development of Russian politics, foreign policy, and political economy without addressing the issues of nationalism.

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Three highly qualified readers – Paul Goode, Oxana Shevel, and Igor Zevelev – have presented their assessment of our book *The New Russian Nationalism: Imperialism, Ethnicity and Authoritarianism 2000–15*. We would like to begin by thanking them for their kind words and astute analyses. Their comments touch upon a range of issues, and it would be impossible to deal with all of them in a brief response. Instead, we will focus on a few crucial topics and concepts.

Goode wonders in what ways the "new Russian nationalism" is actually "new." Indeed, why did we choose to give our book this title? The book springs out of the project "Nation-building, Nationalism, and the New 'Other' in Today's Russia," funded by the Research Council of Norway (project number 220599). When we in 2012 applied for (and were granted) funding for this project it was not only because nationalism was featuring increasingly in Russian society and public discourse, but also because we believed that the *nature* of Russian nationalism seemed to be changing. Previously dominated by "imperial" tendencies – pride in a large, strong, and multi-ethnic state able to project its influence abroad – Russian nationalism focused more and more on *ethnic* issues. This new ethno-nationalism came in various guises – as racism and xenophobia, but also as a new intellectual movement of "national democracy" that deliberately sought to emulate conservative West European nationalism.

To a large extent this new ethno-nationalism was fueled by growing uneasiness in Russian society toward recent migrants from Central Asia and other parts of the former Soviet Union. To be sure, also in the Soviet period there had been significant movement of people between the various parts of the USSR, but the setting had now changed radically. Gone was the overarching shared Soviet culture; knowledge of the Russian language

among the non-Russians in the other post-Soviet states was dwindling; and immigrants who arrived in Moscow and other large Russian cities frequently became a poorly integrated underclass. They could travel to Russia without a visa, but working there requires an official permit, which is generally not forthcoming – so the majority of them work illegally. This labor migration surged after the turn of the millennium when a boom in the Russian economy brought a desperate need for more work hands. With millions of migrants pouring into the country, it is hardly coincidental that, for a long time, the largest Russian nationalist organization was the Movement against Illegal Immigration.

The December 2010 riots in Manezhnaia Square in downtown Moscow marked a sea change in the Kremlin's approach to Russian nationalism. Until then, the authorities had largely condoned radical Russian nationalists, for instance allowing the annual "Russian March," which gathered thousands of nationalists – including skinheads and neo-Nazis – in the streets of Moscow on 4 November, National Unity Day. This leniency toward nationalists contrasted sharply with the regime's harsh reactions against the rallies of the pro-Western, liberal opposition, whose meetings were regularly broken up. The Putin regime had apparently calculated that it could harness nationalist sentiments and exploit the nationalists for its own purposes. However, following Manezhnaia, Kremlin strategists seem to have had second thoughts about the wisdom of this approach. Over the following months the authorities cracked down harshly on expressions of radical nationalism.

Having fallen out of grace with the Kremlin, some nationalists joined the anti-Putin opposition. When anti-Putin rallies erupted in Moscow and other major cities after the fraud-ridden parliamentary elections of December 2011, almost one year to the day after the Manezhnaia riots, nationalists marched together with pro-Western democrats and left-wing activists under an incongruous medley of rightist, centrist, and leftist banners. Around 2010–2011, then, Russian nationalism seemed to be turning into a weapon that the opposition could exploit in mobilizing against the powers-that-be.

To forestall such a scenario, Putin increasingly posed as a nationalist himself. The first signal was an article he published in *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, "Russia: The National Question," part of his 2012 presidential election campaign. Here he came across as a nationalist, but of a different kind from those found among the anti-system radicals. Putin denounced nationalism as such – but by presenting his own alternative version of it. His national model differed significantly from the non-ethnic *rossiiskii* model promoted by the Yeltsin administration in the 1990s by focusing on the historical role – indeed, "the mission" – of the ethnic Russians (*russkie*). At the same time, Putin's model retained the state-centered orientation that had characterized Russian nationalism before this "ethnic turn." It was against this backdrop that we developed our research project.

In the spring of 2014, however, the process of ethnicizing the national identity took yet another turn. The annexation of Crimea was sold to the Russian people in starkly nationalist language. Interestingly, with regard to the two dominant brands of contemporary Russian nationalism – imperial nationalism and ethno-nationalism – the annexation of Crimea allowed Putin to ride two horses at the same time. Since the majority of the peninsula's population self-identify as ethnic Russians it was possible to present this act both as the gathering of Russian lands in a strong Russian state *and* as a defense of ethnic Russians abroad, and thus appeal simultaneously to imperialists and ethno-nationalists alike.

Hence, we find Zevelev's questions especially pertinent: "Is modern Russian nationalism becoming more ethnic, or more imperial? Or perhaps it is becoming more civic, inclusive, moderate, multi-confessional, and liberal?" As he points out, there is evidence of all of the above. We also agree with his assessment that Russian identity is remarkably multilayered and fluid, a work in progress. But the task of researchers will always be to try to

identify *dominant tendencies and vectors*. Goode concludes that what is "new" about the new Russian nationalism is "just the way that political actors cobble together existing tropes in laying claim to power and legitimacy." To be sure, the "new" Russian nationalism has not been invented from scratch: it is an assemblage of various time-honored and well-known elements. Moreover, what is evident in contemporary Russia is not even necessarily nationalism in the singular, but rather various competing nationalisms. It is how the various elements of the Kremlin's nation model, and hence nationalism, are put together – the weighting as well as the wrapping – that, in our opinion, is definitely new.

The most recent changes in the trajectory of Russian nationalism are a result of a series of exogenous events, which nobody could have predicted: the Euromaidan revolution, the annexation of Crimea, the war in Donbas. Like all other observers, Russian nationalists – ethno-nationalists and imperialists alike – are struggling to come to terms with these events and what they may imply for future development (Kolstø 2016). The spectacle of the Russian flag flying over the naval base of Sevastopol has rekindled Russian pride in state grandeur and indeed seems to have given a boost to imperialist sentiments in the population: the level of xenophobia has dropped and more people now take pride in the "multinational Russian nation." However, we believe that it would be premature to conclude that, as a result, the main trajectory of Russian nationalism has permanently altered its course. At the time of writing (September 2016) Crimea and Ukraine already seem to be pushed toward the background of public discourse in Russia. So, in these turbulent waters, we choose to tie ourselves to the mast and stick to our main interpretation: Russian "imperialism" is on the wane, and defense of the *russkii* ethno-cultural core of the nation is coming increasingly into focus. If correct, this would also mean that Russian nationalism is moving closer to recent European trends – which to a large degree are fueled by fears of what is perceived as a deluge of culturally alien migrants.

Goode holds that our choice of terms to describe these developments is unfortunate, arguing that the risks of using "civic" and "ethnic" as ideal types are well known. However, we think that it is precisely as ideal types that these terms have proved their usefulness. Yes, there is the danger that the concept of "ethnic" (*etnicheskii*) may be interpreted in narrowly biological, genealogical terms, and maybe we should have emphasized more strongly that when we write "ethnic" this should be understood in a non-racial sense. Ethnically defined nations may be either inclusive or exclusive, open to assimilation or skeptical to it. In Russia, the Russian ethnic group or "nationality" (*natsional'nost'*) has traditionally operated with fuzzy boundaries toward non-Russian minorities; before the revolution, "Russification" (*obrusenie*) was regarded as a quite normal phenomenon. Today, only a small minority among Russian nationalists defines their nation in racial terms, and they do not reflect the dominant understanding in the Russian population.

Many researchers have interpreted support for the slogan "Russia for Russians" (*Rossiia dlia russkikh*) as evidence of Russian exclusivism. A 2013 large-scale survey specially commissioned for our project also found significant support for this slogan. However, unlike most other pollsters, we included a follow-up question, asking whom the respondents would regard as "Russians" (*russkie*) in this context. We found that only 39% would restrict this term to "ethnic Russians," while 30% understood this word as referring predominantly to ethnic Russians "but not only to them." Finally, 25% responded that they saw the term as encompassing "all citizens of Russia." The latter group could probably be said to have a "civic" understanding of Russianness.

Referring to the postulated "ethnic turn," Shevel asks "what would more ethnic and more civic policies [in Russia] actually look like?" This intriguing question does not have a straightforward answer. "Nationalism" belongs to the realm of sentiment, attitudes,

and rhetoric – and only indirectly to political actions. As Shevel herself has pointed out in an excellent article (2011), the Putin regime has a highly instrumental approach to nationalism, and adroitly plays up to various segments of the Russian populace by designing policies and terminology that appeal to as many people as possible, depending on the context. As we argue above, the annexation of Crimea is a case in point.

To be sure, the Kremlin would never refer to its policies as "nationalist," and indeed, with the exception of a handful of diehard ethno-nationalists, there are very few in Russia who would put themselves in this category. In Russian terminology, "nationalism" – partly as a legacy of the Soviet ideology – has been a four-letter word, whereas "patriotism" is a civic duty. Goode makes the point that we ought to have focused more on Russian patriotism, and it is true that no chapter in the book is devoted exclusively to this phenomenon (although several contributors discuss it in passing). Some Western authors have argued that "patriotism" belongs to a very different conceptual category from "nationalism." While nationalism may come in many guises, all nationalists want to create a maximum correspondence between "the state" and "the nation," however understood. "Patriots," on the other hand, take it for granted that such correspondence already exists: they want to boost support for and celebrate their "nation-state." Hence, it has been argued, "patriotism" has no place in a study of nationalism (see, e.g., Hechter 2000). We believe, however, that the phenomenon of "regime-loyal nationalism," which we deal with extensively, covers much of the same ground.

In hindsight, was the annexation of Crimea a real watershed in the evolution of Russian identity? Zevelev and Goode ask. We believe yes. Hosking (1997) has argued that Russia's empire prevented the creation of a Russian nation. So did the Soviet successor state. But a quarter of a century into its existence, the Russian Federation appears to be less of an obstacle to the development of a *russkii* nation. Not as a narrowly defined community based on descent, but as an extensive – and expansive – ethno-cultural community with "purposefully ambiguous" borders (Shevel 2011). That, then, is the new Russian nationalism.

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