STALIN
and the Struggle for SUPREMACY IN EURASIA

— ALFRED J. RIEBER —

Stalin and the Struggle for Supremacy in Eurasia

This is a major new study of the successor states that emerged in the wake of the collapse of the great Russian, Habsburg, Iranian, Ottoman and Qing empires and of the expansionist powers who renewed their struggle over the Eurasian borderlands through to the end of the Second World War. Surveying the great power rivalry between the Soviet Union, Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan for control over the Western and Far Eastern boundaries of Eurasia, Alfred J. Rieber provides a new framework for understanding the evolution of Soviet policy from the Revolution through to the beginning of the Cold War. Paying particular attention to the Soviet Union, the book charts how these powers adopted similar methods to the old ruling elites to expand and consolidate their conquests, ranging from colonization and deportation to forced assimilation, but applied them with a force that far surpassed the practices of their imperial predecessors.

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To Marsha – Encore

Contents

Maps

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Abbreviations

AVP RF	Arkhiv Vneshnei Politiki Rossiiskoi Federatsii (Foreign Policy Archive of the Russian Federation)
DGFP	Documents on German Foreign Policy
DVP	Dokumenty Vneshnei politiki SSSR (Documents of the Foreign Policy of the USSR), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR
FRUS	Foreign Relations of the United States, US Department of State
GARF	Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii (State Archive of the Russian Federation)
RGASPI	Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Sotsial'no-Politicheskoi Istorii (Russian State Archive of Social and Political History
USNA	United States National Archive, Department of State

Introduction

Conceived as a sequel to The *Struggle for the Eurasian Borderlands,* this book radically shifts the focus away from a comparison of the centuries-old competition among multicultural conquest empires for hegemony in Eurasia to the Soviet Union, the central player in the renewal of that contest in the first half of the twentieth century. Many of the issues remain the same, but the cast of characters has changed. The Soviet Union was heir to much of the territory of the Russian Empire and many of its problems, both foreign and domestic, flowed from that hard-won inheritance. But its response was radically different. Its new leaders were engaged in transforming its foreign policy as part of rebuilding a multinational state. From the outset they were obliged to enter into complex and often contradictory relations with a ring of smaller and weaker successor states, constituting the new borderlands, which had replaced the rival empires all along their frontiers. In many cases these borderland states were allies or clients of the major powers and perceived by the Soviet government as hostile or threatening.

In the first decade of Soviet rule, the leaders sought to fashion a foreign policy that privileged stability by establishing normal diplomatic relations within the postwar capitalist state system while nurturing the cause of socialist revolution. But darker clouds were already gathering. By the early 1930s, they were forced to confront a more direct and formidable challenge to their policy from the rising power of Nazi Germany and a militarist Japan. The imperialist designs of the two flank powers focused initially on exercising control over the successor states all along the Soviet frontiers, although their aspirations, at least in theory, like those of the Soviet Union, also extended beyond these territories. This book, then, is a study of how the Soviet leaders, primarily Stalin, who dominated policy-making during this period, sought to combine the twin processes of transforming the state and its relations with the external world within the context of a renewed struggle over the borderlands.

The Soviet state emerged from the wreckage of the Russian Empire much weakened and diminished. The war against the Central Powers,

revolution and Civil War, and foreign intervention had stripped the old empire of its western borderlands. At one point in March 1918, the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk had reduced its territorial space in the west to its pre-Petrine borders, with the exception of St. Petersburg, renamed Petrograd and soon to become Leningrad. As one of the successor states of the Russian Empire, Soviet Russia had only partially recovered territories lost during the Civil War and Intervention. It had been forced to concede the loss of the former Kingdom of Poland, the Baltic Provinces (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania), Bessarabia and the provinces of Kars and Ardahan in the Caucasus. In the Far East during the nadir of Soviet power during the Civil War, all the Inner Asian borderlands had fallen under virtual Japanese domination. Much of the Trans Caspian borderlands (Central Asia) had broken away and Russian influence in Iran and along the Afghan border was contested. The loss of Russian influence in the Chinese borderlands of Xinjiang, Mongolia and Manchuria and the creation, if only briefly, of an autonomous Far Eastern Republic in Eastern Siberia reversed two centuries of territorial expansion and political penetration.

Although the main rivals of the Russian Empire in the west and southwest, the German Kaiserreich, the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Ottoman Empire, had also collapsed in defeat, the neighboring successor states of Soviet Russia in Eastern Europe, Poland and Romania, were hostile and supported by France, which sought to reconstitute its traditional policy of barrier states (*barrière de l'est*) in the new form of a *cordon sanitaire* against Bolshevism. Relations with the new Turkish Republic, heir to the Ottoman Empire, were exceptional. Diplomatic relations were established on the basis of dividing the Armenian borderland.

The Soviet Union had also recovered some of its influence in Trans Caspia, not only in the reconquest of the former colony of Turkestan and the khanates but also in restoring its influence in Iran where a treaty gave it the right to intervene if its perceived interests were threatened by a foreign power. In Inner Asia the major threat from Japan had receded, if only temporarily. A weak Chinese central government was, however, unable to restore its influence in its borderlands, with mixed results for Soviet influence. With Bolshevik assistance Outer Mongolia had secured its autonomy from China, while warlords in Xinjiang and Manchuria had wrested their autonomy from China by maneuvering among the Russians, Chinese and Japanese.

To survive at all, the Bolshevik leadership appeared to renounce for the time being their world revolutionary aspirations. After an initial internal debate and several abortive revolutions in Hungary, Germany and Bulgaria, they entered into negotiations to establish trade or diplomatic

relations with their new neighbors and the major capitalist powers. But leaders of the outside world were not deceived; to them it was, as Kipling had put it earlier, "the truce of the bear." In fact, by 1921 the Bolshevik leaders had reached a crucial decision to domesticate their foreign policy. And they had begun to construct a state system on that basis. It was in theory, and to a degree in practice, a federal structure that allowed for expansion through the incorporation of new soviet republics. This was the state system that Stalin had done much with Lenin to construct. Over time, Stalin would gradually stand on its head Lenin's initial design of the relationship between the state and revolution; the revolution abroad would become increasingly dependent upon the strength of the Soviet Union rather than the success of socialism in Russia being dependent on the spread of revolution in the advanced capitalist West.

In constructing a new foreign policy, the leadership of the Soviet state and the Communist Party faced in more aggravated form a set of persistent factors with which their predecessors had grappled. What I have called persistent factors constitute a dynamic interplay among geography, demography and culture in the long-term process of state-building in Eurasia. These factors are not fixed or immutable. That is to say, they are not permanent. Rather, they evolve over time both in their separate and distinctive character and in their mutual interaction. Stated in another way, they evolve in the course of an evolutionary historical process, creating conditions that cannot easily be altered by the action of statesmen; even under great external pressures or internal upheavals they resist significant change. The existence of persistent factors sets limitations on the range of policy choices but does not determine a particular course of action. Different leaders will pursue different styles in conducting foreign policy, but they ignore only at their peril the restraints placed upon them by the persistent factors. Concrete examples will help to reduce this concept from the realm of abstraction to the arena of practical politics. But first, one more caveat. Because of their deep embeddedness in a country's history, they affect the formation of both domestic and foreign policy, so that the two aspects of statecraft cannot, and in this study will not, be separated.

In Russian and Soviet history four persistent factors have shaped the making of foreign policy together with implications for domestic policy. They are a multinational social structure; porous or permeable frontiers; cultural alienation; and relative economic backwardness.[1] Taken

[1] For the impact of persistent factors on imperial Russian foreign policy, see Alfred J. Rieber, "Persistent Factors in Russian Foreign Policy: An Interpretive Essay," in Hugh Ragsdale (ed.), *Imperial Russian Foreign Policy* (Washington and Cambridge: Woodrow

together they constitute a unique combination that distinguishes Russian and Soviet foreign policy from that of any other great power. Each requires a brief explanation. The multinational demography of the Soviet Union resembled to a large extent that of the Russian Empire, despite the loss of Finnish, Polish, Ukrainian, Moldovan and Armenian populations on the periphery. What made it so distinctive was first the number of nationalities, second the pattern of their concentration and dispersal, and third the lack of a clear-cut ethnographic line dividing the same national groups on either side of the Soviet frontier. Depending on how they were identified in the Soviet Union – and Stalin himself was inconsistent on this issue – there were between sixty and over a hundred nationalities representing all the world's great religions: Orthodox, Latin and Protestant Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Buddhism as well as numerous sectarians and animists. The peoples of the Soviet Union also spoke an enormous variety of languages, although Russian was the lingua franca of the ruling and local elites and the educated public. But the erratic imperial policies of assimilation had not eliminated strong regional identities where clusters of nationalities retained their distinctive cultural ethos and spoke their own languages in day-to-day exchanges. The nationalities were highly concentrated on the periphery of the state; but Russians and Ukrainians also had been widely dispersed throughout the country by a lengthy process of colonization over the centuries. As Stalin was quick to realize, the Russian settlers, mainly workers and minor officials, could form the iron framework around which a multinational state could be erected. But the problem remained, as it had persisted over time, of how to reconcile the dominant cultural and political position of the Russians with the aspirations of the nationalities for some form of cultural or political autonomy.

The Soviet Union had inherited the task from the Russian Empire of protecting and securing the longest and most turbulent frontier of any state in Eurasia. As a result of conquest, migration, colonization and resettlement over the previous several hundred years, the frontiers from the Baltic to the Sea of Japan had frequently shifted, becoming over time porous and permeable. These large-scale population movements

Wilson Center and Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 315–59. I have slightly altered some of the terminology. "Multicultural" has given way to "multinational" in order to reflect the evolution of ethnic groups into nationalities. "Cultural alienation" replaces "cultural marginality" which was criticized for implying inferiority: this had not been my intention. For the application of persistent factors to the Soviet period, see my essay, "How Persistent are Persistent Factors?" in Robert Legvold (ed.), *Russian Foreign Policy in the 21st Century and the Shadow of the Past* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), pp. 205–78.

contributed to creating borderlands on the peripheries of empires inhabited by very mixed and floating populations in which no one group held a majority; they were quite literally shatter zones. These shatter zones differed, for example, from mixed frontier societies in Western Europe by virtue of the large number of different religious and linguistic groups concentrated within them and the frequent shifts in the demographic equation.[2] Over long periods of time, these borderlands had been contested by competing imperial states, the Russian, Habsburg, Ottoman, Iranian and Chinese empires leaving a residue of competing historical claims. By contrast, similar territorial conflicts in Western Europe and elsewhere involved only two competing external powers and with few exceptions were limited to brief periods of time (e.g. Alsace actively only from 1870 to 1945).

The postwar settlement had drawn arbitrary lines of demarcation all along the Soviet frontiers, leaving the same nationalities facing one another across state boundaries. Many of these groups had participated in the Civil War and their loyalty remained doubtful in the eyes of the Bolshevik leaders. Stalin above all perceived the condition of divided nationalities as a two-edged sword: a potential threat of intervention and an opportunity for expansion. And he well knew the history of subversion and rebellion in the borderlands which he absorbed from the history of his native Georgia and which he had witnessed in 1905 and again during the Civil War. Finally, the existence of the mixed populations on the frontier also facilitated smuggling, illegal immigration and the penetration of ideas from abroad considered subversive by the Soviet government. Under Stalin measures were taken to intensify border surveillance and increase border guards. But porous frontiers also worked in reverse by allowing Soviet agents and propaganda to infiltrate the outer world. For Stalin the problem remained how to seal off the Soviet frontiers from external penetration, but also to transcend them through the medium of foreign Communist parties whose actions he sought to orchestrate from Moscow.

If the number, variety and location of the nationalities along the lengthy porous frontiers posed enormous questions of security, as they always had for the Russian Empire, then the cultural alienation of Russia from the rest of the world perceived by foreign observers and even some Russians

[2] Frontier societies in Western Europe were in the twentieth century almost everywhere bi-national; for example, German and French in Alsace-Lorraine; German and Danish in Schleswig; French and Italian in Savoy; Italian and Croatian in Istria; German and Polish in Silesia and Pomerania. In the Inner Asian borderlands the mix was generally between Chinese and Manchu or Chinese and Mongol, although in Xinjiang the frontier was complex enough to deserve the term "shatter zone."

delayed the entry of the Russian Empire into the European state system and its cultural world. Two centuries of Mongol rule, the acceptance of Christianity from Byzantium rather than Rome, and the sheer physical distance from the centers of European civilization have often been given as the reasons Russia did not participate, or only belatedly and partially, in the Renaissance, Reformation and early stages of the Scientific Revolution. From the time of Ivan IV (the Terrible) until Peter the Great Russia's rulers had tried unsuccessfully to gain European recognition as full-fledged members of the Christian Commonwealth. The conquest of the Muslim khanates of Kazan and Astrakhan and expansion into Siberia seemed to draw the Russians deeper into Asia, away from Europe. Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Muscovy, as it was then known, was omitted from the registers of Christian states and the celebrated peace plans for Europe, like those of William Penn. Peter the Great and Catherine the Great expended great efforts to demonstrate that Russia, then a self-proclaimed empire, was part of Europe politically and culturally. But neither they nor their successors were successful in convincing large segments of European opinion, or even some of their own subjects like the slavophiles, who preferred to regard Russia as a distinct, indeed unique, entity. The long and unresolved debate among foreign observers and pre-revolutionary Russian intellectuals and officials, not to speak of Orthodox churchmen and religious sectarians, over whether the empire (or some part of it) belonged to Europe or not was revived and given a startling reverse spin under Bolshevik rule.

In 1917 it was the Bolsheviks who proclaimed their ideological separation from the rest of the world, but this time as a state and society building socialism – the most advanced form of European civilization. Stalin envisaged himself as a supreme modernizer, yet he could take pleasure from time to time in boasting that he was an Asiatic! Paradoxes of cultural identity multiplied. The early proclamations of world revolution were taken at face value by the rest of the world, including substantial elements of the old social democratic parties who split off to form Communist parties, and under the aegis of the Soviet Union to join the Third International or Comintern. How could the Bolsheviks reconcile their claims for both uniqueness and universality?

The persistent factor of economic backwardness proved the most difficult to tackle, as it had under the tsarist regime, because its resolution was deeply entangled in the nexus of foreign and domestic policy. To be sure definitions of economic backwardness depend upon the object of comparison, the standards of measurement and the perceptions of observers. In the case of Russia, the object of comparison was always "the West" and remained so in the Soviet Union. The standards of

measurement were often subjective, but the advent of more accurate statistics in the late nineteenth century reenforced the impression that Russia still lagged behind the most industrialized countries in most categories. From the earliest period in its history the development of the economy was restricted by unfavorable climatic and geographic factors: short growing seasons, poor soil, extreme temperatures, a land-locked location, widely dispersed if abundant natural resources and the existence of a bonded, communally organized peasantry that was only beginning to undergo a transformation along the lines of individually owned landed proprietors when the revolution overtook the process. The expansion of the state in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries eased some of these problems; the rich Black Earth region of Ukraine was annexed in the late eighteenth century, and colonization began by the end of the nineteenth century to populate most of the lands formerly occupied by nomads. But their exploitation was often hampered by the means employed to acquire them. Long and costly wars were necessary to conquer the Eurasian borderlands. These required the imposition of heavy burdens on the tax-paying population and the service nobility, raising the question of the extent to which Russia was a militarized state.

In the nineteenth century as the Industrial Revolution took hold in Western Europe, Russia fell further behind in military technology and railroad construction. It lost three out of four wars over the borderlands in the last century of the empire (the Crimean War, the Russo-Japanese War and the First World War, defeating only the Ottoman Empire in 1877–8). Russia's industrialization was slowed by the lack of investment capital, the social conservatism of its merchant class, an inadequate transportation system and the continued attachment of most of the peasantry to the land up to the 1880s. Economic backwardness never translated into dependency on the West as it did in other declining empires in the Middle East and Asia. But foreign loans, technology transfer and patterns of trade exposed Russia to pressure from abroad, and influenced the formation of its alliances. During the First World War Russia's needs for loans obliged the government to make concessions to foreigners that encroached upon its sovereignty.

The war and the Civil War led to massive population displacement and losses, de-urbanization and in the countryside a reversal of the process of individual landownership, leaving Bolshevik Russia relatively more backward in relationship to Western Europe than the tsarist government had been in the last decade of its existence. A key question shaping their foreign policy, as the Bolsheviks fully realized and debated, was whether to rely more heavily on developing commercial relations with the capitalist West, the acknowledged political antagonist, or to fall back

on domestic resources. Stalin's decision was to come down on the side of greater autarchy. Surely one of his most important decisions, he carried it out under the shadow of war scares, which, genuine or not, linked industrialization to the requirements of foreign policy.

Persistent factors shape the contours of the problems. But individual policy-makers devise their own solutions. Stalin responded as a Marxist man of the borderlands. This book argues that Stalin's *Weltanschauung* was shaped by two powerful existential and intellectual influences. The first was his early life experiences growing up in the Georgian cultural milieu precariously surviving under the pressure of russification within the shatter zone of the South Caucasus. The second was his evolution as a professional Marxist revolutionary also shaped by the socioeconomic peculiarities of an underdeveloped borderland. Both these elements must be considered in seeking to come to terms with the much disputed problem of the role of ideology in Stalin's policy-making. In addressing the interconnected problems of state-building and foreign policy, he forged a tripartite ideology incorporating his perception of the nationalities problem in the borderlands, his endorsement of Russian political hegemony in the Soviet Union and his interpretation of revolutionary Marxism. He was not always consistent in balancing these elements. His synthesis may have lacked philosophical sophistication. But he was both flexible and uncompromising in manipulating it to reach the pinnacle of power in the party, state and international Communist movement. This interpretation would be incomplete, however, without injecting into the analysis a strong dose of Stalin's arbitrary, violent and ruthless personality traits. His actions threatened at times to undermine the edifice he was striving to construct; he was responsible for the death of millions, including not only of those who stood in his way but also those who sought to participate in the same endeavors.

1 Stalin, man of the borderlands

Soviet policy toward the borderlands was largely the work of Lenin and Stalin. But it was Stalin, a product of that milieu, who completed the structure in his own image.[1] He was raised, educated and initiated as a Marxist revolutionary in the South Caucasus, a borderland of the Russian Empire.[2] At the time of his birth in 1878, the region had become a crossroads, intersecting the movement of people and ideas from Western Europe, Russia and Trans Caspia. In his youth Iosif or "Soso" Dzhugashvili filtered elements of all these currents into a revolutionary ideology of his own making and tested it in its unique kaleidoscopic social and ethnic setting.

In his youth, the circulation of European and Russian books in translation, students from imperial universities to the region and the migrations of seasonal workers from Iran helped to spread radical political ideas among the small Armenian, Georgian and later Azerbaizhan intelligentsia. The economic life of the region was also undergoing significant changes. Burgeoning pockets of industrialization formed around the oil industry in Baku, textiles and leather manufacturing in Tiflis (Tbilisi) and Batumi, and mining in Kutais. A small proletariat was emerging in a multicultural environment. Dzhugashvili's first experiences as a revolutionary agitator were played out in three of these cities: Baku, Tiflis and Batumi where he encountered the complexities of class and ethnic strife. Already as a seminary student in Tiflis, the young Soso, like many of his contemporaries, identified himself with several strands of this borderland

[1] An argument can be made that Lenin too was a man of the borderlands, having been born of mixed ethnic background, raised in the old frontier town of Simbirsk and educated at Kazan University where Tatar, Chuvash and Russian cultures intermixed. Cf. Robert Service, *Lenin: A Biography* (London: Macmillan, 2000), pp. 16–18, 28–9, 67.

[2] Born under the name Iosif Vissarionovich Dzhugashvili, he was called by the diminutive Soso well into manhood. His most famous pseudonym was "Koba," a youthful nickname taken from the bandit hero of a Georgian novel and still used by his comrades in the 1930s. He only adopted the name Stalin in 1912 when writing his first article for *Pravda*. For the complex process of his naming, see Alfred J. Rieber, "Stalin: Man of the Borderlands," *American Historical Review* 5 (December, 2001), pp. 1677–83.

culture. Woven together, they helped to shape his beliefs, attitudes and politics. In the process he constructed an identity that combined native Georgian, borrowed Russian and invented proletarian components.

While many of his contemporaries in the revolutionary movement forged their careers and spent their lives in the South Caucasus, Stalin, as he began to call himself in 1912, projected himself onto the all-Russian stage, bringing with him as he rose to power trusted comrades from his early days as a labor organizer and propagandist. Along the way he propagandized a vision of the state that mirrored his presentation of self as a representative of three interlocking identifications: an ethno-cultural region (Georgia) as a territorial unit, Great Russia as the center of political power, and the proletariat as the dominant class.[3] Out of this amalgam he fashioned a foreign as well as a domestic policy which, once in power, he continued to test by trial and error in the great contest against the burgeoning threat of Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan, the flank powers that challenged Soviet interests in the Eurasian borderlands.

As a revolutionary and statesman, Stalin embodied a particular historical type of man of the borderlands. Unlike a Napoleon or a Hitler, also born into the peripheral cultures of great national powers, he did not attempt to efface all traces of his cultural origins or even to identify himself wholly with his adopted land, at least until quite late in his career. Even then the character traits shaped in part by the dominant culture of his formative period remained embedded in his mental universe. His attitudes toward relations between the Great Russian center and the nationalities of the periphery and between the Soviet state and the outside world reveal a set of deep and unresolved ambiguities. Georgian culture was not only the source of his mother tongue but also of images, reference points and patterns of behavior that marked his public as well as his private life. Yet he could be harsh in his criticism of the backwardness, provincialism and arrogance of the Georgians.[4]

Russia was his second, adopted culture, not only for the spare, functional usage of its language, but for its rich literary heritage. It was also the transmitter of conspiratorial, revolutionary Marxism that appealed to his lower-class origins, his intellectual pretentions, and, in its "hard" Leninist form, his authoritarian personality. Russia became for him the locus and fulcrum of power. Still, the attraction of full assimilation had its

[3] *Ibid*., pp. 1651–91. Cf. Erik van Ree, "The Stalinist Self: The Case of Ioseb Jugashvili (1898–1907)," *Kritika* 11:2 (2010), pp. 257–82.

[4] Svetlana Alliluyeva, *Dvadtsat' pisem k drugu* (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), pp. 56–7. Cf. Robert C. Tucker, *Stalin as Revolutionary, 1879–1929: A Study in History and Personality* (New York: Norton, 1973), pp. 432–3, who interprets this evidence to conclude that Stalin had substituted a Great Russian for a Georgian identity.

limits. Russia had shielded Christian Georgia from the depredations of the Muslim Ottomans and the Iranians and permitted its cultural revival. Yet by the end of the nineteenth century tsarist policies of russification had antagonized Georgian intellectuals and students, including the young Soso Dzhugashvili. In his early years "Great Russian chauvinism" was not just a polemical phrase in Stalin's political vocabulary. Of the three worlds that shaped Stalin's political personality – Georgia, Marxism and Russia – the culture of the borderlands has been underestimated in the formation of his mature world view.

Unlike any of the other top Bolshevik leaders, Dzhugashvili grew up in a non-Russian cultural milieu and lived there for most of the first thirty years of his life, except for brief periods in exile mainly in Siberia – a different kind of periphery. Until late in 1907 the young Dzhugashvili/Stalin was still writing all his major articles and pamphlets in Georgian. The first volume of his collected works dating from 1901 includes twenty items in Georgian and only six in Russian, four of which were collective editorials in Russian-language periodicals and two very brief reports at the Stockholm Congress in 1906. He continued to write in Georgian until he moved his activities to Baku where, of course, his audience changed as well, and he began to publish in Russian.[5] For the following three years he published his articles only in the local press, in journals like *Bakinskii Proletariat* and *Gudok* ("The Whistle"). His first publication outside the South Caucasus came in February 1910 when his "Letter from the Caucasus" appeared in the Bolshevik organ *Sotsial Demokrat*. Two years elapsed before he contributed another piece for an all-Russian audience, in the form of a pamphlet "For the Party" written in Russian and circulated by the Bolshevik Central Committee throughout Russia. Shortly afterwards, he began to write regularly for the central Bolshevik organs in St. Petersburg.[6] This marked the end of his active participation in the provincial press of the South Caucasus but not his abiding interest in the region.

During the years before the revolution of 1917, Stalin participated in all-Russian politics from afar, as a provincial. To be sure he joined in the crucial debate between Mensheviks and Bolsheviks, but from a regional perspective. Moreover, he had little personal knowledge of Russia. It has frequently been noted that Dzhugashvili only briefly visited Europe three times in the period before the revolution. What is less frequently stressed is how little time he spent in Russia, at least as a free man. He spent

[5] I. V. Stalin, *Sochineniia*, 13 vols. (Moscow: Gospolitiizdat, 1946–52) vol. I, pp. 10–37; vol. II, pp. 1–40, 408.
[6] *Ibid.*, vol. II, pp. 416–20.

two years in Siberian exile from 1902 to 1904; six months in 1908–9 in various prisons and exile in North Russia; then a year from the fall of 1910 to the fall 1911 in prison and exile in North Russia; several months in prison in St. Petersburg after being at large for two days in the city followed by two months in exile in the north; a few days in Moscow and St. Petersburg in April 1912 were again followed by exile for a month in Siberia and an escape to St. Petersburg where he spent a year, his longest consecutive period of residence in Russia until he left for Krakow and Vienna in December 1912; and finally four years in Siberian exile beginning early in 1913 and ending with the outbreak of the February revolution. All in all, until Stalin was thirty-eight years of age he spent no more than a year and a few months in Russia at liberty: that is, outside prison and exile in the remote parts of the north and Siberia.[7]

The other future Bolshevik leaders had their primary identification with Russian language and culture and secondarily with other European languages. Those among the most prominent leaders whose ethnic origins were not Russian but Jewish, Ukrainian or Polish, were almost without exception wholly russified and internationalist in outlook. To be sure there was a large number of Bolsheviks at the secondary level who felt strong attachments to their ethnic origins, particularly Georgians, Armenians and Tatars. But their participation in Soviet politics was largely limited to the nationalities question narrowly defined. None played a leading role in the formation of foreign policy either in the Narkomindel or the Comintern, to say nothing of the Politburo. This unique dimension of Stalin's political personality explains why, for him alone among the Bolshevik leaders, the center–periphery relationship was the foundation for building the new multinational state and defending it against the outside world.

South Caucasus as a frontier

There were four features of the South Caucasus frontier society that played a significant role in shaping Dzhugashvili's sense of himself which he incorporated into his political thinking. Elements of all four may be found in other borderlands of the Russian Empire but not in the same form or interactive combination. They were: (1) kaleidoscopic patterns of population settlement and displacement constituting a cluster of "shatter zones" where numerous ethno-religious groups intermingled within changing administrative and political boundaries; (2) lengthy

[7] Tucker, *Stalin as Revolutionary*, remains the best guide to his years in exile.

traditions of rebellion, conspiracies and protest movements by the indigenous population against foreign and domestic enemies, combining social, ethno-religious and later nationalist components; (3) multiple channels of external cultural and intellectual currents that permeated the region and interacted with local cultures; and (4) complex interactions among craftsmen, workers, peasants and intelligentsia of different ethnic groups, some still rooted in highly traditional societies, who were entering revolutionary movements during a period of rapid industrial growth.

Of the thirteen administrative units comprising the South Caucasus *krai* at the end of the century, Tiflis Province where Dzhugashvili was born and educated contained the largest concentration of Georgians. In 1886, when he was seven years old, they officially numbered 366,041 but even the designation "Georgian" was open to question. While it was used in common parlance by Russians and others in the region, the Georgians called themselves Kartveli. This term derived from a family of languages that included peoples who were officially designated by other names such as *Mingreltsy* (Mingrelians), *Svanety* (Svanetians), *Adzhartsy* and others. Most of these peoples lived in the neighboring Kutais Province. The Georgian total could be increased by 20,000 in Tiflis if the smaller groups of Kartveli speakers (*Tushini*, *Pshavi* and *Khevsury*) are included. But even with this addition the Georgians did not constitute a majority or even a plurality in Tiflis Province. They were heavily outnumbered by Tatars (683,415), which was itself an imprecise ethnic term employed by officials until the early 1890s and used afterwards in popular speech to designate all Muslims. Although the Armenian population was only 193,610 they outnumbered the Georgians in the provincial capital of Tiflis.[8]

The second feature of the frontier society was a history of resistance and rebellion against foreign domination. After Russia's annexation of Georgia in 1801, integration had not proceeded smoothly. The Georgian nobility, similar to the Polish *szlachta*, demonstrated it had not renounced its tradition of resistance to foreign control. Up until 1845 when Prince M. S. Vorontsov became viceroy of the Caucasus, part of the Georgian nobility was highly disaffected. They participated in four rebellions and a major conspiracy in 1832 that resembled the Decembrist uprising. At the same time, beginning in 1804, there was a series of uprisings by mountain peoples and peasants which peaked on the eve and the morrow of the

[8] Prince V. I. Masal'skii, "Kavkazskii krai," in F. A. Brokgaus and I. A. Efron (eds.), *Entsiklopedicheskii Slovar'* (St. Petersburg: I. A. Efron, 1894), vol. XXVI, pp. 836–7; these statistics were compiled before the 1897 census; Vsevolod Miller, "Kavkazskie iazyki," *ibid*., p. 814; D. Anuchin, "Rossiia v etnograficheskom otnoshenii," *ibid*. (1899), vol. LIV, p. 144.

emancipation of the serfs and broke out again in the 1870s. In 1865 an urban riot ripped through Tiflis. Political (that is, anti-Russian) and economic grievances were often mixed, a portent of things to come at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century.[9] The spirit of resistance was a major theme in Georgian folklore and the romantic revival in literature in the mid-nineteenth century that so deeply affected the young Soso Dzhugashvili.

The cult of violence in the South Caucasus permeated the whole range of social relations from the traditional tribal societies to urban youth. At one extreme, the masculine code of the warrior and the blood feud prevailed within the tribal regions to the north of Georgia.[10] At the other extreme, the incidents of urban and rural violence during the revolution of 1905 and its aftermath were more numerous in the Caucasus than elsewhere in the empire. During the revolution of 1905–7, according to a recent estimate, 3,611 high-ranking officials and government employees were killed by terrorists and 9,000 wounded. After January 1, 1907, according to official figures of the Ministry of the Interior, 3,060 terrorist acts were carried out in the province of Tiflis alone. Over half of these were bank robberies and holdups. The total number of casualties reported was 1,732 dead and 1,253 wounded.[11] Dzhugashvili participated in these exploits, although even now the details are obscure and contested.

The Georgian national revival was shaped in large measure by the peculiar class structure of the Georgians, which was a product of Russian administrative policies, patterns of settlement and the uneven distribution of industry. According to the census of 1897, the Georgian population was stratified along radically different lines than the other three major regional ethnic groups – Russian, Armenian and Azerbaizhani (Tatar).

[9] For the rebellions and conspiracies, see Stephen F. Jones, "Russian Imperial Administration and the Georgian Nobility: The Georgian Conspiracy," *Slavonic and East European Review* 65:1 (1987), pp. 53–76; Ronald Grigor Suny, *The Making of the Georgian Nation*, 2nd edn (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), pp. 71–2, 82–5, 119–20, 166–7; and I. G. Antelava, "Obostrenie klassovoi bor'by, razvitie i rasprostranenie antikrepostnicheskoi ideologii nakanune otmeni krepostnogo prava," in M. D. Lordkhipanidze and D. L. Mushelishvili (eds.), *Ocherki istorii Gruzii v vosmi tomakh* (Tbilisi: Met's'niereba, 1988–90), vol. V, pp. 170–83, 217–24.

[10] M. O. Kosven *et al.* (eds.), *Narody Kavkaza* (Moscow: Akademiia nauk SSSR, 1960), vol. I, pp. 297–304; Sh. Inal-ipa, *Abkhazy, Istoriko-etnograficheskie ocherki* (Sukhumi: Alashara, 1960), pp. 276–8; I. L. Babich, *Pravovaia kultura Adygov (Istoriia i sovremennost')*, avtoreferat (dissertation abstract) (Moscow, 2000), pp. 13–14, note 21. I am grateful to the author for bringing this source to my attention.

[11] Anna Geifman, *Thou Shalt Not Kill: Revolutionary Terrorism in Russia 1894–1917* (Princeton University Press, 1995), pp. 34–5. The majority of assassinations were carried out by the Armenian Dashnaktsutiun Party, while the Marxists planned most of the expropriations.

For one thing it was more highly polarized between nobles and clergy at one end and peasants at the other. The Georgian "big bourgeoisie" was less than half the size of the Russian or the Armenian, though more than double that of the Azerbaizhani bourgeoisie. The other Georgian urban groups, which included workers, were smaller than the Armenian and Azerbaizhani by a factor of two and a half to three and by a factor of seven in the case of Russians.[12] Moreover, the Georgian nobility was deeply split. A small number of large landowning families who had entered Russian civil and military service, accepted an imperial role and held aloof from the majority whose strong opposition to pressure from St. Petersburg to emancipate their serfs was for many the first step on the road to political resistance.

The growth of a Georgian national opposition to Russian rule was a multilayered process which may be broken down into four constituent elements.[13] First, most of the early nationalists drawn from the nobility were ambivalent in their attitude toward Russia and the Russians who were both their liberators and protectors from the Muslim Turks and Iranians but also their oppressors as representatives of the hegemonic colonial power. Later in the 1870s and 80s, a variation of this ambivalent stance cropped up among Georgian revolutionaries, mainly non-nobles who were inspired by Russian populism. They sought to join the national liberation of Georgia with the social liberation of the peasantry. Second, the Georgian nationalists confronted not one but a number of "others" in their construction of a national identity. Besides the Russians and the local Muslim population there were above all the Armenians, who began rapidly to replace the Georgians as the dominant economic and political group in the Georgians' ancient capital of Tiflis.

[12] Adapted from Bakshi Ishkhanian, *Narodnosti Kavkaza. Sostav naseleniia, professional'naia gruppirovka i obshchestvennoe razsloenie narodnostei, statisticheskoekonomicheskoe izsledovanie* (Petrograd: Popov, 1916), p. 103.

Nationality	Nobles	Clergy	Merchants	Urban dwellers	Peasants
Russian	54,000	11,000	12,000	358,000	1,735,000
Armenian	14,000	12,000	12,000	123,000	878,000
Georgian	85,000	29,000	5,000	48,000	1,180,000
Azeri	49,000	700	1,700	139,000	1,512,000

Figures rounded off to nearest thousand. Nobles include hereditary and personal; merchants include honorary citizens; urban dwellers include petty bourgeoisie and workers.

[13] The best guides to the complexities of the process are Suny, *The Making of the Georgian Nation*, ch. 6, and Stephen F. Jones, *Socialism in Georgian Colors: The European Road to Social Democracy, 1883–1917* (Cambridge University Press, 2005).

Third, when Marxism began to penetrate the South Caucasus there was a strong tendency among the new brand of revolutionaries to replicate the earlier pattern of linking ethnic identity with class consciousness. Marxist groups and parties formed along national or federalist socialist lines. That is to say, they attempted to combine the nationalist radicalism of the disenchanted nobles with the social radicalism of the workers and peasantry. This tendency was on the rise even before the revolution of 1905, but the intense communal strife that broke out in the Caucasus during the revolution intensified the process. The national-socialist orientation became the hallmark of the three leading revolutionary parties in the region: the Georgian Mensheviks, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Dashnaktsutiun) and the Himmat (Endeavor) Party of the Muslim Tatars (Azerbaizhani). It was precisely against this nationalistic characteristic of the Caucasian revolutionary movements that the mature Stalin reacted most forcibly.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, life in the countryside in South Caucasus took a different course than in the rest of the empire due in large part to the peculiar modalities of the peasant emancipation and the growth of specialized crafts and manufacturing industries. Agrarian reform in the three provinces inhabited by Azerbaizhani brought little change into the traditional life of either the peasants, mainly settled on state lands, or the landowning beys and agas, most of whom lived at the level of their peasant neighbors.[14] While the countryside remained relatively stable, the big cities, particularly Baku, with its burgeoning oil industry, became centers of a large-scale in-migration by Russians from the north and seasonal workers from the Iranian province of Azerbaizhan across the frontier to the southeast.[15]

In Georgia the emancipation had a highly disruptive effect on the social structure and economic activities of both the nobility and the peasantry.[16] The nobles were forced to sell off most of their properties in the decades

[14] Ts. P. Agaian, *Krest'ianskaia reforma v Azerbaizhane v 1870 godu* (Baku: Akademiia nauk Azerbaizhanskoi SSR, 1956), and A. S. Sumbatzade, *Sel'skoe khozaistvo Azerbaizhana v XIX veke* (Baku: Akademiia nauk Azerbaizhanskoi SSR, 1958), pp. 151–4.

[15] On Iranian migration, see Audrey Alstadt, "Muslim Workers and the Labor Movement in Pre-War Baku," in S. M. Akural, *Turkic Culture: Continuity and Change* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), pp. 83–91, and Cosroe Chaqueri, *The Soviet Socialist Republic of Iran, 1920–21: The Birth of the Trauma* (Pittsburgh University Press, 1994), pp. 24–6.

[16] The standard work on the emancipation is S. L. Avaliani, *Krest'ianskii vopros v Zakavkaz'e*, 2 vols. (Odessa: Avaliani Publ., 1912–14). But see also P. A. Zaionchkovskii, *Otmena krepostnogo prava v Rossii*, 2nd edn (Moscow: Moskovskoe uchebno-pedagicheskoe obshchestvo, 1960), and the lucid summary in Suny, *The Making of the Georgian Nation,* ch. 5.

following emancipation and then were often blocked from finding alternative careers in the bureaucracy or commercial enterprises by Russian and Armenian competitors who had been long entrenched in these positions. The revival of russification policies by the tsarist authorities in the 1880s added insult to injury. Already emotionally stirred by the Georgian romantic revival of mid-century, a number of the young déclassé nobles were increasingly vulnerable to revolutionary doctrines that combined national opposition to Russia with socialist opposition to capitalism. For reasons once again peculiar to Georgia they found their main mass support not from the small Georgian working class but from the peasantry.

The disaffection of the peasantry in Georgia heavily depended on local conditions. Nowhere was peasant resistance more pronounced than in Western Georgia, in particular the former Kingdom of Guria, renamed in 1840 the Ozurgeti district of Kutaisi Province.[17] By the turn of the twentieth century, the district contained all the ingredients of an explosive social situation: a mass of small landholding peasants under severe economic pressures from changing market conditions but relatively well educated and aware of external events; a tradition of peasant revolts by a culturally homogeneous population; and potential political leaders drawn from a group of youthful social democrats belonging to a European educated, déclassé local nobility and including many of the future leaders of Georgian Menshevism and the independent Georgian Democratic Republic: Noe Zhordania, Sylvester Jibladze, Noe Khomeriki, Isidor Ramishvili. The result was what S. F. Jones has called the prototype of "the peasant based national-liberationist movements" of the twentieth century.[18] As such it represented for Stalin all he despised and sought to destroy during his subsequent political career. Throughout his life, he carried with him the conviction, or suspicion, that any revolutionary movement based upon the peasantry, no matter how loudly it proclaimed its loyalty to international communism, that is to the Soviet Union (such as Tito's Yugoslavia and Mao's China), was fundamentally unreliable and vulnerable to the temptations of national communism.[19] The reasons for this were deeply embedded in his early exposure to the complexities of political protest in Georgia.

[17] The following is based on S. F. Jones, "Marxism and Peasant Revolt in the Russian Empire: The Case of the Gurian Republic," *Slavic and East European Review* 67:3 (1989), pp. 403–34.

[18] *Ibid.*, p. 434.

[19] This is not to deny that Stalin accepted Lenin's view of the poor and middle peasantry as allies in the struggle against tsarism or to ignore Soso's youthful flirtation with Populism in his student years in Georgia. Alfred J. Rieber, "Stalin as Georgian: The Formative Years," in Sarah Davies and James Harris (eds.), *Stalin: A New History* (Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 33–4.

The third characteristic of the South Caucasus as a frontier society was the multiple channels of communication that transferred ideas into the region and then exported them in altered form. In the second half of the nineteenth century, access to European thought increased, mainly through the Russian filter. The encounter and interaction with indigenous traditions produced a variety of cultural hybrids. Later, an influx of pan-Islamic and pan-Turkic ideas offered alternative forms of allegiance and identity to the Muslim population. The most powerful currents coming from Russia penetrated local ecclesiastical schools like the ones Stalin attended or else were conveyed into the region by small numbers of Georgian students who studied in imperial universities, mainly St. Petersburg. A second narrower channel led to institutions of higher learning in Central Europe (in the Kingdom of Poland) and then on to the larger field of Europe as a whole. Among those who imbibed their Marxism at the University of Warsaw were Noe Zhordania, subsequently the leader of the Georgian Mensheviks, and Pilipe Makharadze, a leading figure in the Georgian Bolshevik organization.

Dzhugashvili's Marxism came directly from Russia. The importation of Russian literature both in the original and in translation and Russian translations of European works of literature, history and politics fed these currents and left an indelible imprint on Stalin. In many cases Russian literary forms intermingled with the rich traditions of Georgian literature. Both enjoyed a heritage of Greco-Roman legends and their own versions of knightly tales and romantic heroism. Major Russian writers from Pushkin and Lermontov to Marlinskii and Tolstoy idealized aspects of Caucasian life, although they displayed an ambiguous attitude toward Georgians.[20] Thus, the resentment felt by so many Georgian nobles and intellectuals toward the administrative and bureaucratic insensitivities of Russian officials and clerics, shared by the young Soso Dzhugashvili, was mitigated by an admiration of Russian high culture.

Although Marxism found its way to the South Caucasus mainly through channels from Russia, the local social and economic conditions in Georgia shaped its contours in fundamental ways. Caucasian Marxists boldly confronted the question of overcoming ethnic difference in forging a revolutionary movement.[21] They adhered more closely than their Russian counterparts to a belief in the peasantry as a revolutionary force; the program of the Georgian Mensheviks in particular embraced this

[20] Cf. Susan Layton, "Eros and Empire in Russian Literature about Georgia," *Slavic Review* (Summer, 1992), pp. 195–213. See also Katya Hokanson, "Literary Imperialism, Narodnost' and Pushkin's Invention of the Caucasus," *Russian Review* 53:3 (1994), pp. 336–52.

[21] Sh. Davitashvili, *Narodnicheskoe dvizhenie v Gruzii* (Tbilisi: Federatsiia, 1933), p. 32.

view, compelling the Bolsheviks, Stalin among them, to compete with their rivals on this issue.[22] The social democratic appeal to the peasantry was one of the reasons why the Socialist Revolutionary Party never came close to gaining the support in the South Caucasus that it enjoyed in the Russian countryside. The early Georgian Marxists also took a different view of the role of the worker in the revolutionary movement than their counterparts in Central Russia by stressing the importance of spontaneity and the social equality of workers and intelligentsia in the movement, a position that created both problems and opportunities for Stalin.

Industrialization occurred in cities where widely divergent social groups, ranging from the tribal to the urbanized, rubbed shoulders with an equally variegated number of ethno-religious groups, further complicating ethnic relations and social identification. For Stalin the most important social consequences arose from the multicultural profile of the working class and the peculiar relationship of the working class to the intellectuals. In the South Caucasus, workers mixed easily with one another, especially where Russian was a lingua franca, whereas the nobles, merchants and clerics of different nationalities led separate lives. Consequently, social democracy in the Caucasus was from the outset a multicultural political movement unlike any other in the empire.[23] Relations between workers and intellectuals also exhibited regional nuances. The working class in Georgia, and to varying degrees throughout the borderlands, had grown from two major sources: the old craft structure and modern industry – oil, railroad construction and mining.[24] The influx of unskilled and semi-literate Azerbaizhani from the countryside and Iranian Azerbaizhan, raised formidable obstacles for labor organizers but offered an opportunity to men like Stalin who saw personal advantages in organizing politically unformed workers of low status.

In Georgia and elsewhere in the South Caucasus the older radicalism of the crafts (mainly Georgian) combined with the newer workers' (mainly Russian) consciousness to generate a strike movement that

[22] Jones, "Marxism and Peasant Revolt."

[23] G. A. Galoian, *Rossiia i narody Zakavkaz'e. Ocherki politicheskoi istorii ikh vzaimo otnoshenii s drevnikh vremen do pobedy Velikoi Oktiabr'skoi Sotsialistichskoi Revolutsii* (Moscow: Mysl', 1976), pp. 357–64; Ronald Grigor Suny, *Looking Toward Ararat: Armenia in Modern History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), pp. 90–2, 260.

[24] For the school of *remesleniki*, see Prince V. Masal'skii, "Tiflis," in *Entsiklopedicheskii Slovar'* (1901), vol. LXV, p. 268; for populist contacts with them Davitashvili, *Narodnicheskoe dvizhenie*, pp. 60–5, 79; for revolutionary populist influence on the earliest strike movements, E. V. Khoshtaria, *Ocherki sotsial'no-ekonomicheskoi istorii Gruzii: promyshlennost', goroda, rabochii klass (XIX–nachala XX v.)* (Tbilisi: Met's'nierba, 1974), pp. 204–8.

erupted simultaneously with that in St. Petersburg. It began in 1878 at the Zeitser Factory in Tiflis. After a pause of four years, a strike broke out at the Nobel plant in Batumi and in 1890 there was a major strike of railroad workers in Tiflis. A smaller work stoppage occurred at the Mantashev factory in Batumi in 1892. In a rising crescendo in 1894 and 1895 a series of large strikes of the workers in Tiflis tobacco factories attracted regional attention. According to participants, these strikes were all "spontaneous" without an organizational center or the guidance of a political party.[25] But this did not mean that all workers lacked a political consciousness.

In the 1870s and 80s in the main cities of the South Caucasus, Tiflis in particular, a social stratum of "worker–craftsmen" began to make contact with the young generation of populist intellectuals. Most of the craftsmen had attended the urban craft schools (*remeslennoe uchilishche*) where they had an opportunity to meet students from other institutions and to encounter the floating population of exiles and immigrants from Russia. The populist students from rural Georgia found them, rather than factory workers, to match their internalized image of "the toiler." The craftsmen produced their own writers like Iosif Davitashvili, the famous self-taught poet of the people. As early as the late 1870s, they formed their own mutual aid society in Tiflis, and in 1889 published an illegal handwritten journal which appeared for ten years under various names.[26] According to a report of a police agent in 1900, "there does not exist a single factory, plant or workshop that does not have its secret circles, the leaders of which are in constant contact with one another, and which gather in general meetings (*skhodki*)." According to the same report, the intelligentsia had not yet penetrated these circles but were taking "the first steps" to draw closer to them.[27] This was the setting for Dzhugashvili's debut as a conspiratorial agitator within the working class.

The rapid spread of Marxist ideas among the factory workers in Georgia was attributed by Pilipe Makharadze to the absence of any strong competition from other ideologies: "among us the Marxist orientation did not have to struggle with any other kind of tendency for hegemony

[25] F. Makharadze, *Ocherki revoliutsionnogo dvizheniia v Zakavkaz'e* (Tiflis: Gosizdat. Gruzii, 1927), pp. 47–51.

[26] *Ibid.*, pp. 62–3.

[27] The agent also noted that the formation of circles occurred "independently of nationality from Russians, Georgians and Armenians united by the general goals of the proletariat," TsGAOR, f. DPDD, op. 1898, ed. kh. 5, ch. 52, ll. 23–4, cited in G. A. Galoian, *Rabochee dvizhenie i natsional'nyi vopros v Zakavkaz'e, 1900–1922* (Erevan: Aistan, 1969), p. 11.

among the working class as took place in other countries," by which he meant trade unionism or economism inspired by a "bourgeois world view."[28] This was also true to a large extent in Russia as well. But in Georgia there was no "naive monarchism" among the workers and no experiments with police socialism that had disoriented the working class in Russia. With the decline of populism or rather its co-optation, Marxism had the ground all to itself.

Growing up in Gori

Dzhugashvili's home town of Gori was a microcosm of the South Caucasus frontier. To the north of Georgia stretched the tribal regions of the Abkhazians, Svanetians and Ossetians, societies still deeply rooted in a feudal–patriarchal way of life and closely related to the Georgians by family ties, a common language and customs. The southern boundary of the Ossetian settlements was a scant 30 kilometers from Gori, whereas Tiflis was 73 kilometers away.[29] Gori itself had a mixed population of Georgians, Armenians and Russians. The town was poised as it were between two very different worlds of the patriarchal, tribal and the urban, early industrial. The blending of cultures was also reflected in the social structure, architecture and urban grids of the three main cities – Tiflis, Batumi and Baku – that formed the triangle of Dzhugashvili's early revolutionary activity.[30] In each case contemporary accounts employ terms typical of the colonial discourse in describing the "European" and "Asian" sections of the cities.[31] Stalin bore the stigma of this discourse throughout

[28] F. Makharadze, *K tridtsatletniiu sushchestvovaniia Tifliskoi organizatsii. Podgotovlenyi period, 1870–1890: Materialy* (Tiflis: Sovetskii Kavkaz, 1925), p. 29.

[29] Many students from Ossetian schools came to study in Gori and Tiflis. M. M. Gapringashvili, "Gruzinskaia kul'tura v XIX v.," in N. Berdzenishvili *et al.* (eds.), *Istoriia Gruzii*, 5 vols. (Tbilisi: Gos-izd. Gruzinskoi SSR, 1946–54), vol. V, p. 548.

[30] Population statistics drawn from the census of 1897 give the following breakdown on the basis of language. Batumi: Georgian – 39.4 percent; Russians – 25 percent; Armenian – 21 percent; Greek – 9 percent; Turko-Tatar – 7.5 percent; with less than 1 percent of Jews, Poles, and Persians. Tsentral'nyi statisticheskii komitet Ministerstva vnutrennykh del, in *Pervaia vseobshchaia perepis' naseleniia Rossiiskoi imperii*, 79 vols. (St. Petersburg, 1903–5), vol. LXVI, pp. 146–9. Baku: Turko-Tatar – 36 percent; Russian – 34.8 percent; Armenian – 17 percent; Persian – 3 percent; German – 2.2 percent; Jews – 1 percent; Tatskii – 1 percent; Georgian – 0.09 percent. *Ibid.*, vol. LXI, pp. 154–5. Tiflis: Armenian – 38.1 percent; Georgian – 26.3 percent; Russian – 24.8 percent; Poles – 3.4 percent; Persians – 3.2 percent; Tatars – 1.7 percent; English, Germans and Swedes – 1.2 percent; Jews – 1.1 percent; a scattering of French, Italians, Lezginy, Ossetians and Greeks. *Ibid.*, vol. LXV, p. 267.

[31] See, for example, K. N. Bagilev, *Putevoditel' po Tiflisu* (Tiflis, 1896), pp. 26–9, and especially Vasilii Sidorov, *Po Rossii. Kavkaz. Putevye zametki i vpechatleniia* (St. Petersburg: M. Akinfiev and I. Leontiev, 1897), pp. 142–5, 163, 270, 274, 276, 595–6, 598, 605

his early career although on several occasions later on he sought to turn the epithet of "Asiatic" to his advantage.[32]

When Iosif Dzhugashvili was born, in either 1878 or 1879, Gori was by no means an insignificant or obscure town.[33] Its history reproduced in miniature the characteristics of the frontier society of which it was a part. Gori was first mentioned by Georgian chronicles in the seventh century as a location on the main caravan route of the South Caucasus. Like most inhabited places in Georgia, it suffered from many invasions and conquests, most notably by Timur in the fourteenth century, the Turks in the sixteenth century and the Iranians in the seventeenth century. But it also had its moment of glory as the capital of Kartelia before another Iranian conquest, by Nadir Shah in the eighteenth century and a period of harsh exploitation led to a revolt and the reestablishment of Georgian control under Irakli II. From that time until unification with Russia in 1801 it was a center of feudal conspiracies by local princes plotting against the Georgian kings.

History lingered on in the shape of the dominant man-made feature of the town, the fortress (*Goris-tsikhe*) with its thick and high crenellated walls and the legends attached to it. The fortress image subsequently occupied a prominent place in the mature Stalin's imagery. In the center of the court there was a large depression, possibly an ancient burial mound, and not far away a strangely shaped spherical yellow stone. Popular fantasy attributed to it a special meaning and linked it to the mythical figure of Amiran, the local Prometheus. It had been his sword which he hurled into the ground before he was chained to a cliff in the Caucasus. In a customary rite still practiced at the end of the nineteenth century, the local blacksmiths went to their workshops at midnight on Maundy Thursday and hammered their anvils as a sign that the chains binding Amiran still held him firmly. Otherwise the hero would break loose and avenge himself on those who had forged his bonds.[34] These and other

for vivid descriptions of the mixed Asiatic and European character of Tiflis, Baku and Batum. There were similar descriptions of Stalin's home town of Gori, *ibid*., pp. 460–77, and in Al. Azhavakhov, "Gorod Gori," in *Sbornik materialov dlia opisaniia mestnosti i plemen Kavkaza* (Tiflis, 1883).

[32] See note 1.

[33] The exact date of Stalin's birth has long been disputed due to a confusion for which he is responsible. For the most recent analysis based on archival sources, see Miklos Kun, *Stalin: An Unknown Portrait* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2003), pp. 8–10.

[34] RGASPI, f. 71, op. 10, ed. kh. 273, l. 15 (based on contemporary sources). There were many local tales of Amiran as a liberator and other heroes who came from the people and "by strength or by guile" overcame their oppressors. *Ibid*., l. 44. Another suggestive tradition associated with the fortress was the legend of the commander who in a time of danger gave refuge to the inhabitants of the quarter outside the walls, locked the gate himself and kept the key. To this day the inhabitants living in places visible from

tales of treachery, revenge and embattlement were the stuff of Soso's childhood.[35]

Gori Province had a reputation for being rebellious as well as a center of conspiracies. Throughout almost the entire nineteenth century, the peasantry, especially in the region of Ossetia, repeatedly rose against their landlords. The liberation of the serfs in 1864 did nothing to improve their lot. On the contrary, it reduced most of them to landless laborers or smallholders eking out a living on wretched parcels of land burdened with heavy taxes and exposed to the arbitrary violence of local officials.[36] On Sundays, they saddled their emaciated water buffaloes, loaded their carts with fruit, vegetables and cheese, and dragged their produce to the closed market sheds in Gori where they were often forced to sell for a pittance; or else they were cheated by sharp traders who took advantage of their desperate need for cash. Spontaneous peasant outbreaks increased after the liberation, although they remained localized and sporadic until the revolution of 1905.[37]

The peasants also suffered from the depredations of bandits, a persistent problem in the countryside. In the post-liberation period, the bandits began to come down from the mountains in the northern part of Gori Province and raided the big estates of Machabeli and Eristavi as well as peasant villages. The rural police offered little assistance, claiming the peasants "were bandits themselves and their accomplices."[38] Some bandits achieved brief notoriety, but their fame was overshadowed by popular avengers who hunted down bandits or protected villagers without extracting any payment from them.[39] The heroic and romantic tales that absorbed Georgian youth like Soso Dzhugashvili had their real equivalents in living memory. Subsequently, the role of the bandit became equivocal in Stalin's mind: as a revolutionary and "expropriator" he identified with it, but once in power he used it to stigmatize popular resistance to his rule.[40]

the walls have not forgotten the danger. However, the post of commandant was always given to the most trusted of the king's servitors. *Ibid*., l. 16.

35 For additional insights into the role of folkloric images in Stalin's writing, see Mikhail Vaiskopf, *Pisatel' Stalin* (Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2001), and the discussion in Rieber, "Stalin," pp. 1658–62.

36 S. V. Machabeli, "Ekonomicheskii byt krest'ian Goriiskogo uezda, Tifliskoi gubernii," in *Materialy dlia izuchenii ekonomicheskogo byta gosudarstvennikh krest'ian Zakavkazskogo kraia* (Tiflis, 1887), vol. VI, p. 201.

37 RGASPI, f. 71, op. 10, ed. kh. 273, l. 79.

38 Sofrom Mgaloblishvili, *Vospominaniia o moei zhizni. Nezabyvaemye vstrechi* (Tbilisi: Merani, 1974), pp. 35–6.

39 *Ibid*., pp. 37–9.

40 Compare his revolutionary pseudonym Koba, adopted from the avenging bandit hero of the Georgian writer Aleksandr Qasbegi (Kazbek), with the rhetoric used to identify

Gori lost some of its commercial importance when the Poti–Tiflis railroad bypassed it in 1871, but it recovered as a center for transshipping grain and oats. By the time Stalin was born, its population had passed the 10,000 mark. A railroad spur later further improved its communications with the outside world. But the physical appearance of the town had changed little, with its narrow, crooked and dirty streets, its great market and the ruined fortresses recalling its past glories. The social structure of Gori remained highly traditional, not to say feudal. The local merchants and landowners had made common cause with the Russian bureaucrats in order to retain their dominant position. The town craftsmen, of whom Stalin's father was one, were hard-working but conserved their old-fashioned methods.[41]

In the 1860s, the Georgian national revival and greater cultural interaction with Russia turned Gori into an important cultural center and a hot bed of political activity. The key to its renaissance was the connection with Tiflis and especially the relationship between the Gori parish school and the Tiflis Seminary. A generation before Dzhugashvili was to follow this route to enlightenment, the top students from Gori went on to Tiflis, which served as a transmitter of fresh and bold ideas from Russia. They returned home as *Kulturträgers*. During Soso's years as a schoolboy in Gori and a seminarist in Tiflis, he began to construct the tripartite political persona, Georgian–Russian–proletarian, that became the foundation of his ideology of state-building.

His life in the Tiflis Seminary exposed him for the first time to the humiliation of russification and the blandishments of Marxism. By the time he arrived at the seminary, the relatively liberal atmosphere of the 1870s had given way to a harshly repressive regime. According to the anonymous memoirs of a former student published in 1907, the faculty were "despots, capricious egotists who only had in mind their own prospects," which were to acquire a bishop's miter. Mainly Russians, they openly displayed their contempt for Georgians and their language. By 1900 there were only fifty Georgians out of 300 students. By 1905 there were no Georgians left.[42] In such an atmosphere it is hardly surprising that the long-established student circles for self-education turned more and more to radical politics.

kulaks in the 1930s and members of the Ukrainian Revolutionary Army (UPA) in the 1940s as bandits. For the psychological significance of Koba, see Tucker, *Stalin as Revolutionary*, pp. 79–82, and Philip Pomper, *Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin: The Intelligentsia in Power* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), pp. 158–63.

41 Mgaloblishvili, *Vospominaniia*, pp. 11, 14.

42 RGASPI, f. 71, op. 10, ed. kh. 73, ll. 153–4.

Before Stalin had enrolled, the Tiflis Seminary already had a reputation as a center of anti-governmental activity. Inspired by the spread of populist literature, the students repeatedly challenged the administration. Between 1874 and 1878 eighty-three of the recalcitrants were expelled. By the early 1880s, a new generation of Georgian populists coming from the lower strata of the population replaced the nobles and princes who had founded the movement. Resistance to the government's repressive policies after the assassination of the tsar in 1881 accelerated the transition from populism to Marxism and also took more violent forms. Close to the People's Will in Russia, they turned their attention more to students and worker–craftsmen than to peasants. In 1882 a group of seminarists formed a populist revolutionary circle around Gola Chitadze that included several future leaders of Georgian social democracy like Isidor Ramishvili and Noe Zhordania (subsequently Stalin's great rivals in the Menshevik wing of the Georgian party), Pilipe Makharadze and Mikha Tskhakaia the future Bolsheviks.

During the late 1880s, a few seminary students began to read Marxist literature, in particular the early essays of Plekhanov. For some, like Makharadze and Zhordania, the final stage in the transition to Marxism came only after they had left Tiflis in 1891 to continue their studies in Warsaw. From there they corresponded with their comrades in Tiflis, Silvester Dzhibladze and Egnati Ninoshvili, sending them illegal Marxist literature. When in 1894 Ninoshvili died prematurely, his friend, who had suffered expulsion with him, Silvester Dzhibladze, delivered a famous funeral oration at his grave site that for the first time publicly invoked Marxism as the revolutionary wave of the future. The appeal for a new direction met an enthusiastic response among the mourners and inspired the radical intellectual Grigori Tsereteli to call them *mesame-dasi*, the third generation, which the Georgian Marxists then adopted as their name.[43]

To be sure, there were disagreements among the early recorders of these events about how many of the group were "real Marxists" and how many were "under the strong influence of Marxist ideology."[44] The differences that later emerged between Mensheviks and Bolsheviks were

[43] Noe Zhordania, *Moia zhizn'* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1968), pp. 11–15; Makharadze, *K tridtsatiletniiu*, pp. 4–5, 14–17, 40–2. The memoirs of both Zhordania and Makharadze are replete with disparaging remarks about each other, but their accounts agree on the general nature of the transition from populism to Marxism among the Tiflis seminarians.

[44] The first position was held by Makharadze, *K tridtsatiletiiu*, p. 43, and the second by S. T. Arkomed, *Rabochee dvizhenie i sotsial-demokratiia na Kavkaze* (Geneva: Chaulmontet, 1910), pp. 145–51. That the former was a Bolshevik and the latter a Menshevik goes far toward explaining the difference between them.

not clearly drawn at this time. Moreover, the youthful seminarists had very little direct contact with the emerging workers' movement. During these same years from the late 1870s to the early 90s, a parallel and independent movement of worker activism in the form of strikes and secret discussion groups spread rapidly throughout the South Caucasus. Dzhugashvili cautiously and gradually adopted a Marxist outlook and began to associate with workers' study circles, a milieu he found more congenial to his plebian background than the discussion groups of the intelligentsia.

In 1900 Dzhugashvili's initiation into Marxism proceeded more rapidly with the arrival of a group of Russian social democratic exiles who injected fresh energy into the workers' movement in Tiflis and Baku. They arrived shortly after the workers had organized the first large-scale May Day demonstration with the participation of the Tiflis committee.[45] Among the newcomers was the veteran social democratic activist, Mikhail Kalinin, the future Soviet leader. His later efforts to diminish his own contribution to the development of a Leninist spirit among the Tiflis workers in favor of Stalin's role ring hollow in light of the contemporary attention paid to him by the police.[46]

The arrival of the Russian exiles coincided with a rapid growth of the strike movement that caused serious concern among the police. It was probably during this period, in the late summer or fall of 1901, that the Tiflis committee was taken over by the more radical elements in *mesamedasi* supported by the Russian exiles who advocated joining the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party.[47] This was also the moment when Soso Dzhugashvili was co-opted to the committee, most likely in order to strengthen the radical group. For the first time police reports mention the name Dzhugashvili as an agitator, but note that "he conducts himself in a highly cautious manner."[48] Caution was still his watchword when at

[45] Stalin may have spoken at the demonstration but this is mentioned only by later memoir apologists. Vladimir Kaminskii and I. Vereschchagin, "Detstvo i iunost' vozhdia: dokumenty, zapiski, rasskazy," *Molodaia Gvardiia* 12 (1939), p. 93.

[46] The gendarmes described Kalinin as one of the "outstanding propagandists of anti-governmental ideas" who had a wide circle of acquaintances among like-minded thinkers and as a important revolutionary who maintained relations "with the leading representatives of the revolutionary party in many cities of Russia." G. Glebov, "M.I. Kalinin v 1900–1901 v Tiflise," *Zariia Vostoka* 46 (February 25, 1940), p. 3. No such "encomiums" for Stalin!

[47] A leaflet announcing this affiliation came as an unpleasant surprise to Noe Zhordania, one of the leaders of the moderates, who was in prison at the time and not in a position to challenge the decision. Zhordania, *Moia zhizn'*, pp. 33–4.

[48] Arkomed, *Rabochee dvizhenie*, pp. 39–40, 47–51; Galoian, *Rabochee dvizhenie*, pp. 10–12; Glebov, "M.I. Kalinin," pp. 247–8.

the end of 1901 he arrived in Batumi on a mission from the reconstituted Tiflis committee.

From Batumi to Baku

For Dzhugashvili, Batumi was the first opportunity to step out of the shadows of better-known and more active comrades and define himself more clearly against his enemies in the social democratic movement. Similar to Tiflis in many ways, Batumi bore even more clearly the stamp of a frontier town. An ancient urban site, it only passed under Russian sovereignty in 1878. Located twelve miles from the Turkish border but linked to Tiflis by rail, its population was highly mixed ethnically, as was the small working class concentrated in the late booming oil industry. The surrounding countryside was inhabited mainly by Georgians (Gurievtsy), Laz and Kurds.

When Dzhugashvili arrived there was no social democratic organization in Batumi. But there was an active Sunday school propaganda program run by two early adherents to *mesame-dasi*, Nikolai Chkheidze (known as "Karlo" in honor of Marx) and Isidor Ramashvili, both close associates of Zhordania and future Georgian Menshevik leaders. There were also small illegal circles of workers where social democratic propaganda circulated.[49] The future Mensheviks insisted that the increase in strike activity in Batumi in 1902 was spontaneous, though directed toward political goals by social democratic propagandists who were on the ground before Dzhugashvili's arrival. Subsequently, the mature Stalin claimed to have been the instigator of the strike and ridiculed his rivals as legal Marxists.[50] Thus he sought to portray himself as an advocate of conscious leadership over the idea of worker spontaneity even before the fateful split between Mensheviks and Bolsheviks had occurred over this issue.[51]

Although Dzhugashvili had been born, raised and educated in an ethnically mixed environment, he did not fully grasp the revolutionary and counter-revolutionary implications of communal strife until the eve of the revolution of 1905. The years between 1903 and 1919 were filled

[49] As early as 1897 the social democratic circles in Batumi had organized a partial translation of *The Communist Manifesto* into Georgian and hectographed 100 copies. L. E. Gorgiladze, "Rasprostranenie marksizma," in Lordkhipanidze and Mushelishvili, *Ocherki istorii Gruzii*, vol. V, p. 472.

[50] RGASPI, f. 71, op. 10, ed. kh. 73, ll, 327–38. Stalin was repaid in kind by Ramishvili, who stated "We have not sanctioned his activities and he conducts these in a self-willed way (*samovol'no*)." *Ibid*., l, 351.

[51] For the background to this ideological split, see Leopold Haimson, *The Russian Marxists and the Origins of Bolshevism*(Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1955).

with communal riots, pogroms and two major revolutionary outbreaks. But tensions were already building in Soso's youth between the Armenian and Tatar communities and there was growing resentment between the Georgian and Armenian communities, especially in Tiflis. The sources of conflict stemmed from the economic development of the region, the boom in the oil industry, the spread of market relations and related changes in migratory patterns that brought growing numbers of Georgians into Tiflis and waves of illegal migrants from Iran into the Baku oil fields. The dangerous mixture of class antagonism superimposed upon older ethnic and religious rivalries exploded during the 1905 revolution. In Baku the fighting turned into a Tatar–Armenian war which spread to other cities, including Tiflis where it was only brought under control by a Georgian workers' militia, and to the countryside, especially in Nagorno-Karabakh.[52] That ethnic tensions and outbreaks of communal violence tended to split the revolutionary parties, including the social democrats, along national lines severely weakened the revolutionary movement in Stalin's eyes.

From the first stirrings of working-class consciousness in the South Caucasus, the more politically advanced workers tended to group themselves on the basis of their ethnic identity. Georgian, Armenian, Russian and Azerbaizhani workers maintained separate circles. The Georgian workers were more closely tied to their home villages to which they could return in the slack season. The Armenian and Russian workers were mainly permanent migrants with no ties to the countryside. The Muslim workers, largely unskilled, were divided between the local Azerbaizhani who retained close links to their villages and the migrants from across the Iranian frontier who were often seasonal and lived without their families in slums cut off socially from their southern compatriots. Ethnic separatism was reinforced by employment practices and distinctions in crafts and skills. Most workers were hired by their own countrymen. The Russians tended to be much more highly skilled than the others, with the Muslim workers occupying the lowest rung of the ladder.[53]

Socialist intellectuals also tended to identify themselves and their potential mass support with their ethnic origins. Perhaps nowhere else in the Russian Empire outside the South Caucasus were the emerging revolutionary parties so deeply marked by the tension between internationalist and nationalist aspirations. There were two major reasons for the competing identities. First, as we have seen, capitalist relations developed

[52] Tadeusz Swietochowski, *Russia and Azerbaizhan: A Borderland in Transition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), pp. 36–42.

[53] Suny, *The Making of the Georgian Nation*, pp. 160–1, Swietochowski, *Russia and Azerbaizhan*, pp. 21–2.

unevenly within the populations of the main ethnic groups – Georgians, Armenians and Azerbaizhani – producing quite different levels of social consciousness among all classes in the three societies. Second, as we have also seen, there were equally pronounced differences among the three groups with regard to historic memories, territorial unity and political experience – all important indicators of national awareness. Consequently, the mixture of socialist and nationalist feelings among intellectuals tended to be highly volatile, and attempts to reconcile the two elements through various formulas became a trademark of the emerging revolutionary organizations. Among those attempts, Stalin's, like others', can only be understood within the context of the political controversies of that period. Roughly speaking, there was a hierarchy of political consciousness and action that distinguished the three groups. The Azerbaizhani were the slowest to break out of their traditional religious communities. Both the Armenian and Georgian intellectuals began more or less simultaneously their struggle to combine socialist and nationalist elements into a revolutionary ideology. But they ended up achieving a quite different balance of the two.

An Azerbaizhan socialist movement emerged against a complex cultural background made up of modern political movements – Islamism, pan-Turkism or just plain Turkism – that reflected the age-old rivalry of Iran and Turkey in the region. In addition there were Azerbaizhani liberals drawn from the merchant and industrial groups who also preceded the socialists on the political stage.[54] But, as in other regions of the Russian Empire, socialist groups among the Muslims made their appearance on the political scene at approximately the same time as the liberals, outflanking them on the left.[55] In Baku in the early years of the twentieth century, they found a fertile ground for their activities. One third of the oil workers and more than a quarter of the workers in the copper smelting industry, students in the secondary schools, as well as some students in the Russian *lycées*, were Turkic (Azeri) speakers. Migrant workers from Iran, numbering an estimated 100,000 by 1890, constituted half the number of Muslim workers in Baku. They formed a potential reservoir of recruits for social democracy, not only in Baku but across the border in Iran.[56]

[54] Firouzeh Mostashari, *On the Religious Frontier: Tsarist Russia and Islam in the Caucasus* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2006).

[55] For much of the following, see Tadeusz Swietochowski, "The Himmat Party: Socialism and the National Question in Russian Azerbaijan, 1904–1921," *Cahiers du Monde russe et soviétique* 19:1–2 (1978), pp. 119–25, and Audrey Alstadt, *The Azerbaijani Turks: Power and Identity under Russian Rule* (Stanford University Press, 1992), pp. 43–8.

[56] N. K. Belova, "Ot otkhodnichestva iz severo-zapadnogo Irana v kontse XIX nachale XX veka," *Voprosy istorii* 10 (1956), pp. 113, 117.

By 1904 a handful of Azerbaizhani radicals in the Baku organization of Russian Social Democracy founded a separate political group, Himmat (Endeavor), with their own newspaper of the same name. Because its program was vaguely socialist with strong nationalist overtones, it rapidly picked up mass support among both local and immigrant Muslim workers after the outbreak of revolution in Russia in January 1905. For the same reasons its relationship with the social democratic organizations of Baku was ambivalent. According to M. E. Rasulzade, one of its leaders and subsequently a participant in the Iranian "constitutional revolution" of 1906–11, Himmat was more often associated with the Bolsheviks in Baku than the Mensheviks. The contacts with "Koba," as Stalin was known to him, and his public support for the Bolsheviks gave rise to an incident which illustrates once again the youthful Dzhugashvili's sensitivity to language questions. In the ongoing debate among the social democrats about tactics, Andrei Vyshinskii, representing the Menshevik point of view, sneered at Rasulzade's ungrammatical Russian, whereupon Koba responded drily, "I don't think that if you gave a speech in Turkic you would do any better."[57] Dzhugashvili was also quick to ingratiate himself with Himmet. In 1907 he played a prominent role in a commission to organize a mass commemorative funeral for one of the leaders of Himmet martyred during a strike. At his gravesite, Dzhugashvili spoke of his close friend as a hero of socialist labor, seeking once again to establish a firm link between proletarian and national consciousness. But he soon learned the dangers of associating himself too closely with an ardent Muslim nationalist party.[58]

Himmet was important to Dzhugashvili in several ways. First, after his return from Siberian exile in 1907, he and his Bolshevik colleagues sought allies among the radical national parties in their rivalry with the dominant Menshevik organization in Baku for control over the workers' movement. They were motivated by three important tactical considerations. First, working with Himmet and other groups would facilitate their recruitment among the large number of unskilled and illiterate Muslim oil workers as a means of counter-balancing Menshevik influence among the mainly Russian skilled workers. Second, they calculated, rightly, that their agitation for militant strikes would elicit a more favorable response among the most highly exploited section of the workers who had very

[57] M. E. Rasulzade, "Vospominaniia o I. V. Staline," *Vostochnyi Ekspress* 1 (1993), p. 43.
[58] Michael G. Smith, "The Russian Revolution as a National Revolution: Tragic Deaths and Rituals of Remembrance in Muslim Azerbaijan (1907–1920)," *Jarhbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 49:3 (2000), pp. 370–3. Smith also points out the symbolic importance for the Bolsheviks (and I would stress for Stalin) of the cult of the dead.