

Theories and Practices of Nationalism - HW02

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Which aspect of Stalin's definition of nationalism is still useful?

And which aspect of his definition of nationalism is now obsolete

Ans: Stalin's definition of nationalism of a "historically constituted... stable community of people" formed on the basis of a "common territory" that is not "racial or tribal"¹ and "is subject to change" is still a valid and useful definition. It excludes individual tribes or dynastic enterprises like Alexander the Great's, and most modern nations are territorially bound geographic locations due to the requirement of having to live in a common region.

Most notably obsolete is Stalin's requirement that the nation must comprise of people who satisfy *all* the conditions of having

1. A common language
2. A common territory
3. A common Economic life
4. A psychological makeup manifested in a common culture.

While the second is still true, and maybe the third, the rest are not. Multi-lingual populaces of a single nation are examples abound, and even "common culture" is not a truth, considering the example of just India. Especially considering the existence of Civic Nationalism as the dominant form present today, wherein the only official requirement is adherence to the code defined within the (coincidentally geographically bound) region. This requirement was in his own words to account for Austria and Russia not being separate nations at the time.

¹<https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1913/03a.htm#s1>, paragraph three.