

## Workshop:

# Ethnicity, Indigeneity, and Identity in Soviet and Post-Soviet Contexts

Exploring how Soviet legacies continue to shape identity, belonging, and nationhood across Eurasia

**13 February 2026, University of Amsterdam, Faculty of Humanities**

**Hosts:** East European Studies Group (University of Amsterdam) and ETHNICGOODS (a project of the Institut Barcelona d'Estudis Internacionals, IBEI, funded by the ERC)

## About the Workshop

The Soviet Union profoundly influenced how ethnicity, indigeneity, and nationality were categorized, governed, and lived. Through nationalities policy, census practices, and institutional frameworks, the Soviet state not only classified its populations but also embedded these identities deeply into social and political life.

Yet these categories were never fixed; they were constantly contested, negotiated, and reimagined. Today, across the post-Soviet space, their legacies continue to evolve in new and complex ways:

- In **Central Asia**, Soviet-era ideas about nationality and indigeneity intersect with debates on language, Islam, and state-building.
- In the **Baltic states**, questions of citizenship and belonging emerge amid European integration and minority politics, reinterpreting the Soviet legacy.
- Among **Russia's ethnic minorities**, Soviet classifications still shape autonomy and recognition even as Moscow's centralizing policies reshape these dynamics.
- In **Ukraine**, identity politics are being redefined in light of war, memory, and coloniality.

This interdisciplinary workshop brings together scholars examining how Soviet and post-Soviet identities are **contested, renegotiated, and transformed** across time and space.

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## Schedule

09.00-9.15 Welcome

### 9.15-10.30 Keynote

Perestroika Revisited: Why Was There So Much Ethnic Mobilization in the Soviet Union During and After Perestroika – and So Little Violence?

*Pål Kolstø, University of Oslo*

10.30-10.45 Coffee break

### 10.45 -12.30 Panel 1

*Chair: Andrei Tarasov, Institut Barcelona d'Estudis Internacionals (IBEI)*

Collective Identity in Transition: A Case Study of Estonian Subcultural Identity from the Soviet to the post-Soviet

*Isabel Ekua-Thompson, University of Amsterdam*

Who's Welcome? Security, Soviet Memories, and the Estonian Refugee Dilemma

*Hakob Matevosyan, Centre for East European and International Studies (ZOiS)*

Ethno-religious Nationalism and Queer Invisibility in Lithuania

*Rasa Kamarauskaite, University of Amsterdam*

12.30-13.30 Lunch

### 13.30-15.15 Panel 2

*Chair: Gulnaz Sibgatullina, University of Amsterdam*

Colonial Framework in Times of Crisis: Digital Sense-Making in Ukraine after 2022.

*Mila Rossokhatska, University of Amsterdam*

Ukrainian State Media Platforms and National Identity

*Natalia Vdovichenko, Tilburg University*

From Soviet History to National Narratives: A Computational Study of Armenian and Azerbaijani Textbooks

*Emre Amasyali, Institut Barcelona d'Estudis Internacionals (IBEI)*

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## Transnational Belonging and Susceptibility to Disinformation among Russian-Speaking Communities

*Sabina Imatova, Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB)*

15.15-15.30 Coffee break

### 15.30-17.00 Panel 3

*Chair: Emre Amasyali, Institut Barcelona d'Estudis Internacionals (IBEI)*

Language Policy in Public Education in the Soviet and post-Soviet Context

*Andrei Tarasov, Institut Barcelona d'Estudis Internacionals (IBEI)*

Categories of Nationality and Ethnicity through the Lens of Late Soviet  
Developmentalism

*Davlatbegim Mamadshoeva, University of Amsterdam*

Azatlıq Radiosı and the 'Other' Tatar Nation: The Cultural and  
Historiographical Discourse of the Tatar-Bashkir Service of Radio  
Liberty/Radio Free Europe during the Cold War Era

*Mansur Gazimzianov, University of Amsterdam*

Nevada-Semipalatinsk Anti-nuclear Movement: Placing the Soviet Union  
into the Framework of Global Colonialism

*Kamila Smagulova, Leiden University*

17.00-18.00 Closing notes

18.15-21.00 Dinner

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