



# The Affirmative Action Empire

Nations and Nationalism in  
the Soviet Union, 1923–1939

Terry Martin

## The Affirmative Action Empire



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the Soviet Union, 1923–1939

TERRY MARTIN

Cornell University Press ITHACA AND LONDON

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First published in 1997 by Cornell University Press  
First printing, Cornell Paperbacks, 1997

Printed in the United States of America

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data  
Martin, Terry (Terry Devo)

The affirmative action dispute: racism and national identity in the Soviet Union, 1925-1990 / Terry Martin.

p. cm. — (The Wadsworth series in politics, history, and culture)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-8078-2614-5 (pbk. : alk. paper)

1. Negroes—Soviet Union. 2. Nationalism and socialism—Soviet Union. I. Title. II. Series.

JN592.M374M37

947.0842—dc21

2001001222

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Reprints printing 10 9 8 7 6 5 4

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To Sally and Eli

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## Acknowledgments

My maternal grandmother, Margaret Horst, spent a summer with me a decade ago recalling her experiences as a young Mennonite girl growing up in prerevolutionary Dagestan with Kumyk Tatars as neighbors. She later experienced the ferocious assault of Makhno's peasant bands on the wealthy south Ukrainian Mennonite community during the revolution and civil war, before finally leaving the Soviet Union in 1924 to join the Russian Mennonite diaspora in Canada. Her stories first forced me to grapple with the fascinating problem of ethnicity. I've never been able to provide an adequate answer to a simple question that I'm always asked when I visit Russia or Ukraine: "What's your nationality?" Mennonite or Canadian, the only answers with any meaning to me, never satisfy anyone. One is a religion and the other is just citizenship, I am told. One might say that this book is an extended explanation as to why I, only two generations removed from Russia and Ukraine, can no longer provide a satisfactory answer to this seemingly straightforward Soviet question.

This book began as a dissertation at the University of Chicago, where I have never felt more intellectually at home. My dissertation committee was a true "dream team": Richard Hellie, who provided basic training in Russian history after I dropped my planned dissertation on seventeenth century English religious poetry; Ron Suny, who shared his encyclopedic knowledge of the nation-ethnic question as well as his good cheer and personal kindness; and David Taitm, whose crystal-clear intellect and commitment to comparative and interdisciplinary work broadened my horizons immensely. My greatest debt is to my adviser, Sheila Fitzpatrick, who taught me the craft of history, offered a model of integrity and discipline, and provided moral support when needed, but always gave me complete intellectual freedom.

Thanks also to my friends at Chicago—Matt Payne, James Harris, Josh Sanborn, Golfo Alexopolous, Jon Bone, and John McCannor—who made the writing ordeal endurable and occasionally even fun. Special thanks to Julie Hessler, not only for the weekly bridge games and cheap Chianti, but also for reading the entire manuscript and providing the crucial advice that allowed me finally to find the right structure for the book, and to Matt Lencz, whose ideas had a fundamental influence on my conception of Soviet history.

In addition to those already mentioned, I received helpful comments from Joerg Baberowski, Peter Blicstein, David Brandenberger, John Bushnell, Andrea Graziosi, Peter Holquist, Hirotaki Kurumaya, Douglas Northrop, Gabor Rittersporn, Yun Slezkine, Roman Szporluk, James Urry, Lynne Viola, and Mark Von Hagen. In Moscow, I am indebted to Aleksandr Livshin, Oleg Khlevrinsk, Lidiia Koshelova, Aleksandr Kvashenkin, Dina Noduzovich, and Larisa Rogovaia. In Kyiv, I am particularly indebted to Ruslan Pyrh for his enlightened policy of archival openness and to my good friend Jurii Shapoval, for sharing freely his inexhaustible knowledge of Ukrainian history and archives. Finally, I would like to thank William Ealey, Robert Fluschka, Michael Murrin, Malcolm Gladwell, Bruce Heallam, and the entire Martin clan, and above all my parents, Lloyd and Delphine Martin.

The research for this book was supported by the International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX), the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) of Canada, the MacArthur Foundation's CASPIC program, and the C. Boyden Gray fund for junior faculty research in Harvard's history department. Parts of Chapter 2 were published as "Borders and Ethnic Conflict: The Soviet Experiment in Ethno-Territorial Proliferation," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropes* 47 (September 1999): 338–53. An earlier version of Chapter 8 was published as "The Origins of Soviet Ethnic Cleansing," *Journal of Modern History* 70 (December 1998): 813–61. Parts of Chapter 10 were published as "The Russification of the RSFSR," *Cahiers du monde russe* 39, nos. 1–2 (1998): 99–118. The author thanks the publishers for permission to reprint this material.

This book is dedicated to Sally, without whose love and extraordinary tolerance it could never have been written, and to Eli, who appeared in the middle of the project and made it all much more fun.

T.M.

Cambridge, Massachusetts

## Footnote Abbreviations

The following footnote format, with one exception, is used throughout the book: ARCHIVE *fond/opis'/data* (date): *listy*. For protocols of Communist Party meetings, the following format is used: ARCHIVE *fond/opis'/data* (date): *protokol/speker*. For the Harvard Interview Project, the citation HIP A26, 43 means Harvard Interview Project, "A" Interview Series, Respondent #26, page 43.

BFORC	British Foreign Office: Russia Correspondence
CGM	Captured German Materials
GAU	Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii
GARF (IsGA)	Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii [formerly IsGA, RSFSR]
HIP	Harvard Interview Project
ISS	<i>Polnoe sobranie sochinenii</i>
RGAE	<i>Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv obshchestvi</i>
RGVA	<i>Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi voennyi arkhiv</i>
RTKhIDNI	<i>Rossiiskii Tsentr Khraneniia i Issledeniia Dokumentov Novei- shei Istorii</i>
SU	<i>Sobranie zakonov i rasporiazhenii</i>
SZ	<i>Sobranie zakonov i rasporiazhenii</i>
TIDAHOTI	<i>Tsentral'nyi derzhavnyi arkhiv hranshchynskoi Ukrainy</i> <i>Україны</i>
TIDAVOI/	<i>Tsentral'nyi derzhavnyi arkhiv pykhanykh orhanov Ukrainy</i>
TiKhSD	<i>Tsentr khraneniia sovremennoi dokumentatsii</i>

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## A Note on Style

I used the Library of Congress transliteration system for Russian, Ukrainian, and Belorussian, suppressing soft signs in proper names and with the usual exceptions for well-known names such as Trotsky. The cast of characters and places in this book covers dozens of languages, and it would be impossible to accurately name all non-Russians in their native languages. Therefore, I have used Russian names throughout for individuals' and place names, with the sole exception of several well-known Ukrainians. I have also used the contemporary place names rather than the emerging new ones, such as Kirgizia not Kyrgyzstan.

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## The Affirmative Action Empire



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# I

## The Soviet Affirmative Action Empire

The Soviet Union was the world's first Affirmative Action Empire. Russia's new revolutionary government was the first of the old European multiethnic states to confront the rising tide of nationalism and respond by systematically promoting the national consciousness of its ethnic minorities and establishing for them many of the characteristic institutional forms of the nation-state. The Bolshevik strategy was to assume leadership over what now appeared to be the inevitable process of decolonization and carry it out in a manner that would preserve the territorial integrity of the old Russian empire. To that end, the Soviet state created not just a dozen large national republics, but tens of thousands of national territories scattered across the entire expanse of the Soviet Union. New national elites were trained and promoted to leadership positions in the government, schools, and industrial enterprises of these newly formed territories. In each territory, the national language was declared the official language of government. In dozens of cases, this necessitated the creation of a written language where one did not yet exist. The Soviet state financed the mass production of books, journals, newspapers, movies, operas,

<sup>1</sup>The Austro-Hungarian empire was the first of the old European empires to see its existence decimated by separatist nationalism. After 1867, the Hungarians half of the empire pursued a strategy of building a Hungarian nation-state through assimilation, whereas the Austrian half of the empire pioneered many of the steps, later adopted by the Soviet Union. Their policy, however, was primarily a defensive strategy of granting concessions to nationalist demands, whereas the Soviets pursued an active, prophylactic strategy of promoting non-Russian nation-building to prevent the growth of nationalism. On the policies of the Austro-Hungarian empire, see Adam Wandruszka and Peter Urbanich, eds., *Die Habsburgermonarchie, 1848–1918. Band III. Die Völker des Reiches* (Vienna, 1986).

museums, folk music ensembles, and other cultural output in the non-Russian languages. Nothing comparable to it had been attempted before, and, with the possible exception of India, no multiethnic state has subsequently matched the scope of Soviet Affirmative Action. This book is devoted to an analysis of this novel and fascinating experiment in governing a multiethnic state.

## 'The Logic of the Affirmative Action Empire

Why did the Bolsheviks adopt this radical strategy? When they seized power in October 1917, they did not yet possess a coherent nationalities policy. They had a powerful slogan, which they shared with Woodrow Wilson, of the right of nations to self-determination. This slogan, however, was designed to recruit ethnic support for the revolution, not to provide a model for the governing of a multiethnic state. Although Lenin always took the nationalities question seriously, the unexpected strength of nationalism as a mobilizing force during the revolution and civil war nevertheless greatly surprised and disturbed him. The Bolsheviks expected nationalism in Poland and Finland, but the numerous nationalist movements that sprang up across most of the former Russian empire were not expected. The strong nationalist movement in Ukraine was particularly unnerving. This direct confrontation with nationalism compelled the Bolsheviks to formulate a new nationalities policy.<sup>2</sup>

This did not occur without contestation. On the one side were the nation-builders, led by Lenin and Stalin; on the other side were the internationalists, led by Georgii Piatakov and Nikolai Bukharin. At the Eighth Party Congress in March 1919, the two sides clashed over the question of the right of national self-determination.<sup>3</sup> Piatakov argued that "during a sufficiently large and torturous experience in the borderlands, the slogan of the right of nations to self-determination has shown itself in practice, during the social revolution, as a slogan uniting all counterrevolutionary forces."<sup>4</sup> Once the proletariat had seized power, Piatakov maintained, national self-determination became irrelevant: "It's just a diplomatic game, or worse than a game if we take it seriously."<sup>5</sup> Piatakov was supported by Bukharin, who argued that the right to self-determination could only be invested in the proletariat, not in "some fictitious so-called 'national will.'"<sup>6</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Richard Pipes, *The Formation of the Soviet Union* (rev. ed., Cambridge, Mass., 1964); Ronald G. Suny, *The Revenge of the Past* (Stanford, Calif., 1963); Andrei Gromiko, *Bolshéviki i korennye na tsvetie i na listve 1917-1918 godov* (Moscow, 1970); Jeremy Smith, *The Bolsheviks and the National Question, 1917-1923* (London, 1995); Yuri Slezkine, "The USSR as a Communal Apartment, or How a Socialist State Promoted Ethnic Particularism," *Slavic Review* 53 (Summer 2004): 414-432; Francine Hirsch, "Empire of Nations: Colonial Technologies and the Making of the Soviet Union, 1917-1930" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1988).

<sup>3</sup> For a good background discussion, see Smith, *The Bolsheviks and the National Question*, 7-28.

<sup>4</sup> *Sobremennye izvestiia NKPSi. Protokoly* (Moscow, 1953): 79-80.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 82.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 48-49. This position was briefly supported by Stalin as well in December 1917 and January 1918. I. V. Stalin, "Otkrye rozarishcham Ukraintzam v zhib i na fronte," *Sobremennye izvestiia* 4 (Moscow, 1917-1918): 2; "Vystupienie na III vserossiiskom s'ezde sovetskoi R., 5. i. k. D.," 4: 51-52.

Lenin had clashed with Piatakov and others on this issue before and during the revolution.<sup>17</sup> He now answered this renewed challenge with characteristic vigor. Nationalism had united all counterrevolutionary forces, Lenin readily agreed, but it had also attracted the Bolsheviks' class allies. The Finnish bourgeoisie had successfully "deceived the working masses that the Muscovites [Moscovity], chauvinists, Great Russians wanted] to oppress the Finns." Arguments such as Piatakov's served to increase that fear and therefore strengthen national resistance. It was only "thanks to our acknowledgement of [the Finns'] right to self-determination, that the process of [class] differentiation was eased there." Nationalism was fueled by historic distrust: "The working masses of other nations are full of distrust [*sindovrie*] towards Great Russia, as a kulak and oppressor nation." Only the right to self-determination could overcome that distrust, Lenin argued, but Piatakov's policy would instead make the party the heir to Tsarist chauvinism: "Scratch any Communist and you find a Great Russian chauvinist. . . . He sics in many of us and we must fight him."<sup>18</sup>

The congress supported Lenin and retained a qualified right of national self-determination.<sup>19</sup> Of course, the majority of the former Russian empire's nationalities were forced to exercise that right within the confines of the Soviet Union. The period from 1919 to 1923, therefore, was devoted to working out what exactly non-Russian "national self-determination" could mean in the context of a unitary Soviet state. The final result was the Affirmative Action Empire: a strategy aimed at disarming nationalism by granting what were called the "forms" of nationhood. This policy was based on a diagnosis of nationalism worked out largely by Lenin and Stalin. Lenin had addressed the national question repeatedly from 1912 to 1916, when he formulated and defended the slogan of self-determination, and again from 1919 to 1923, after the alarming success of nationalist movements during the civil war.<sup>20</sup> Stalin was the Bolsheviks' acknowledged "master of the nationalities question"<sup>21</sup>: author of the standard pre-revolutionary text *Marxism and the Nationalities Question*, Commissar of Nationalities from 1917 to 1924, and official spokesman on the national question

<sup>17</sup> Lenin's two major pre-revolutionary attacks on Piatakov's position, whose major exponent was Rosa Luxemburg, were "O pravo natsii na samopredelanie" (1914) in V. I. Lenin, *PSW* 36 (Moscow, 1975-1977), 235-240, and "Sotsialisticheskaya revoliutsiia i pravo natsii na samopredelanie" (1916) *PSW* 37: 35-66. He also debated Piatakov at the party's seventh conference in April 1917; see *Natsionalnyi vopros na perekhvatke leninskoi* (Moscow, 1991): 11-27.

<sup>18</sup> *Istoriia SSSR*, 34-35, 207-208.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 387. Smith, *The Bolsheviks and the Nationality Question*, 21.

<sup>20</sup> For the period 1912 to 1916, in addition to the works cited above, see "Vozrazheniia po natsional'nomu voprosu" (1913) *PSW* 23: 314-322; "Kriticheskie zametki po natsional'nomu voprosu" (1913) *PSW* 22: 173-176; "Truzh. diskussii o samopredelenii" (1916) *PSW* 36: 17-38. For the period 1919 to 1922, see "Pis'mo k rabochim i krest'iansam Ukrainy . . ." (1919) *PSW* 40: 41-47; "Ob otstavlenii SSSR" (1921) *PSW* 43: 37-41; "K voprosu o natsional'nostakh ili ob avtonomizatsii" (1922) *PSW* 45: 36-46.

<sup>21</sup> "Ob izobrazhenii SSSR. Stenogramma zasedaniia sektsii ra. s'ezda RKP(b) po natsional'nomu voprosu 25.04.23" *Izvestiia TSK KPSS*, no. 3 (1991): 169.

at party congresses.<sup>12</sup> Lenin and Stalin were in fundamental agreement on both the logical rationale and the essential aspects of this new policy, although they came into conflict in 1922 over important issues of implementation. Their diagnosis of the nationalities problem rested on the following three premises.

### The Marxist Premise

First, the point on which Plekhanov and Lenin agreed, nationalism was a uniquely dangerous mobilizing ideology because it had the potential to forge an above-class alliance in pursuit of national goals. Lenin called nationalism a "bourgeois trick"<sup>13</sup> but recognized that, like the hedgehog's, it was a good one. It worked because it presented legitimate social grievances in a national form. At the Twelfth Party Congress in 1923, Bukharin, by then a fervid defender of the party's nationalities policy, noted that "when we tax [the non-Russian peasantry] their discontent takes on a national form, is given a national interpretation, which is then exploited by our opponents."<sup>14</sup> Ernest Gellner has parodied this argument as the "wrong-address theory" of nationalism: "Just as extreme Shi'ite Muslims hold that Archangel Gabriel made a mistake, delivering the Message to Mohammed when it was intended for Ali, so Marxists basically like to think that the spirit of history or human consciousness made a terrible boob. The wakening message was intended for *classes*, but by some terrible postal error was delivered to *nations*."<sup>15</sup>

The Bolsheviks viewed nationalism, then, as a masking ideology. Masking metaphors recur again and again in their discourse about nationality. Stalin was particularly fond of them: "The national flag is sewn on only to deceive the masses, as a popular flag, a convenience for covering up [*skrytyia*] the counter-revolutionary plans of the national bourgeoisie." "If bourgeois circles attempt to give a national tint [*natsional'naya okraska*] to their conflicts, then only because it is convenient to hide their battle for power behind a national costume."<sup>16</sup> This interpretation of nationalism as a masking ideology helps explain why the Bolsheviks remained highly suspicious of national self-expression, even after they adopted a policy explicitly designed to encourage it. For example, in justifying a wave of national repression carried out in 1924, Stalin characteristically invoked a masking metaphor: "The remnants of capitalism in the people's consciousness are much more dynamic in the sphere of nationality than in any other area. This is because they can mask themselves so well in a national costume."<sup>17</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Stalin's articles and speeches are collected in J. Stalin, *Marxizm i natsionalno-estorsial'nye voprosy* (Moscow, 1924).

<sup>13</sup> Lenin, "Kak Plekhanov Nikon razskazyval o Plekhanove" (1913) *TSV* 24: 4.

*Doklady i rechi V K P S S R. Sotogrupirovka teksta* (Moscow, 1968), 612.

<sup>14</sup> Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1983), 129.

<sup>15</sup> Stalin, "Politika avtonomii vlasti po natsional'nomu voprosu v Kazan'i" (1915), in *Marxizm*.

<sup>16</sup> "Vystupleniia na III vserossiiskom s'ezde," 4.

<sup>17</sup> *TSV* 24: *Vol' V K P S S R. Sotogrupirovka teksta* (Moscow, 1924), 31.

This understanding of nationalism led Piatakov to support the only apparently logical response: attack nationalism as a counterrevolutionary ideology and nationality itself as a reactionary remnant of the capitalist era. Lenin and Stalin, however, drew the exact opposite conclusion. They reasoned as follows. By granting the forms of nationhood, the Soviet state could split the above class national alliance for statehood. Class divisions, then, would naturally emerge, which would allow the Soviet government to recruit proletarian and peasant support for their socialist agenda. Lenin argued that Finnish independence had intensified, not reduced, class conflict.<sup>17</sup> National self-determination would have the same consequences within the Soviet Union. Likewise, Stalin insisted it was “necessary to ‘take’ autonomy away from [the national bourgeoisie], having first cleansed it of its bourgeois filth and transformed it from bourgeois into Soviet autonomy.”<sup>18</sup> A belief gradually emerged, then, that the above class appeal of nationalism could be disarmed by granting the forms of nationhood. This was the Marxist premise.

### The Modernization Premise

This conclusion was buttressed by a second premise: national consciousness was an unavoidable historic phase that all peoples must pass through on the way to internationalism. In their prerevolutionary writings, Lenin and Stalin argued that nationality emerged only with the onset of capitalism and was itself a consequence of capitalist production.<sup>19</sup> It was not an essential or permanent attribute of mankind. Piatakov understandably interpreted this as meaning that nationality would be irrelevant under socialism and therefore should be granted no special status. Both Lenin and Stalin insisted, however, that nationality would persist for a long time even under socialism.<sup>20</sup> In fact, national self awareness would initially increase. Already in 1916, Lenin stated that “mankind can proceed towards the inevitable fusion [*slivanie*] of nations only through a transitional period of the complete freedom of all oppressed nations.”<sup>21</sup> Stalin later explicated this paradox as follows: “We are undertaking the maximum development of national culture, so that it will exhaust itself completely and thereby create the base for the organization of international socialist culture.”<sup>22</sup>

Two factors appear to have combined to create this sense of the inevitability of a national stage of development. First, the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian empire and the surprisingly strong nationalist movements within the former Russian empire greatly increased the Bolsheviks’ respect for the power and

<sup>17</sup>In his prerevolutionary writings, Lenin repeatedly cited Sweden’s granting Norway independence in 1905 as having sped the emergence of class conflict in both countries. Lenin, “O prave nash,” 249; “Natsionalno-revolutsionna,” 249.

<sup>18</sup>Stalin, “Odnazh ocherednykh zadach” (1918) *Sobremennik* 4: 73.

<sup>19</sup>Stalin, *Marksiizm*, 4: 161–62; “O prave nashii,” 249–251.

<sup>20</sup>On Lenin, see *Teoriya natsionalnoi politiki TSK RKP (Bolshevikskii otдел tsentralkomuna IV s’ezda tsentralkomuna TsK RKP, 1922 g.* (Moscow, 1992): 16–21; on Stalin, see *Marksiizm*, 155–165.

<sup>21</sup>Lenin, “Spetsialnochekaia revoliutsiia,” 256.

<sup>22</sup>*SRKADJANI* 308/1/240: (1922): 9.

ubiquity of nationalism. Stalin was particularly impressed by the process of national succession in the formerly German cities of Austro-Hungary. At the 1921 party congress, he pointed out that just fifty years earlier all cities in Hungary were predominantly German, but had now become Hungarian. Likewise, he maintained, all Russian cities in Ukraine and Belorussia would "inevitably" be nationalized. Opposing this was futile: "It is impossible to go against history."<sup>24</sup> Elsewhere Stalin called this pattern "a general law of national development in the entire world."<sup>25</sup> National consolidation, then, was unavoidable even under socialism.

Moreover, this national stage of development took on a more positive connotation as it became associated not only with capitalism but also with modernization in general. In his rebuttal of Piatakov and Bukharin, citing the example of the Bashkirs, Lenin had stated that "one must wait the development of a given nation, the differentiation of proletariat from bourgeois elements, which is unavoidable . . . the path from the medieval to bourgeois democracy, or from bourgeois to proletarian democracy. This is an absolutely unavoidable path."<sup>26</sup> As Lenin focused Bolshevik attention on the Soviet Union's eastern "backward" nationalities, the consolidation of nationhood became associated with historical developmental progress. This trend reached its climax during the cultural revolution, when Soviet propaganda would boast that in the far north, the thousand-year process of national formation had been telescoped into a mere decade.<sup>27</sup> The formation of nations, then, came to be seen as both an unavoidable and positive stage in the modernization of the Soviet Union. This was the modernization premise.

#### The Colonial Premise and the Greatest-Danger Principle

A third and final premise asserted that non-Russian nationalism was primarily a response to Tsarist oppression and was motivated by a historically justifiable distrust (*neuverie*) of the Great Russians. This argument was pressed most forcefully by Lenin, who already in 1914 had attacked Rosa Luxemburg's denial of the right of self-determination as "objectively aiding the Black Hundred Great Russians. . . . Absorbed by the fight with nationalism in Poland, Rosa Luxemburg forgot about the nationalism of the Great Russians, though it is exactly this nationalism that is the most dangerous of all." The nationalism of the oppressed, Lenin maintained, had a "democratic content" that must be supported, whereas the nationalism of the oppressor had no redeeming value. He ended with the slogan: "Fight against all nationalists and, first of all, against Great Russian nationalism."<sup>28</sup>

<sup>24</sup> *Deiarij s'ecA BKE/ty. Proislojy* (Moscow, 1953): 216.

<sup>25</sup> *BDKb/DNT* 508/7/4490 (1920): 16.

<sup>26</sup> *Vorova s'ecA*, 35.

<sup>27</sup> *II sessia VTsIK XV sazora. Stenograficheski otkos* (Moscow, 1931), 16. *Yur. Slezkine, Arctic Workers* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1954):

<sup>28</sup> Lenin, "O pover'ii," 207, 275, 276, 319.

Bolshevik conduct between 1917 and 1919 convinced Lenin that the all-Russian Communist party had inherited the psychology of great-power chauvinism from the Tsarist regime. In non-Russian regions, the Bolshevik party, relying almost exclusively on the minority Russian proletariat and agricultural colonists, had frequently adopted an overtly chauvinist attitude toward the local population.<sup>29</sup> This attitude alarmed Lenin, and his harsh attack on Piatakov was partly motivated by the latter's anti-Ukrainian policy in Kiev. In December 1919, Lenin again launched a fierce denunciation of Bolshevik chauvinism in Ukraine.<sup>30</sup> His anger climaxed during the notorious Georgian affair of 1922, when he denounced Dzerzhinskii, Stalin, and Ordzhonikidze as Great Russian chauvinists (russified natives, he maintained, were often the worst chauvinists).<sup>31</sup> Such Bolshevik chauvinism inspired Lenin to coin the term *rossiiskoprvo* (mindless Russian chauvinism), which then entered the Bolshevik lexicon and became an invaluable weapon in the rhetorical arsenals of the national republics.<sup>32</sup>

Lenin's concern over Great Russian chauvinism led to the establishment of a crucial principle of the Soviet nationalities policy. In December 1922, he reiterated his 1914 attack on Great Russian chauvinism with the added admonition that one must "distinguish between the nationalism of oppressor nations and the nationalism of oppressed nations, the nationalism of large nations and the nationalism of small nations. . . . [I]n relation to the second nationalism, in almost all historical practice, we nationals of the large nations are guilty, because of an infinite amount of violence [committed]."<sup>33</sup> This concept entered formulaic Bolshevik rhetoric as the distinction between *offensive* (*napastopitel'skii*) great-power nationalism and *defensive* (*oboronitel'skii*) local nationalism, the latter being viewed as a justifiable response to the former. This belief in turn led to the establishment of the important "greatest-danger principle": namely, that great-power (or sometimes Great Russian) chauvinism was a greater danger than local nationalism.<sup>34</sup> This was the colonial premise.

Lenin's extreme formulation of this principle led to one of his two differences of opinion with Stalin over nationalities policy in late 1922.<sup>35</sup> Stalin had supported the greatest danger principle before 1922–1923, reiterated his support in 1923, and from April 1925 to December 1952 supervised a nationalities policy based on that principle. Nevertheless, Stalin was uncomfortable with the insistence that *all* local nationalism could be explained as a response to great-power chauvinism. Based on his experience in Georgia, Stalin insisted that Georgian nationalism was also characterized by great-power exploitation of

<sup>29</sup> *Deiatsyi i'eed*, 191–100; Pipes, *The Formation*, 120–134, 172–183.

<sup>30</sup> Richard Pipes, ed., *The Colossus Fallen* (New Haven, Conn., 1996): 76–77.

<sup>31</sup> Lenin, "K voprosu o natsional'noevakh," 356–358.

<sup>32</sup> At the 1921 party congress, Zaitonskyi attributes this term to Lenin. *Deiatsyi i'eed*, 207.

<sup>33</sup> Lenin, "K voprosu o natsional'noevakh," 359.

<sup>34</sup> *Deiatsyi i'eed*, 693–695.

<sup>35</sup> Their second difference of opinion came over the structure of the Soviet Union and in particular the place of Russia within the Soviet Union. This is discussed in Chapter 10.

their Ossetian and Abkhaz minorities. Stalin therefore always paired his attacks on Great Russian chauvinism with a complementary attack on the lesser danger of local nationalism.<sup>37</sup> This difference in emphasis led Stalin, in September 1922, to accuse Lenin jocularly of “national liberalism.”<sup>38</sup> This difference of emphasis was also evident in Lenin’s and Stalin’s terminologies. Lenin typically referred to Russian nationalism as great-power chauvinism, which distinguished it from other nationalisms, whereas Stalin preferred the term Great Russian chauvinism. Despite these differences in emphasis, Stalin consistently supported the greatest-danger principle.

The Marxist, modernization, and colonial premises, then, combined to form the theoretical rationale for the nationalities policy that Lenin and Stalin successfully imposed on a reluctant Bolshevik Party through a series of resolutions at the 1919, 1921, and 1922 party congresses.<sup>39</sup> Their reasoning can be summarized as follows. Nationalism is a masking ideology that leads legitimate class interests to be expressed, not in an appropriate class-based socialist movement, but rather in the form of an above-class national movement. National identity is not a primordial quality, but rather an unavoidable by-product of the modern capitalist and early socialist world, which must be passed through before a mature international socialist world can come into being. Since national identity is a real phenomenon in the modern world, the nationalism of the oppressed non-Russian peoples expresses not only masked class protest, but also legitimate national grievances against the oppressive great-power chauvinism of the dominant Russian nationality. Therefore, neither nationalism nor national identity can be unequivocally condemned as reactionary. Some national claims—those confined to the realm of national “form”—are in fact legitimate and must be granted to split the above-class national alliance. Such a policy will speed the emergence of class cleavages and so allow the party to recruit non-Russian proletarian and peasant support for its socialist agenda. Nationalism will be disarmed by granting the forms of nationhood.

#### The Piedmont Principle

The intersection between nationalities and foreign policy was a fourth factor influencing the formation of the Affirmative Action Empire. Already in November 1917, Lenin and Stalin issued an “Appeal to all Muslim Toilers of Russia and the East,” which promised to end imperial exploitation within the former Russian empire and called on Muslims outside Russia to overthrow their colonial masters.<sup>40</sup> This linkage between domestic nationalities policy and foreign policy goals in the east was quite common during the civil war period. After

<sup>37</sup> *Dnevnyi sled*, 387–400.

<sup>38</sup> *Istorii gosudarstva SSSR*, 7: 111–12 (1979): 16.

<sup>39</sup> The key resolutions are found in *Pervoi S'ezd*, 387; *Dnevnyi sled*, 372–82; *Dnevnyi sled*, 691–697; *Vaiety narodnaia politika*, 262–266.

<sup>40</sup> I. Lazovskii and I. Bibin, *Sovetskaiia politika na usloviiatsional'nogo voprosa v RSFSR* (M.: Gosizdat-Leningrad, 1928): 2–3.



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