly or implicitly in the new ethnogenetic and ethnohistorical myths. Methodology based on an aspiration to relate one's own ethnic roots to famous ancient people caused an inevitable symbolic conflict, since two or more different ethnic groups might claim one and the same ancestor as a result. Hence, the struggle between the Ossetians, Balkars and Karachai, Ingush and, to a lesser extent, Chechens, for the Alan legacy, between the Tatars and Chuvash for Volga Bulgaria, between the Armenians and Azeris for the Caucasian Albanian legacy, between the Georgians and Abkhazians for the Abkhazian Kingdom, between the Russians and Kazakhs for the Sakae legacy, between the Russians and Ukrainians for the Kievan Rus', between the Uzbeks and Tajiks for the early Iranian legacy, between the Kirghiz and the Khakas for the early Kyrgyz ancestors, and the like. The Aryan myth has grown in popularity in Russia, Ukraine, Armenia, Ossetia and Tajikistan over the last ten to fifteen years or so (Shnirelman 2004: 123–225). During the last twenty years one could also observe an intensification of the claims for the "Scythian-Sarmatian heritage" from the side of certain Turkic scholars, who have sometimes gone so far as to consider the Bronze Age and even the Chalcolithic cultures of the Eurasian steppes as having been created by the Turkic speakers.

Hot debates about their own ancestors, origins and early development between certain factions within the well established ethnic groups became a new phenomenon in the 1990s. Discussions between Tatarists and Bulgarists in Tatarstan about both the origins of the Volga Tatars and their proper name are a well-known case at present (Shnirelman 1996b, 1996c; Uyama 2002; Tsviklinsky 2003). Yet there have been other cases like, for example, the Erzya-Moksha debates within the Mordvinian ethnic group (Shnirelman 2005).

7   Conclusions

In the late 19th century Slavophiles felt unhappy about the issue of the derivative nature of Russian culture and wondered how to adjust an image of Russian originality to the critical importance of Western borrowings. In the 1920s this dilemma was overcome. At that time, having taken its own route to development, Russia not only discovered its original image but demonstrated it before the whole

world. For sure that image proved to be non-Russian or less Russian. The country advertised itself as a constellation of equal nationalities manifested by its new name, the Soviet Union. The abolition of ethnic discrimination, first, caused a flow of new people to the spheres of scholarship and culture, and second, established many new fields of studies. Whereas Western anthropologists were searching for the objects of their studies overseas, Soviet scholars found them within their own country with its great ethnic diversity. Moreover, the ethnicization of political life and the Bolshevik aspiration to eliminate social and economic inequality between ethnic groups made ethnographic studies urgent and provided them with generous financial support. Many new scholarly and educational organizations, University departments and chairs, museums and academic associations were established.

The first ten to fifteen Soviet years witnessed numerous scholarly innovations, which concerned both concepts and methodologies. For example, the academic basis of the regional approach was built up, and traditional economies and social structures as well as folk beliefs and arts were intensively examined. Since there was no high wall between traditional folk culture and prehistory, interdisciplinary archaeological-ethnographic studies were developed, and Soviet scholars began to discuss a new methodological approach which was much later called ethnoarchaeology (Shnirelman 1995c: 151). Comparative studies became popular, and the concept of economic-cultural types was first formulated. Under these conditions, the well-known historical-cultural methodology obtained a multi-disciplinary form.

By the end of the 1920s, the growth of political centralization and administrative pressure made the authorities pay more attention to academic conclusions and recommendations which more often than not contradicted bureaucratic expectations. In particular, scholars pointed to specific characteristics of the traditional economic systems and warned that their radical transformation would have catastrophic consequences for local cultures. Obviously, that contradicted the demands of Soviet industrialization and collectivization. Moreover, scholars emphasized the importance of traditional spiritual culture including folk beliefs, and this could not meet the demands of Soviet militant atheism. Furthermore, one of the most painful issues dealt with ethnic views of the regional past, because local versions of history were actively used by various ethnic intellectual leaders to justify their mutually exclusive claims for the same territories. Ethnic conflicts might be the result while Soviet authorities were dreaming of a cohesive well-integrated national entity.

They had neither the skill nor sufficient time to re-train intellectual elites, so the issue was settled in a radical way—many scholars both in the center and the republics were arrested and accused of disloyalty towards the Soviet power. It was in this environment that Marxism was introduced throughout the country at the turn of the 1930s, when its most valuable legacy was identified with internationalism. Younger people who graduated from Universities and Colleges in the Soviet era were loyal towards Soviet values and became the bearers of the new ideology. To

reconcile neighboring ethnic groups they developed the concept of autochthonism, which emphasized ancient local roots and common ancestors. They expected that a belief in common ancestry might reconcile the rivals and fill their hearts with brotherly love. At the same time, an idea of large linguistic families, which crossed state borders, met severe criticism since, from the authorities' point of view, it encouraged conflicts of loyalty and, thus, threatened state unity. It is for this reason that academician Marr's followers stigmatized the ideas of pan-Turkic, pan-Finnish or pan-Iranian linguistic and cultural unities. Comparative studies of languages and cultures were increasingly suspect, and their advocates were persecuted. All of this provided the regional approach with new arguments: whereas in the 1920s it was used for the legitimization of both ethnopolitical autonomies and ethnic claims for specific models of economic development, now it had to demonstrate ethnic kinship and the great role of regional interethnic contacts in the formation of traditional cultures. Within linguistic studies, the concept of linguistic families was replaced by the idea of the sub-stratum, which shifted the emphasis from linguistic relationship to linguistic interaction and merger.

In the mid-1930s, the political-administrative structure of the Soviet Union was finally formed and legitimized by the new constitution of 1936. Having realized the value of national history for the consolidation of identity, the authorities encouraged consolidation of views of the regional past and demanded that they be integrated into school curricula. But this demand was burdened with irreconcilable contradictions. Indeed, on the one hand, being interested in the formation of a highly integrated Soviet people, the authorities needed a uniform well-integrated view of national history. On the other hand, while recognizing the state status of separate republics, they agreed that the latter had a right to their own regional versions of history. As the republics were ethnically based, those versions appreciated mainly the past of the titled peoples: ethnic minorities were neglected or entirely ignored. This concerned the All-Soviet scheme of history as well, since it was based on the history of the Russian people. It was in this way that the idea of a civic nation was replaced by one of ethnic nations. Ever after, ethnic nations became the main actors in the new Soviet history. Thus, the idea of internationalism was formally intact, as ethnic nations were declared equal and obtained the right to their own past. Yet in fact this "internationalism" meant a complex hierarchical structure with the Russian people at the top, and within which various levels were associated with different political and social privileges. This led not only to the provision of certain ethnic groups with special privileges but also to the legitimization of oppression against those ethnic groups deemed to be disloyal by the state authorities. Hence, the problem of the "punished peoples," deprived of all rights, including those to their own culture and history.

Under these conditions, a preoccupation with theoretical knowledge and the development of new concepts and methodological approaches became unsafe.

Scholars found themselves constrained within the narrow limits of ethnic history. Moreover, even writing original texts in this field was unsafe, because Soviet policy changed very often and immediately demanded respective changes in views of the past. That is why the period was well-known for numerous trials of scholars. Many of them went to jail, and some perished there. Nevertheless, a huge amount of empirical material on the ethnic past was collected in the 1930s and 1940s, and fundamental works and textbooks on the histories of the titled peoples came out in the last Stalin decade. Even so, those publications were often attacked for their deviation from official dogma.

Anyway, by the 1950s some peoples obtained their own history, while others were still deprived of one. Scholars of the new generation, especially those of the "punished peoples," did their best to overcome this injustice in the 1960s and 1970s. The political atmosphere was much more liberal at that time, in contrast to the era of Stalin's repressions. For sure, scholars might be severely criticized for their "political errors," and the most stubborn of them might suffer administrative sanctions, but the practice of mass repressions and shootings was over. This seemed encouraging. Comparative studies were rehabilitated, linguists began to discuss linguistic relationships once again, the concepts of linguistic families and archaeological cultures were reintroduced, and archaeologists developed an interest in the problem of migrations. But it was ethnographers who were engaged in generalized integrative studies of ethnogenesis and ethnic history.

From the 1960s to the 1980s ethnography played a very important role, while developing a language of resistance to the cultural leveling connected with the implementation of the concept of the "new Soviet entity." It was within the ethnographic intellectual community, with its emphasis on traditional cultures, that the language of ethnic nationalism was developed. In this respect, the concept of "ethno-social organism" suggested by academician Yu. V. Bromlei was of crucial importance (Bromlei 1973: 40–45, 1983: 63–70). It restored the organic approach popular in the 19th century and highly appreciated by many nationalist leaders in those days. In fact, this concept legitimized ethnically-based republics and justified the privileges of their titled ethnic groups by reference to scholarly knowledge. Ever after, popular views of ethnogenesis were based on the notion of the movement of some coherent "ethnic organisms" through centuries and millennia. Regardless of any complex ethnogenetic processes constructed by scholars, the "ancestors" were perceived by people as equal members of their own ethnic group, and they were unwilling to share them with any other communities.

The value of "ancestors" was strictly connected with their ability to legitimize the full rights of the titled peoples for their own republics. Whatever scholars said of the complex relationships between language, culture and somatic features in the formation of various ethnic groups, local intellectuals thoroughly tested those characteristics against their ability to be useful for ethnopolitical goals. For example,

although the Azeri people inherited their language from the medieval Oghuz, the latter were less than appropriate ancestors for them because, firstly, they were newcomers to the Caucasus, and secondly, they were well-known as destroyers of cultures and civilizations. Ancestors with such a bad reputation were certainly unacceptable, and Azeri intellectuals preferred to identify their ancestors with the Early Medieval local farmers. Although the latter spoke a different language, relationships with them allowed one, firstly, to claim all the territory of the republic, and secondly, to be treated as the "ancient cultured population." The Kazakh and Uzbek peoples went even further and aspired to prove their ancestry from the local population of the Early Iron Age that was different both in language (they were Iranian speakers) and physical appearance. Karachai and Balkar intellectuals used another strategy and made every effort to justify their desirable political status in the Karachai-Cherkess and Kabardino-Balkar republics respectively through imposition of the Turkic language upon the Early Medieval Alans, whom they viewed as their own ancestors. Moreover, they depicted all the other Iranian-speaking steppe nomads besides the Alans only as Turkic speakers. As a result, the Karachai and Balkars were eager not only to appropriate high symbolic status in their respective republics but also to refer to the glorious past of the steppe nomads, full of military feats and political achievements (Shnirelman 2003b).

All the abovementioned ethnogenetic constructions emphasized the direct and pure line which united ancestors with descendants. Yet there was also another model which strove to beneficially exploit the advantages of two different ancestries. It was used by the Ossetians, who, on the one hand, claimed their origin from the local Koban' culture of the Late Bronze Age, and on the other hand, made every effort to retain the Scythian and Sarmatian heritage received from the steppe nomads who arrived in the Northern Caucasus in the Early Iron Age. The former provided them with arguments in favor of their desired indigenous status, while the latter enriched them with a glorious past, memorialized by the Classical and Early Medieval authors.

Thus, it is possible to distinguish between several different models which predominate among different ethnic groups (Shnirelman 1995d: 6). For example, an indigenist model is characteristic of the Ukrainians who are convinced that their ancestors have lived in Ukraine since time immemorial. The Russian ethnonationalists, neo-pagans, prefer "the prodigal son model," which stresses the continuous wanderings of the ancestors all over the world with a final return to the homeland. The ideologists of pan-Turkism use "the Genghiz Khan model," which emphasizes the glorious deeds of the ancestor-conquerors rather than local roots. The Ossetians attempt to combine the autochthonous model with "the Genghiz Khan model" in order both to claim the local lands and to preserve the glorious ancient Iranian past ("the Janus model"). "The reincarnation model" is popular among the Kazakhs and the Bashkirs, who stress their indigenous status accordingly in Kazakhstan and in

Bashkortostan. This they do despite the fact that the Iron Age native inhabitants differed from the contemporary Kazakhs and Bashkirs both physically and in language. Thus, this model permits a language shift and even a drastic change in physical appearance. The message is clear: in order to claim the territory of Kazakhstan the Kazakhs have to prove that they are a truly indigenous population deeply-rooted in early local history and prehistory. The same is true for the Bashkirs.

Finally, it is by no means true that ethnonationalists stubbornly stick to only one of the models under consideration. Quite the opposite—they usually have two or more different versions of the past in their closets simultaneously and choose which to use depending on the current political situation. For instance, the Kazan' Tatars use the Bulgar and the Golden Horde versions, and the Azeris, the Albanian and Turkic ones.

It is worth noting that to develop all those views of the past scholars could beneficially use different methodological approaches inherited from the 1920s and 1930–1940s while supplementing them with new approaches developed in the post-Stalin decades. What was valued was not their scholarly credibility and correctness but their ability to provide ancestors with that very image which was urgently demanded by ethnopolitical goals. It is for this reason that the ancestors' image could drastically change as a response to new ethnopolitical challenges. Therefore, scholars of the same ethnic affiliation could depict very different images of their ancestors depending on their views of the current ethnopolitical situation. Hence, endless disputes between orthodox and revisionist scholars that was very much a characteristic of republican historiographies in the last Soviet decades[6].

In fact, this was phase A ("period of scholarly interest") in the development of nationalism as defined by the Czech scholar M. Hroch (Hroch 1985: 23). At the same time, there was no clear boundary between phases A and B ("period of patriotic agitation") in the USSR, since patriotic ideology was innate in Soviet propaganda. Whereas Soviet patriotism was promoted in the center, it was supplemented by local patriotism in the republics, which referred to the regional past taught in republican schools. Ethnic minorities manifested much more interest in their ethnic past and historical figures, in contrast to the dominant majority. The reason was that ethnic minorities felt a persistent threat to their own identities and status. It was irrelevant that sometimes people were unable to present a consistent narrative about their own ancestors and ethnic past. Indeed, ethnogenesis manifested an elite discourse, and as we know, even scholars developed sometimes radically different views of the past. What is important was that people eagerly assimilated any information which might shed light to their ethnic origin. It was in this way that they attempted to maintain their ethnic identity and to defend their ethnic values in the next phase of the "growth of the mass nationalist movement" in the late 1980s–early 1990s.

Thus, the disintegration of the USSR did not happen overnight—the ideology of dissolution in the form of ethnogenetic myths was developed during decades of

the Soviet regime. At a time of political instability those myths encouraged ethnic mobilization to achieve certain ethnopolitical goals such as separatism, irredentism, appropriation of political sovereignty or upgrading political status in general. Simultaneously, ethnic myths justified new ethnocratic regimes and consolidated emerging ethnic nations. Hence, the rewriting of prehistory and early history in the post-Soviet states, which manifested the aspiration of the local elites to establish their own ethnic groups as ethnic nations and to develop new ethnic alliances rather than merely "restore" their distorted ethnic past[7].

Notes

1) For the importance of those points see Jones (1994); Penrose (1995).
2) For the close link of legitimacy with indigenousness see Horowitz (1985: 202–204).
3) This is a widely shared notion. For example, see Nairn (1981: 206).
4) My definition of "actors" is somewhat more restricted than that of "artists" by Rubie Watson. See Watson (1994: 72).
5) For case studies see Shnirelman (1996b, 2001); Uyama (2002); Roudometof (2002: 48–49); Coppieters (2002).
6) For case studies of Azeri and Tatar scholarship see Shnirelman 1996b, 2001.
7) This paper is a result of the Minpaku joint research project "Ethnographical knowledge under Post-socialist conditions: redefined positions and effects: unwinding the multipolarity of the anthropological discipline as an institution" (2004–2006 headed by H. Takakura) financially supported by the National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka, Japan.

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