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Stalin and the National Question

ERIK VAN REE

In the literature about Stalin's thinking on the 'National Question' a central place has always been occupied by his 'The National Question and Social-Democracy'. The article was carried in 1913 by the Bolshevik journal *Prosveshchenie*. It contained the well-known definition of a nation as 'an historically formed, stable community of people, united by community of language, of territory, of economic life, and of psychological make-up, which expresses itself in community of culture'.¹ Once it was held that Stalin's article, containing this concise definition of the nation, was actually the product of fellow Bolsheviks of greater ability like Lenin and Bukharin. That thesis has long been laid to rest. Several scholars have shown Stalin's work to contrast with Lenin's thinking, directing our attention to the influence in Stalin's 1913 article of Kautsky, Bauer and Renner. I will argue that this analysis is not exhaustive.

The young Stalin was much more preoccupied with the national question than is commonly assumed. His 1913 article was only an episode in a series of writings on the subject from 1904 to 1916. Stalin's thinking on the national question may be divided into two periods, roughly corresponding to the pre- and post-revolutionary. Before the revolution he was violently opposed to any form of nationalism, especially of small nationalities like the Georgians and the Jews. By 1916 he had developed a political outlook that was closer to that of Luxemburg than to Lenin's. The centralised multinational state was his alpha and omega. In that period his definition of the nation remained, in fact, an alien element in his own thought. Only after the revolution did it acquire practical relevance. His responsibilities as a state leader forced him to have a more open eye to the realities of national life. He realised more clearly than before that nations were tenacious things and bound to outlive capitalism. His theoretical, as opposed to political, thinking on the phenomenon of nations, as it

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developed from 1913 to 1950, should be located in the tradition of Russian organicism.

MARXIST THEORIES OF THE NATION

When the nineteenth century drew to a close large parts of Central and Eastern Europe were still dominated by the Austro-Hungarian and Russian multinational empires. The Balkans, experiencing a steady decline of Turkish rule, were a nationalist powder keg. It was not easy for the Second International (founded in 1889) to take a clear position on the national question, proceeding as it had to from the naive, internationalist perspective of Marxism. At its congress in London in 1896 the International granted nations a right to 'self-determination', but it was unclear what that implied. Marxism had an inherent centralist bias and, consequently, all major tendencies in the International hoped to keep the multinational empires intact. The most radical position was taken by Rosa Luxemburg who was least of all prepared to compromise with nationalism.

But the national aspirations in Central and Eastern Europe had to be appeased. Basically, two approaches were developed. The 'Austromarxists' Otto Bauer and Karl Renner favoured a system of 'national-cultural autonomy' in the nationally heterogeneous regions of their multinational empire. Citizens would register individually according to nationality and form their own institutions to administer and develop cultural affairs. The more orthodox Marxist V.I. Lenin, on the other hand, found the prospect of crystallisation of cultural identities abhorrent. He opted for a right of secession for nationally homogeneous territories in the hope that, given that opportunity, nations would prefer remaining within their large, centralised states, gradually merging into one, to developing their own separate cultures.²

Marxism was a creed, a complete view of the world. The early Social-Democrats were not satisfied with developing a political programme to deal with the national question. A fierce debate on the theoretical side of the matter naturally developed. It centred around the question of what nations were, how they had developed and what their future was.

For Marxist thinking on what constituted nations, the work of Karl Kautsky first comes to mind. He was the first, beginning in 1887, to attempt to fill the vacuum which Marx and Engels left behind. His was the orthodox 'historical materialist' position. The modern nation

was the product of historical circumstance or, more precisely, a 'child of capitalist commodity production'. That economic system demanded the breakdown of barriers between mutually separated but adjoining territories and the creation of one centralised economic and political 'organism', in which the need for smooth economic traffic caused the development of one national language, replacing both Latin and the local dialects.³ Thus, he considered 'community of language' and 'community of territory' to be the basic characteristics of the modern nation. He did, on the other hand, feel that 'community of national character', while not denying its possible existence, was not a 'necessary condition for the [. . .] existence of a nation'. Nobody 'really knows what it looks like'.⁴

With his *Der Kampf der österreichischen Nationen um den Staat* (1902), Karl Renner challenged Kautsky's theoretical authority in the Second International. Preoccupied with Austria's transformation along 'national-cultural' lines, he defined the nation as a 'cultural community [. . .] not linked to the "soil"', having a 'community of language' at its disposal. It was 'a union of identically thinking and speaking persons'. As is often the case with those who stress national unity, Renner's thought was heavily influenced by organicism (of which, it should be added, Kautsky's thought was not free either). Renner noted that nations form an 'organic unity', a nation 'thinks, feels and *acts* as a unified whole'. He also treated the state as a 'sovereign territorial organism' in which the organised population forms 'organs giving shape to a *collective will*'.⁵

The other, probably more influential, 'Austromarxist' was Otto Bauer, whose major study *Die Nationalitätenfrage und die Sozialdemokratie* appeared in 1907. Perhaps his most revolutionary break with socialist orthodoxy was a positive assessment of the nation. He broke with Kautsky's expectation that economic internationalisation and socialism would give rise to a unified world culture, using one world language.⁶ Instead, he expected that socialism would not result in a fusion of nations but in their 'increasing differentiation'.⁷ According to Bauer, nations consisted of people whom 'fate' had brought together in a state of intense mutual communication, transforming them into relatively unified 'communities of character'. Bauer was more orthodox than Renner in that he thought that historical fate was determined by economics. A common mode of production induced endogamy, giving rise to common biological characteristics, and – through a community of language – to a common culture. Community of territory was

contributive, but not essential, to the formation of national communities.⁸

There was a basic point of dispute between Kautsky's linguistic-territorial concept and the cultural-linguistic approach of Renner-Bauer. The former acknowledged that some kind of national unity, overarching class differences, existed in the form of a common language and territory. But he was very niggardly when it came to providing that with substance. He failed to recognise the existence of cultural and psychological unity among classes in any relevant sense. The latter, on the contrary, approached the matter from the opposite angle. They treated nations generously as self-conscious cultural communities, with a long-term, stable existence and with traditions accounting for a measure of like-mindedness among their respective members. In their case class conflict lost some of its weight.

Within the Russian Social-Democratic Workers' Party (founded in 1898) the Austromarxist thesis was not without influence, especially in the Jewish Bund. For instance, in 1906, one of its leaders, Vladimir Medem, wrote a forceful essay in favour of cultural autonomy for the Russian Jews. But the article made no contribution to the theory of nations. His favouring of autonomy for minority nations was a purely tactical matter. Medem's attitude towards nations as such was one of emphatic indifference. He reduced them metaphorically to various 'colours' in which mankind was 'painted'.⁹

Lenin did not provide any serious counterweight. Though sympathising with Kautsky's position, he showed little interest in the theory of nations. His early works contained only scattered remarks on the subject, such as the Marxist commonplace that the modern nation was the product of the centralising forces of the capitalist economy.¹⁰ In 1903, while engaged in polemics with the Bund, he adhered to Kautsky's thesis that community of language and territory were necessary attributes of nationality. He denied that the Jews were still a nation, whatever their sense of cultural unity might be.¹¹ Only in 1912 did Lenin become really involved in the national question – not because of a theoretical interest, but out of political necessity. His anger was aroused by a conference in August 1912, where his opponents in the party, among them the Bund and many Mensheviks, accepted the principle of cultural autonomy for the nations of the Russian empire. In December of that year the Bolshevik leader became even more infuriated when the Mensheviks managed to include this demand in a declaration by the Social-Democratic Duma faction, while their Bolshevik colleagues failed to rebuff them.

On 19 and 20 December 1912 Lenin wrote two letters to the so-called Russian Bureau of the Bolshevik Central Committee, calling for 'decisive measures' and even a 'war' to defend the party programme on the national question.¹²

'THE NATIONAL QUESTION AND SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY'

Among the Bolsheviks the concept of cultural autonomy could count on little sympathy, but Austrian theoretical influence was not entirely absent. In 1906 a brochure in the Armenian language, 'The National Question and Social-Democracy', appeared in Tiflis. According to its author, the Bolshevik S.G. Shaumian, human beings tended to join up in ever larger 'social organisms' in their struggle for survival against nature and each other. He described the formation of modern nations as a process covering 'dozens and hundreds of centuries'. The centralisation resulting from the rise of capitalist commodity production gave only the final push. Nations were characterised by a community of ancestry, language, religion and customs.¹³ Shaumian's theoretical approach contained many similarities to that of the Austrians. That could certainly not be said of the writings of another Bolshevik who had paid attention to the national question, 'Koba' Dzhughashvili.

His first essay on the theme, 'How Social-Democracy Understands the National Question', appeared in the Georgian journal *Proletariatis Brdzola* in September 1904. It crudely rejected the concept of a cultural community of nations, deriding both the cultivation of national identity and the struggle for Georgian independence. In the course of his discussion Dzhughashvili bluntly denied the existence of a 'national spirit' as well as of any community of interest between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.¹⁴ In the original version of the article the author not only denied the existence of a 'national spirit', but of 'national characteristics' in general.¹⁵

This article, included in the *Sochineniia*, was not Dzhughashvili's only early work on the national question. In the 5 June 1906 issue of the Social-Democratic journal *Akhali Tskhovreba*, appearing in Tiflis, he contributed a rebuke against a plea for the federalisation of Russia that had appeared in the Georgian-nationalist journal *Iveriia*. He argued that, 'The rights of oppressed nations are not safeguarded by federation, but by democracy'. Those who demanded 'Transcaucasian autonomy' separated 'the fate of our country from Russian culture and link it to Asian barbarism'.¹⁶ It appears that in these early

years Dzhugashvili was blind to the realities of national life and a convinced adherent to the idea of the centralised multinational state.

He did not change this view during the years that followed. In *Sotsial-demokrat*, no.28–29 (5/ 18 November 1912) and no.30 (12 [25] January 1913) there appeared two articles, respectively called 'Nationalist Decay' and 'The Question of "Cultural-National Autonomy" in our Programme (Some Necessary Information)'. According to the IMEL-researchers who produced Stalin's *Sochineniia* both articles can be ascribed to Stalin with a high degree of probability.¹⁷ The articles attacked the Bund, the idea that the Jews formed a nation, as well as the concept of a federated Russia. According to the author, nationalism was 'for the non-Russian intelligentsia what the various forms of retreat from politics were for the Russian intelligentsia'. The author slighted sarcastically the concept of an 'historical culture' and particularly 'the backward part of the Jewish petty-bourgeoisie, its sabbaths, its jargon, religious holidays etc'.¹⁸ From Lenin's point of view, Dzhugashvili (who began to call himself Stalin around this time) was a reliable battering ram against the cultural approach to the national question.

At the time circumstances had made Stalin, temporarily, the main Bolshevik at liberty within Russia. In January 1912 a conference of the RSDWP had convened in Prague under conditions completely controlled by the Bolsheviks. It elected a Central Committee of seven members, of whom Lenin and G.E. Zinov'ev lived abroad. The other five (G.K. Ordzhonikidze, S.S. Spandarian, D.M. Shvartsman, R.V. Malinovskii and F.I. Goloshchekin) resided within the borders of the Russian empire. Before the end of the conference the new Central Committee co-opted two more members, I.S. Belostotskii and Dzhugashvili, bringing the 'Russian collegium' to seven members. The C.C. appointed Spandarian, Ordzhonikidze and Dzhugashvili as the Executive or Russian Bureau, to which Goloshchekin was added as travelling agent.¹⁹ In September 1912 Dzhugashvili escaped from exile in Naryn and went to St Petersburg where he automatically obtained an elevated position in the Bolshevik apparatus. Between April and June 1912 his colleagues at the Russian Bureau, Spandarian, Ordzhonikidze, and Goloshchekin, had been arrested and did not regain their freedom until the following year or even later. Belostotskii was also arrested during the course of that year.²⁰ Being a Menshevik, Shvartsman could not act as Lenin's trusted contact in Russia. That left only Malinovskii and Dzhugashvili, but the former was not part of the Russian Bureau.

A few months after Lenin's call for war Stalin's 'The National Question and Social-Democracy' appeared in the March, April and May issues of *Prosveshchenie*. That Bolshevik theoretical monthly was founded in St Petersburg in December 1911. Its editorial board was divided into a Russian group, headed by M.A. Savel'ev, and a foreign group, which included Lenin and A.A. Troianovskii, who had been living in Vienna since 1912.²¹ Newly available archival material allows us to fill in some of the gaps in the history of Stalin's article. In early January 1913 Stalin went to Lenin's residence in the Polish city of Cracow, where he attended a conference of the Central Committee and other party cadres from 8 to 14 January.²² He was certainly in Cracow on 7 or 8 January because he sent a letter to L.B. Kamenev from there on one of those dates.²³ In another letter of 8 January (perhaps again to Kamenev) he announced his intention to stay for about one-and-a-half weeks in Cracow.²⁴ At the conference the national question was an important subject of discussion.²⁵ Troianovskii and his wife Elena Rozmirovich attended the conference too.²⁶

It is generally assumed that it was Lenin who requested or commanded Stalin to write the piece during the latter's stay in Cracow. To my knowledge, there exists no definite evidence of this fact. But according to Sof'ia Veiland, the teacher of the daughter of the Troianovskiis', who accompanied them to Cracow, Lenin indeed asked Stalin to write an article on the national question during the latter's stay in Cracow. He was supposed to do the work in Vienna.²⁷ However, in a letter to the editorial board of *Prosveshchenie* in St Petersburg of 6 January Troianovskii had already written, 'Yesterday I received Stalin's article, at last'. He probably referred to an early draft.²⁸ In Cracow itself Stalin had no time to write anything. On 12 January he wrote in a letter to St. Petersburg 'I am very sorry that I found no time to write. [. . .] The point is that we have an impossible atmosphere here, we are all terribly busy, with the devil knows what'.²⁹

On or after 25 January Stalin set out for Vienna, where he arrived on one of the last days of the month. His mission was to organise the sending of Lenin's newsletter about the conference to Paris.³⁰ In Vienna Stalin lived at the Troianovskiis'.³¹ In the Austrian capital he also met the young N.I. Bukharin, who had recently agreed to start writing for *Prosveshchenie*.³² On 13 or 14 February Lenin organised another meeting of the Central Committee in Cracow, which Stalin attended having returned from Vienna.³³ Edward Ellis Smith

concluded already in 1967 that Stalin's stay in Vienna could have lasted 'only two or three weeks'.³⁴ Veiland has it that Stalin stayed 'some weeks' with them.³⁵ It was certainly too short a period to research and write the extensive article.³⁶ We now know that Stalin produced a publishable draft prior to his arrival in Vienna. On 2 February he wrote a letter to Malinovskii from the Austrian capital, informing him that he was 'writing all sorts of rubbish' and asking him to 'tell Vetrov [Savel'ev, E.v.R.] not to publish the "Nation. question" but to send it here [. . .] If possible send the article this very day.' He added 'Soon I will be back with Il'ich'.³⁷

Smith, who first unearthed this letter, supposed that Stalin referred to an article by Savel'ev.³⁸ However, that was incorrect. On 4 February Troianovskii wrote to *Prosveshchenie*, 'We are waiting for Stalin's article on the national question, why don't you send it? Did you receive the telegram? Don't print it, but send it immediately to us'.³⁹ In another letter on the same day to St Petersburg, Troianovskii wrote, 'Vasilii [another alias for Dzhugashvili, E.v.R.] insistently demands [. . .] that the article on the national question be returned to us here'.⁴⁰ It seems that Stalin wrote the original draft of the article in late 1912 and delivered it to the editors in St Petersburg. They sent it to Troianovskii in January. After reading it he returned it to Savel'ev to be published. But when Stalin arrived in Vienna they asked for it back. Stalin may have revised the article in Vienna, but he did not write it there.

At the second Cracow conference *Prosveshchenie* itself was on the agenda.⁴¹ Troianovskii attended this meeting too, in order to participate in the discussions about the journal, and Lenin 'talked a lot about the national question' with Stalin.⁴² The latter stayed in the Polish city for some time, which he devoted to writing. Between 14 and 25 February Lenin wrote a letter to A.M. Gor'kii from Cracow, stating: 'A wonderful Georgian has settled down [*zasel*] among us and is presently writing [*pishet*] a big article for *Prosveshchenie*, having collected *all* Austrian and other material'.⁴³ Around 28 February Stalin left Cracow, returning to St Petersburg on 4 March.⁴⁴ It seems that Stalin put the final touches to the article during his second stay in Cracow. Lenin 'participated in the editing' of the March, April and May issues of *Prosveshchenie* in which Stalin's article appeared.⁴⁵

As I said in the introduction to this article, it was once believed that the people from *Prosveshchenie*, particularly Lenin, Bukharin and Troianovskii, played an essential role in the writing of Stalin's article. Krupskaja suggested as much.⁴⁶ Bertram Wolfe, who claimed to be

informed by unspecified 'other sources', held that Stalin needed Bukharin as 'his mentor on Austrian theory' and for his command of German.⁴⁷ However, this 'German' myth has long been exploded. Several authors have pointed to Stalin's use of translations of most of the works quoted, such as Renner's and Bauer's. Only a very limited number of German works needed translation.⁴⁸ What is more, Stephen Cohen has not found any evidence of Bukharin playing a 'great role' in the preparation of Stalin's article.⁴⁹ This is not surprising. Bukharin had come to Vienna in late 1912 to study economics, not the national question. His interest lay not in the Austromarxists' views on nationality, but on monopoly capitalism.⁵⁰ Moreover, in early 1913 the young Bukharin had only published two articles.⁵¹ By this time Stalin had already published enough to fill several volumes. Both his party position and his status as a writer were far above those of Bukharin, so he would not have been in any particular need of Bukharin's help.⁵²

Lenin was certainly enthusiastic about the article. In two letters to Kamenev, dated 25 February and 29 March 1913 respectively, he described Stalin's essay as '*very good*' and 'Good!' In both cases he particularly commended its attack on the mistaken views of his party opponents, the Bund and the 'liquidators', who favoured cultural-national autonomy.⁵³ Furthermore, in an article published on 28 December 1913 Lenin wrote that Stalin's article had expounded the 'foundations of the national programme of the S.D'.⁵⁴ However, I found no other example of Lenin publicly referring to Stalin's article in his voluminous writings on the national question during this period.⁵⁵ That is not surprising in view of its contents.

Chapters II to VII of the article were in the spirit of Stalin's previous work on the subject. The author conceded nations the right to use their own languages and the right to self-determination. But economic internationalisation and class struggle made any national unity of nations like Georgia a harmful illusion. Stalin did not favour secession and also fiercely attacked the project of national-cultural autonomy, because it allegedly froze the identities of backward cultures, on which he spared no sarcastic words. If this expressed the political purpose of the article, as it surely did, the theoretical first chapter with its definition was odd. One would expect it to have laid the groundwork for what followed with a 'Kautskyan' definition of nations of a strong anti-cultural bias. Instead, the author presented a concept which included cultural and psychological uniformity as a constitutive element of nationhood. Thus, the first and the remaining

chapters contrasted to the point of giving the whole an impression of disharmony.

For his part Lenin did not depart from his previous dislike of any theory suggesting nationwide cultural identities, which was precisely what Stalin's definition did. In two compilations of notes from early 1914 Lenin favourably contrasted Kautsky's 'historical-economic theory' of the nation as a '*Sprachgemeinschaft*' with Bauer's 'idealist theory' of the nation as a '*Kulturgemeinschaft*'.⁵⁶ Probably Lenin liked Stalin's article *only* from the point of view of political expediency, for answering his call for an attack on the strategy of cultural autonomy. His editing work was not so rigorous as to adapt the article completely to his views.⁵⁷

TURUKHANSK

Back in St Petersburg Stalin was arrested on 8 March 1913 and subsequently deported to Turukhansk district for a period of four years. As it appears from his letters his interest in the national question did not diminish. In August 1913 he asked in a letter to Zinov'ev in Cracow to mail him books by Strasser, Anton Pannekoek and Kautsky.⁵⁸ In late November the same year he asked Malinovskii in a letter whether Zinov'ev's remark that his articles on the national question were to appear as a separate brochure was accurate. 'The point is, that if it is true, I would have to add one chapter to the articles (I could do that in a few days, if only you let me know)'. He was also interested in the fee, experiencing as he did a chronic lack of money.⁵⁹ On 7 December (OS) he reported in a postcard to Zinov'ev that he had not yet received the books he required, though he did have a new Georgian language brochure by Kostrov (Noi Zhordaniia). He intended 'to treat them all at once. Again I ask you to send them'.⁶⁰ The next day he sent another letter to the same addressee urging him to send his fees, adding: 'As soon as I receive the German books I will supplement the article and send it to you in its reworked form'.⁶¹

On 11 January 1914 (OS) Stalin sent yet another postcard to Zinov'ev in Cracow. 'Why do you remain silent, friend?', he asked, announcing that he had sent a 'very big [*bol'shuiu-prebol'shuiu*] article "On cult.-nat. autonomy"' to *Prosveshchenie*. He hoped for a handsome fee. 'By the way: the article criticizes Kostrov's brochure (in Georgian) in connection with the general theses of the adherents to cultural autonomy'.⁶² It seems that Stalin had decided not to wait

for the books any longer but to write his new article solely on the basis of Zhordaniia's brochure. Apparently the article was received in good order. On 25 March 1914 Zinov'ev wrote to Troianovskii: 'There arrived a big article from Stalin against the new book of Kostrov (Naridze) on cultur.-nation. aut. It touches only on that theme. You will be content [*Ostanetes' dovol'ny*]'.⁶³ To Stalin's great regret the article was never published. It was somehow lost.⁶⁴

On 10 April 1914 (OS) Koba sent one more letter, this time to G.I. Petrovskii. He informed the latter that he was still waiting for the books he had ordered to arrive. If they came he promised to write another 'big article (a feuilleton in five parts)', as big as the one he had recently sent. It could appear in *Pravda* under the title 'On the Foundations of Marxism'. For *Prosveshchenie* he would write one more piece under the title 'The Organisational Aspect of the National Question'. If Petrovskii was interested he was also prepared to provide *Pravda* with 'a popular article on the nat. question, completely readable for workers'.⁶⁵ On 20 May 1914 he wrote one more postcard to Zinov'ev, asking for one of Kostrov's books, adding 'Once more I ask you to send me the books by Strasser, Pannekoek and K.K'.⁶⁶ The book situation never improved. On 10 November 1915 (OS) Stalin complained in a letter to Lenin and Krupskaja on the 'complete lack or almost complete lack of serious books'. Specifically mentioning the national question, he added that he had many ideas but no materials to work with. He wondered whether his addressees could send him some interesting works on the national question in French or English.⁶⁷

Despite his lack of reading material he made progress in writing. On 5 February 1916 he informed Kamenev, at the time himself in Siberian exile, that he was presently writing two articles, 'The National Movement in Its Development' and 'War and the National Movement'. He hoped that his brochure *Marxism and the National Question*, plus 'my big article "On Cultural-National Autonomy" which has not yet appeared but has been approved for publication' (including a Postscriptum), plus the two new ones, could be joined into one volume. Perhaps 'that would add up to a book "on the theory of the national movement" (or question)'. Stalin provided the outlines of his two new articles. The first one described the birth, flourishing and decline of the national movement, ending with a chapter on 'imperialism'. The contents of the second one, as outlined by Stalin in the letter, deserve special attention because Lenin's

celebrated brochure on imperialism was written in the first half of 1916 and had not been published by the time Stalin wrote this letter:

[. . .] Export of mainly industrial capital (export of financial and particularly commodity capital is not characterist. in the given case) [. . .] Imperialism as the political expression [. . .] The insufficiency of the old frameworks of the 'national state'. The breaking up of these frameworks and the tendency to form 'multinational states [*gosudarstv natsional'nostei*]'. Consequently the tendency to annexation and war. [. . .] Consequently the belief in nat. liberation. [. . .] The popularity of the principle of nat. self-determination as a counterweight to the principle of annexation. The clear weakness (economical and otherwise) of small states and the popularity of the idea of a narrow union [*soiuza*] of states, not only military but also economical. The insufficiency of a completely independent existence of small and medium-sized states and the fiasco of the idea of nat. separation. [. . .] A broadened and deepened union of states on the one hand and autonomy of nat. regions [*oblastei*] within states on the other [. . .] it should express itself in the proclamation of the autonomy of a nat. territory within multinational states in the struggle for the united states of Europe, i.e. for the most democratic forms of the broadening of frameworks that announces itself.

In an addendum he divided capitalism into three stages, 'the epoch of primitive accumulation, the first stages of industrial capitalism, the highest stages of industrial capitalism'. The articles were 'almost ready'.⁶⁸ Some of the 'Leninist' ideas on imperialism were clearly expressed here *avant la lettre*. It is also fascinating to see that Stalin adhered to the concept of a 'united states of Europe' against which Lenin polemicised in 1915. The most interesting fact of the letter is that its author did not mention the right to secession and even seemed implicitly to deny that the right to self-determination implied that right. In his 1913 article he had still supported Lenin on that matter.

We must conclude that Stalin's 1913 article had not been an isolated event. For years before and after 1913 he was intensely preoccupied with the national question. His main focus was support for the principle of 'internationalism' embodied in the centralised multinational state. Anything that tended to interfere with that, be it cultural autonomy, federalism or separatism, aroused his hostility. In

his final letter of 1916 he was actually closer to Luxemburg's position than to Lenin's. It foreshadowed the debate between Lenin and Stalin on the principles of the union of Soviet republics in 1922. Lenin never hid the fact that his position on the right of nations to secession was purely tactical. But as a tactical slogan he took it seriously enough and spent a lot of polemical gunpowder in defending it. In contrast, in Stalin's work on the national question from 1904 to 1916 only lip-service was paid to it. Disgust for the national ambitions of the Jews and the Georgians stands out as his main motive. Perhaps a psychological parallel to Luxemburg, herself also from minority (Polish-Jewish) descent, would be illuminating.

STALIN'S ORGANICISM

All this renders the question of what made Stalin adopt a definition of nations which included their cultural and psychological identity as an essential component the more acute. The inclusion of cultural identity into the definition did not harmonise with the political drift of Stalin's pre-revolutionary thinking on the national question. Moreover, the whole definition had some disturbing implications. In accordance with Marxist orthodoxy, the author described how the third 'characteristic' of nations, community of economic life, was realised only as a result of capitalist unifying processes. The logical corollary was that nations only came into being with the rise of that economic system. If one of its necessary conditions was lacking one could not define a community as a nation.⁶⁹ But that conclusion, logical as it may be, obscures the significant fact that Stalin failed to point out that linguistic, territorial and cultural unity were *themselves also* the historical outcome of capitalist economic development. Thus he silently suggested that some of the constitutive elements of nationhood, in particular a common language, fatherland and culture, might have been in place prior to capitalism. What is more, the notion that nations were 'stable' communities suggested that they might possibly survive capitalism.

Several authors occupied themselves with Stalin's sources of inspiration. Pipes and Tucker have referred to the contrast of Stalin's definition with Lenin's views. They noted that it was really a synthesis. Like Lenin, Stalin adopted Kautsky's territorial community as a precondition for nationhood but unlike him he added the Austromarxist notion of cultural community.⁷⁰ A close comparison of Stalin's article and the writings of Kautsky and Bauer is fruitful on

some points of detail too. Parts of the first chapter of Stalin's article seem a paraphrase of a Russian language article by Kautsky from 1906.⁷¹ Stalin may have obtained the idea of providing a formal definition of nations consisting of a list of 'characteristics' from a passage in Bauer's book, where the author pointed out earlier efforts of that kind by Italian sociologists.⁷²

To my knowledge, the most detailed treatment of the problem is to be found in the work of Haupt, Löwy and Weill. In *Les marxistes et la question nationale* two further authors, apart from the obvious Kautsky and Bauer-Renner, were suggested as having influenced Stalin's concept of nationality, namely Medem and Josef Strasser.⁷³ If it concerns the theoretical side of the matter this seems doubtful to me. I do not recognise Medem's concept of the nation as 'colour' in Stalin's 1913 article. As far as the booklet *Der Arbeiter und die Nation* (1912) by the radical Austrian Social-Democrat Strasser is concerned, it was noteworthy for its insistent denial of any community of interest between the working class and the bourgeoisie, even when it came to protecting one's culture, language or territory. There was no such thing as a national character in any relevant sense. Strasser virtually denied the existence of nations.⁷⁴ If one looks for other sources of inspiration for Stalin, Shaumian is a more plausible candidate. His definition of a nation as a community with cultural aspects and having antecedents from times long before the rise of capitalism is similar to Stalin's. The two men collaborated closely on the Baku party organisation during the latter half of the first decade of the century.⁷⁵

In my opinion, the problem of the roots of Stalin's definition of the nation is not exhausted by pointing to Austromarxist influence. As I see it, Stalin was naturally drawn to his inclusive definition once he started thinking about nations as collective entities. His four separate 'characteristics' formed the conclusion of an argument, not its a priori starting point. That argument was that if all four conditions were not met, a nation would not be integrated to the point of being a real unit. Lenin's lieutenant confessed to not believing in 'paper "nations"', but rather in 'real nations, acting and moving'. Stalin's nation was something 'living and acting', with its members living a 'common [...] life' and its 'separate parts [united] into one whole'. He thought of his ideal-typical nation as a large-scale individual, lumping together its economic, territorial and linguistic community as its 'conditions of life', and treating the psycho-cultural characteristic as its 'state of mind [*dukhovnyi oblik*]'.⁷⁶ That was reminiscent of an

earlier article in which Dzhugashvili compared the relation between society's conditions of life and its ideology to that between the nervous system and the mind of an individual organism.⁷⁷

The metaphor that was on Stalin's mind in 1913 requires no guesswork. He spoke of 'national organisms'.⁷⁸ In its pure form the metaphor of the 'organism' expresses a very strong kind of integration of a human group. Generally it has two aspects. First, it assumes that the separate people or sectors of society are not viable in isolation, any more than the organs of an organism would be. It is the whole that determines the parts, not the other way round. Secondly, it presupposes the existence or desirability of some sort of common mind or purpose, enabling people to act in full unity. Thus, an 'organism' could be defined as a purposeful whole. From this perspective Stalin's allegiance to the Austromarxist concept of psycho-cultural community within a nation falls into place: whatever the reality of class struggle, any 'national organism' deserving that name simply *had to have* some sort of common mind, *ergo* there would have to be a psycho-cultural identity of sorts.

The organicism in the 1913 article corresponds to Renner's concept of the organic unity of nations, as cited above. As such, our findings strengthen the notion of Stalin borrowing from the Austromarxists, whom he purported to assail in his article. However, the 'organic' aspect of the matter becomes more revealing in the light of the Russian tradition of thinking. Any handbook of nineteenth and early twentieth-century Russian philosophy shows the centrality of the concept of 'organic wholeness' especially among thinkers of Orthodox persuasion. The concept was widely employed, in the basic branches of philosophy such as epistemology and ontology, as well as in other fields such as A.S. Khomiakov's ecclesiological work. In the second half of the nineteenth century two reactionary thinkers, Konstantin Leont'ev (1831-91) and Nikolai Danilevskii (1822-85), both with a biological training, applied biological concepts to the life of states, nations and cultures. According to the former, cultures lived through the same stages of initial simplicity, growing complexity and the simplicity of old age, as plants and animals.⁷⁹

When it comes to the national question, Danilevskii was the most influential thinker. His *Rossia i Evropa*, which appeared as a book in 1871, was (and remains) the main *exposé* of Panslavism. Stalin's concept of nations shows interesting similarities to the theory of cultural types which Danilevskii's book contains.⁸⁰

Danilevskii's point of departure lay in a resistance against the Western concept of universal world culture, of which the West considered itself to be the most outstanding representative. Measuring Russian culture against the yardstick of universalism was as silly as finding out whether the tulip or the rose was the better embodiment of the concept of flower. Each culture should be judged on its own standards, corresponding as it did to a specific natural organism, like a plant or an animal, with its unique characteristics. All of them went 'through their stages of development like everything that is organic', from birth to death. More concretely, the world was divided into separate communities, which Danilevskii called 'cultural-historical types', each of which was primarily defined by its language. Each was further characterised by particular 'cultural elements (religious, way of life, social, political, scientific and artistic)' and by a 'specific psychological structure'. These made up its 'inner essence, its purpose, idea – that which we call its soul', which united 'the parts of the body into organic unity'.⁸¹

Stalin did not follow Danilevskii in his extreme abhorrence of universalism. To the former, specific cultural identities were aspects of a broader world culture. But he did concur with the latter in looking at nations as strongly integrated, organic wholes with unique linguistic and psycho-cultural characteristics. There is no indication that Stalin read Danilevskii. If he did, the impression it made on him was not enough for him to include a copy of the book in his personal library which he collected after the revolution. But the idea of 'organic unity' of human collectives was part and parcel of Russian thinking and as such naturally 'available' to Stalin. His 1913 definition of the nation deserves to be treated as part of that same tradition of Russian organicism to which Leont'ev and Danilevskii's thought belonged.

THE LATER STALIN

During the post-revolutionary stage of his career Stalin never abandoned his early admiration for the great multinational state. Given a choice between the interests of the Soviet state and any 'nationalism' (strictly speaking: including Russian) he would not have hesitated. But he did allow the nations a somewhat larger measure of cultural and linguistic autonomy than could be expected on the basis of his pre-revolutionary writings. In May 1925 he told a gathering of students of the Communist University of Workers of the East that though culture in the socialist era was 'proletarian as to its content', it

would continue to be 'national in form'. He denied in effect that national 'forms' were determined by class relations.⁸² In March 1929 he repeated and defended his old four-point definition in a long letter on the national question. He stressed that nations as such only arose with capitalism, but added explicitly that, though only in rudimentary form, 'elements of the nation (language, territory, cultural community etc.) [. . .] were created gradually, already in the pre-capitalist era'. Also stressing the 'extraordinary persistence [*ustoichivost'*]' of nations and languages, he predicted 'growth and flourishing' of nations for the socialist era. Only with the *world-wide* victory of socialism would a process of gradual fusion of nations, with their cultures and languages, commence.⁸³

Stalin was the Marxist who finally destroyed the traditional Social-Democratic concept, to which even Lenin had stuck, that the victory of socialism implied the quick demise of the nation. In that respect he was obliged to Otto Bauer. In practical terms it meant that local languages and cultures remained partially intact even after 'socialism' had been established in the 1930s. The policy of cultural and linguistic Russification knew its limits. Theoretically Stalin accomplished this by returning to his old definition of the nation which had been an odd element in his thinking in 1913 but now unexpectedly gained practical significance. However, only towards the end of his life did the Soviet leader develop a theory to explain *why* nations were tenacious enough to survive the demise of the capitalist system. Here he concentrated on one of the constitutive elements of nationhood – language.

Probably the first to have pointed to the significance of *Marxism and Questions of Linguistics* (1950) was Gustav Wetter. In his *Der dialektische Materialismus* he treated it as a relatively original version of historical materialism.⁸⁴ Stalin started out with a run-of-the-mill account of basis and superstructure, relating how the political and ideological views and institutions in a society were the product of its economic structure. A superstructure was a product of class and 'does not live long'. It was 'a product of one epoch', when a particular economic system held sway. Language, however, 'is created not by some class or other, but by society as a whole' in order to 'satisfy the needs not of one class, but of the whole of society'. As a 'means of communication' languages did not differ 'from the instruments of production, let's say, from machines, which can also equally serve the capitalist and the socialist systems'.⁸⁵ Stalin's argument came down to the idea that society's technological needs gave rise to specific economic systems,

which in their turn translated themselves into politico-ideological structures. But – and here lay its novelty – technological needs also gave rise to other human pursuits, *parallel to the economic system*, such as language. Such phenomena were directly determined by society *as a whole*.

In his old age the fear of chaos, which had always been present in Stalin's mind, became ever more pronounced. 'One can and should destroy the old superstructure', he wrote, 'in order to make room for the development of society's productive forces, but how could one destroy the existing language [. . .] without injecting anarchism into social life, without creating the threat of the disintegration of society?' The Soviet leader concluded that 'class struggle, however fierce it might be, should not be allowed to lead to the disintegration of society'.⁸⁶ He made the general point that societies tended to create structures to protect themselves from the threat of chaos resulting from the quick changes of economic systems and class struggle and to provide themselves with stability. Language was only one case in point. 'Language belongs to a number of social phenomena which function during the entire period of the existence of a society. It is born at the birth of a society and develops with it. It dies when the moment of a society's death has arrived'.⁸⁷ Thus, a general argument was laid out that could serve to explain the longevity of other phenomena than language too – such as cultural traditions or even nations as such.

And again an underlying organicist view of societies clearly shone through. National communities were living entities. As such they were bound to have some permanent, relatively unchanging characteristics defining their identity. They simply *could not* consist only of ever alternating modes of production and corresponding ideologies without ceasing to be historically recognisable communities. The organicist flavour of *Marxism and Questions of Linguistics* went so far as to attribute a corporate life and will not only to the collective of society but even to its parts. The economic basis, for instance, 'lives and acts' with a special purpose, namely that 'it tends society economically'. The superstructure, on the other hand had another function. It 'creates [. . .] institutions for society' while it was itself 'created by a basis in order that it might serve it'. It 'actively helps its basis to form and strengthen itself, it takes all possible measures to assist the new system'. But Stalin added that it was certainly possible that a superstructure might 'refuse to fulfil its

serving role and [. . .] take up a position of indifference'. It would then cease to be a superstructure.⁸⁸

Stalin's version of historical materialism was indeed original. It cannot be found in this form in the works of Plekhanov, Bukharin or Bogdanov – to mention the main Russian theorists in this field. But if a precursor is to be pointed out it would be the physician Aleksandr Bogdanov (1873–1928). Among the Russian Marxists of renown he was the one most given to interpreting historical materialism in organicist terms. Putting technology at the centre of his attention was for him a natural outflow of his seeing society as a collective organism engaged in a struggle for survival against nature. Society's complex and layered structure had biological connotations. For Bogdanov 'social forms' such as technology, basis or superstructure 'belonged to the broad *species* of biological adaptations'. They enhanced society's collective viability in its 'struggle for existence', in the way individual plants or animals profited from their adaptations.⁸⁹ In the third volume of his *Empiriomonizm* (1906) he elaborated on this. Society was 'not a mechanical clustering of elements, but a living *system* with its parts organically connected to each other'. At the same time all elements had 'a certain independent life'.⁹⁰

It is unlikely that Stalin borrowed directly from Bogdanov. In the former's private library were five copies of the latter's *Kratkii kurs ekonomicheskoi nauki* (from 1879 to 1923), but the notes he made in the margins represent no interest in this context.⁹¹ However, should one want to write a history of Russian Marxist theories of society the proximity of Stalin's 1950 concept to Bogdanovist organicism would certainly have to be noted.

CONCLUSION

Some concluding remarks of a more general nature are in order. Stalinism has been a curious blend of a 'totalitarian' belief in the omnipotence of the state and a strong traditionalist streak. It would be misleading to contrast these two tendencies completely. The strong state was itself part of Russian tradition. But there was an undeniable element of contrast. The centralised multinational state, crushing local ambitions and forcibly 'merging' nations into socialist uniformity, was held in balance (up to a point) by a grudging recognition of the resilience of national life and of society in general. The biological terms in which Stalin discussed society and the nation were expressive of that recognition by him. It was not so much a full-

blown organicist theory which one finds in Stalin's writings, as a tendency to look at the community as a living tissue. An organism can be subjected to the surgeon's knife and few historical leaders have taken to the knife as enthusiastically as Stalin has. But there are limits to what the surgeon can do if he does not want to kill the whole organism. In the respect discussed in this article the biological metaphor represented Stalin's recognition that even the state cannot act at *complete* liberty. Biology provided him with the concept of national communities as independent organisms with an identity of their own, and made him understand the inevitability of their prolonged existence within the framework of the great state.

NOTES

1. K. Stalin, 'Natsional'nyi vopros i sotsialdemokratiia', *Prosveshchenie*, no. 3 (March 1913), p.54
2. For a general discussion of the national question in the European Social-Democracy in this period see: Richard Pipes, *The Formation of the Soviet Union. Communism and Nationalism, 1917-1923* (Cambridge, MA, 1964), pp.21-49; Georges Haupt, Michael Löwy and Claudie Weill, *Les marxistes et la question nationale 1848-1914. Etudes et textes* (Paris, 1974); and Hans Mommsen, *Arbeiterbewegung und nationale Frage* (Göttingen, 1979).
3. Karl Kautsky, 'Die moderne Nationalität', *Die Neue Zeit*, vol.5 (Stuttgart, 1887), pp.398, 402, 404; See also Kautsky's contribution in: V. Medem, *Sotsialdemokratiia i natsional'nyi vopros* and K. Kautskii, *K natsional'nomu voprosu v Rossii* (St Petersburg, 1906). 'Die moderne Nationalität' appeared in a Russian translation in 1903. See Werner Blumenberg, *Karl Kautskys literarisches Werk, Eine bibliographische Uebersicht* (The Hague, 1960), p.40.
4. Karl Kautsky, 'Nationalität und Internationalität', *Ergänzungshäfte zur Neuen Zeit*, no.1 (18 Jan. 1908), pp.8-9, 12. According to Blumenberg, op. cit., p.81, there was no Russian translation of 'Nationalität und Internationalität', but according to Lenin, there was. See *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, vol.23, *Mart-sentiabr' 1913* (Moscow, 1961), p.210 [PSS].
5. Rudol'f Springer, *Natsional'naia problema (Bor'ba natsional'nostei v Avstrii)* (St Petersburg, 1909), pp.24, 37, 43, 67. The work was originally published under the pseudonym Rudolf Springer. I used the Russian translation used by Stalin.
6. Kautsky, op. cit., 1887, p.448; op. cit., 1908, pp.13, 16.
7. Otto Bauer, *Die Nationalitätenfrage und die Sozialdemokratie (Marx-Studien, Blätter zur Theorie und Politik des wissenschaftlichen Sozialismus, vol.2)* (Vienna, 1907), pp.105-8.
8. Ibid., in particular pp.2-135, 367-74.
9. 'Sotsialdemokratiia i natsional'nyi vopros', in Medem and Kautskii, op. cit., pp.3-57, in particular p.15.
10. PSS, vol.2, p.207; from 'K kharakteristike ekonomicheskogo romantizma' (1897).
11. Ibid., vol.8, pp.72-3; from 'Polozhenie Bunda v partii'. See also 'Natsional'nyi vopros v nashei programme', in ibid., vol.7, pp.233, 242, an article which also appeared in 1903.
12. Ibid., vol.48, pp.130-32, 134-5. See also ibid., pp.380-81.
13. S.G. Shaumian, 'Natsional'nyi vopros i sotsial-demokratiia', in: *Izbrannye proizvedeniia v dvukh tomakh*. vol.1, 1902-1916gg. (Moscow, 1957), in particular pp. 135-9.

14. I.V. Stalin, *Sochineniia*, (vol.1) 1901–1907 (Moscow, 1946), pp.32–55 [*Sochineniia*].
15. *Rossiiskii Tsentr Khraneniia i Izucheniia Dokumentov Noveishei Istorii*, f.558, op.1, d.7. All other archival materials referred to in the present article are also from the RTsKhIDNI.
16. F.71, op.10, d.183, 11.106–07. Fond 71 contains the archive of the former Institute of Marxism-Leninism. Its opis' 10 contains the archive of the sector of the *Institut Marksa-Engel'sa-Lenina* (as the institute was called until 1956), that produced Stalin's *Sochineniia*. Its materials were largely collected during Stalin's lifetime. The article in the column 'Press Review' was unsigned. Listy 109–14 contain the argument why Dzhughashvili was the probable author. It is based on stylistic comparison and argues why authorship of other regular contributors to the journal is unlikely.
17. See F.71, op.10, d.20, 11.313–16, 324–26. The second article appeared under the pseudonym 'Kavkazets'.
18. Ibid., 11.295–96, 318.
19. I.E. Gorelov (ed.), *Bol'sheviki. Dokumenty po istorii bol'shevizma s 1903 po 1906 goda byvshego Moskovskogo Okhrannogo Otdeleniia* (Moscow, 1990), pp.170–73; 'Protokoly VI (Prazhskoi) vserossiiskoi konferentsii RSDRP. Okonchanie', *Voprosy istorii KPSS*, no.7 (July 1988), pp.53–4.
20. I. Dubinskii-Mukhadze, *Ordzhonikidze* (Moscow, 1963), p.378; S.S. Spandarian, *Stat'i, pis'ma i dokumenty* (Moscow, 1958), p.353; Gorelov, op. cit., p.281; Heinrich E. Schulz, Paul K. Urban and Andrew I. Lebed (eds.), *Who was Who in the USSR. A Biographic Directory Containing 5,015 Biographies of Prominent Soviet Historical Personalities* (Metuchen, NJ, 1972), p.199; N. Kartashov and L. Konstantinovskii, *Bol'shaia zhizn'. Dokumental'naia povest'* (Cheliabinsk, 1963), pp.179–89. See also A.I. Spiridovich, *Istoriia bol'shevizma v Rossii. Ot vzniknoveniia do zakhvata vlasti 1883–1903–1917* (Paris, 1922), p.239n.
21. N.P. Loginov, 'Bol'shevistskii zhurnal "Prosveshchenie" (K 50-letii vykhoda v svet)', *Voprosy istorii KPSS*, no.6, 1961, p.164; I.A. Portiankin et al., *Bol'shevistskaia pechat'. Kratkie ocherki istorii 1894–1917 gg.* (Moscow, 1962), p.354; E.I. Krutitskaia and L.S. Mitrofanova, 'Posol Sovetskogo soiuz A.A. Troianovskii', *Novaia i noveishaia istoriia*, no.2 (March–April 1975), p.91.
22. Vladimir Il'ich Lenin. *Biograficheskaiia khronika 1870–1924*, (vol.3, 1912–1917 (Moscow, 1972), p.65; PSS, vol.22, p.465; Gorelov, op. cit., p.195. In the *Sochineniia* it is said that Stalin went in 'late December [konets dekabria]', but this refers to the Old Style calendar (*Sochineniia*, vol.2, p.421). In my article dates are given in New Style unless otherwise stated.
23. F.558, op.1, d.5391. At the time Stalin was intimate with Kamenev. The letter begins: 'Hello friend, I kiss you on the nose in the Eskimo way.' The author complained that life was boring without his friend.
24. F.558, op.1, d.4899.
25. PSS, vol.22, p.466.
26. P.N. Pospelov et al. (eds.), *Istoriia kommunisticheskoi partii Sovetskogo Soiuz*, (vol.2 *Partiia bol'shevikov v bor'be za sverzhenie tsarizma. 1904–fevral' 1917 goda* (Moscow, 1966), p.400.
27. F.558, op.4, d.647, 11.427–28, 431; in O. Veiland, 'V avstriiskoi emigratsii (Iz vospominanii starogo bol'shevika)'. See also l.419, in Bruno Frei, 'Stalin v Vene'.
28. F.30, op.1, d.3. According to the information in the opis', Troianovskii referred to an article on the national question.
29. F.558, op.1, d.46. He was not referring to the article on the national question in this letter.
30. In the *Sochineniia* (vol.2, p.421) it says that Stalin arrived in Vienna, 'in the second half of January' (which would mean 28 January or later in the New Style calendar) from where he sent Lenin's newsletter. Lenin wrote the letter between 14 and 21

January and sent it to Kamenev in Paris after 25 January. (*Vladimir Il'ich Lenin* (pp.70, 73). F.558, op.1, d.45 contains a letter from Stalin to Kamenev concerning this matter.

31. See N.K. Krupskaya, *Vospominaniia o Lenine* (Moscow, 1957), p.211. Details of his living circumstances are provided in the articles by Veiland and Frei in f.558, op.4, d.647. Trotskii met Stalin in Vienna, forever remembering his 'yellow eyes' with their 'glint of animosity'. See Leon Trotsky, *Stalin. An Appraisal of the Man and His Influence* (London, 1947), p.244.
32. Krupskaya, op. cit., p.211; G.L. Smirnov et al. (eds.), N.I. Bukharin. *Izbrannye proizvedeniia* (Moscow, 1988), p.v.
33. In *Vladimir Il'ich Lenin*, p.77, this date is explicitly referred to as being in New Style. However, the conference of the Central Committee is mentioned in the PSS, (vol.22, p.589) as having occurred 'in the middle of February' suggesting Old Style measurement. I have opted for the first source because its chronology is generally more exact and detailed. For Stalin attending the conference see Krupskaya, op. cit., p.211; E. Gorodetskii and Iu. Sharapov, *Sverdlov. Zhizn' i deiatel'nost'* (Moscow, 1961), p.68; V.T. Loginov, *Lenin i Pravda. 1912-1914 godoy* (Moscow, 1962), p.111.
34. Edward Ellis Smith, *The Young Stalin. The Early Years of an Elusive Revolutionary* (New York, 1967), p.274.
35. F.558, op.4, d.647, 1.432.
36. According to Krupskaya's inaccurate memoirs, Stalin spent 'a month or two' in Vienna 'working on the national question', prior to mid-February 1913. (op. cit., p.211). The second volume of the *Sochineniia*, p.367, published in 1946, puts 'Vienna, 1913, January' under the article, suggesting that this line appeared in the original. This is however a falsification: the original in *Prosveshchenie* does not have it. The official date and place were celebrated during the Allied occupation of Austria, in 1949, when the Soviet authorities attached a plaque to the house in Vienna where Stalin had stayed, stating that he wrote the article there in January 1913. See Smith, op. cit., p.275.
37. F.558, op.1, d.47.
38. Smith, op. cit., p.289.
39. F.30, op.1, d.4.
40. F.71, op.10, d.266, 1.251.
41. *Vladimir Il'ich Lenin*, p.77.
42. Krupskaya, op. cit., p.211.
43. PSS, vol.48, p.162. According to Krupskaya, op. cit., p.211, this letter was written after the conference of *medio* February. See also *Vladimir Il'ich Lenin*, p.78.
44. The *Sochineniia* (vol.2, p.421) have it that Stalin left for St Petersburg, 'in the middle of February' in Old Style, which would imply around 28 February in New Style. His arrival in the Russian capital is given by V.T. Loginov, op. cit., p.112, as 19 February, presumably in Old Style.
45. PSS, vol.23, p.455. According to Stalin, Lenin 'edited the book'. See Milovan Djilas, *Conversations with Stalin* (Harmondsworth, 1969), p.122. The article reappeared as a booklet in 1914.
46. Krupskaya, op. cit., pp.211, 214.
47. Bertram D. Wolfe, *Three Who Made a Revolution. A Biographical History* (New York, 1948), p.582. See also Trotsky, op. cit., pp.154-9.
48. See Pipes, op. cit., p.41; Robert C. Tucker, *Stalin as Revolutionary. 1879-1929. A Study in History and Personality* (New York; London, 1974), p.155; Haupt, Löwy and Weill, op. cit., pp.60, 307. According to Veiland, 'Comrade Koba drew all those surrounding him into his work on the national question. Some read Otto Bauer, some Kautsky.' And one day 'comrade Koba proposed that I translate a fragment from the German journal "Neue Zeit" for him'; According to Frei, Veiland 'provided him with translations from German texts to Russian'. (f.558, op.4, d.647,

- 11.432–33, 419). Stalin's article used eight titles of works originally not in Russian or Georgian. He used only three of them in German: *Verhandlungen des Gesamtparteitages der Sozialdemokratie in Oesterreich abgehalten zu Brünn vom 24. bis 29. September 1899 im 'Arbeiterheim'* (Vienna, 1899); *Dokumente des Separatismus, herausgegeben vom österreichischen Metallarbeiterverband zum zehnten ordentlichen Verbandstag* (Vienna, 1911); and Josef Strasser, *Der Arbeiter und die Nation. II vermehrte Auflage* (Reichenberg, 1912). Together these works account for only four of the total of 83 footnotes, which makes the 'German' contribution to the article of marginal significance.
49. Stiven Koen, *Bukharin. Politicheskaiia biografiia. 1888–1938* (Moscow, 1988), p.465.
 50. Ibid., pp.45f; L.I. Abalkin *et al.* (eds.), *N.I. Bukharin. Izbrannye proizvedeniia* (Moscow, 1990), p.6. In 1913 Bukharin did copy pages from A.I. Kastelianskii (ed.), *Formy natsional'nogo dvizheniia* (St Petersburg, 1910). Stalin quotes from this book in his article, but not from the same pages copied by Bukharin (f.329, op.1, d.1).
 51. Sidney Heitman (ed.), *Nikolai I. Bukharin. A bibliography. With annotations, including the locations of his works in major American and European libraries* (Stanford, CA, 1969), p.25.
 52. Troianovskii was actually unhappy about Stalin's article. On 25 February Lenin wrote to Kamenev in Paris that 'Troianovskii is making some kind of a row because of Koba's article for *Prosveshchenie* "The National Question and Social-Democracy". He wants to give it a non-official [*diskussionnaia*] stamp because Galina [his wife, E.v.R.] is in favour of cultural-national autonomy!!' (*PSS*, vol.48, p.169). The letter incidentally suggests that by 25 February Stalin had finished the article. Troianovskii himself also disagreed with Lenin's interpretation of the right of nations to self-determination, an interpretation which Stalin adhered to in his article. In his capacity as co-editor of *Prosveshchenie* Troianovskii demanded around this time that the journal publish an article by him against Lenin's views on the matter (Portiankin *et al.*, op. cit., p.355).
 53. *PSS*, vol.48, pp.169, 173.
 54. Ibid., vol.24, p.223. The article, 'On the National Programme of the RSDWP', appeared in *Sotsial-demokrat*.
 55. Iu. I. Semenov ('Iz istorii teoreticheskoi razrabotki V.I. Leninym natsional'nogo voprosa', *Narody Azii i Afriki*, no.4 (1966), p.116) mentions that in February 1914 Lenin once more favourably referred his readers to '*Prosveshchenie*, 1913, no.3.' He may, however, also have had another article in mind, which appeared in the same issue as Stalin's: N. Sk., 'O tom, kak bundisty razoblachali likvidatorov. K natsional'nomu voprosu'.
 56. See 'Materialy k referatu "natsional'nyi vopros"', in V.V. Adoratskii *et al.* (eds.), *Leninskii sbornik XXX* (Leningrad, 1937), p.53; 'Tezisy referata po natsional'nomu voprosu', in *PSS*, vol.24, pp.386–8. In both cases he only mentions these two Marxist theories of the nation and does not bother to mention Stalin's definition as a third. In 'Materialy k referatu . . .' Lenin did mention Stalin favourably for his criticism of Bauer's 'nat[ionali]sm' (Adoratskii *et al.*, op. cit., p.53). Lenin also referred to Stalin ('Brünn and Stalin, the Ukrainians') in another set of notes written in the first half of 1913, 'Plany k referatu po natsional'nomu voprosu', in *PSS*, vol.23, p.445.
 57. After the Second World War Stalin also said to Djilas that his work on the national question 'was Ilyich's – Lenin's view' (Djilas, op. cit., p.122). That show of modesty can easily be explained by Stalin's wish to strengthen the essay's 'Leninist' credentials.
 58. F.558, op.1, d.48.
 59. F.558, op.1, d.5393.
 60. F.558, op.1, d.49.
 61. F.558, op.2, d.89.

62. F.558, op.1, d.5168.
63. F.30, op.1, d.20. Stalin sent the article to S. Alliluev, who apparently mailed it to Lenin. See *Proletarskaia revoliutsiia*, nr.8, 1937 (f.161, op.1, d.12).
64. On 25 February 1916 (OS) Stalin wrote a letter to the Bolshevik centre abroad (through Inessa Armand), 'By the way, please write to me what has been the fate of K. Stalin's article "On Cultural Autonomy"' (f.558, op.1, d.57). According to Vera Shveitser, an old Bolshevik who met Stalin in his place of exile (see V. Shveitser, *Stalin v turukhanskoi ssylke. Vospominaniia starogo podpol'shchika* (Moscow, 1943)), the handwritten original filled two exercise-books. In 1917 Stalin asked Shveitser to track down the manuscript. During the civil war and again in 1924 he asked the same of I.P. Tovstukha. Later, when the *Sochineniia* were prepared another fruitless search was organised (f.558, op.4, d.662, 11.308f, 424).
65. F.558, op.1, d.5394.
66. F.558, op.1, d.5169. 'And how is Bauer doing? Doesn't he reply?', Stalin asked in the same letter. He was also interested to receive the addresses of Troianovskii and Bukharin.
67. F.558, op.1, d.54.
68. F.558, op.1, d.56.
69. Stalin, op cit., pp.53-4.
70. Pipes, op cit., pp.39-40; Tucker, op cit., 1974, pp.153f.
71. See Medem and Kautskii, op cit., in particular pp.58-60.
72. Bauer, op cit., p.130.
73. Haupt, Löwy and Weill, op cit., pp.60n, 307, 386.
74. Strasser, op cit., pp.15, 20, 23, 32f.
75. Perhaps Stalin derived some indirect inspiration from Pannekoek's *Klassenkampf und Nation* (Reichenberg, 1912). Pannekoek was a Dutch Social-Democrat whose ideas were close to Strasser's. Lenin read the booklet in its year of publication. (Adoratskii et al., op. cit., p.27n). In a letter to Maksim Gor'kii written between 15 and 25 February he commented that 'there exist two good S.-D. brochures on the national question: by Strasser and Pannekoek' (PSS, vol.48, p.162). Lenin may have familiarised Stalin with the contents of the German language work, which the latter could not have read himself. In the first part of his brochure the Dutch author supported Bauer's definition of nations as cultural and psychological communities of people, brought together by historical fate. But then he turned his argument unexpectedly around, noting that with the development of class struggle all national unity vanishes. The workers need only fight for one world culture of their own. Pannekoek's essay was noteworthy for the same curious inconsistency between its theoretical and its political part as Stalin's later one.
76. Stalin, op. cit., pp.53-6.
77. See 'Anarchism or Socialism?' (1906-7): *Sochineniia*, vol.1, pp.313-14.
78. Stalin, op. cit., April 1913, p.28.
79. For general accounts of Russian organicism see for instance N.O. Lossky, *History of Russian Philosophy* (London, 1952) and V.V. Zenkovsky, *A History of Russian Philosophy* (two vols) (New York/London, 1967).
80. For Danilevskii's thought see Andrzej Walicki, *The Slavophile Controversy. History of a Conservative Utopia in Nineteenth Century Russian Thought* (Oxford, 1975), pp.503-9, 513-17; and his *A History of Russian Thought from the Enlightenment to Marxism* (Stanford, CA, 1979), pp.291-7.
81. N.Ia. Danilevskii, *Rossiia i Evropa* (Moscow, 1991), pp.82, 88, 91, 95, 133, 352.
82. *Sochineniia*, vol.7, pp.17-38.
83. See 'The National Question and Leninism', in *ibid.*, vol.11, pp.336, 347-49. The letter was only published later in the *Sochineniia*. It was a reworked version of a speech Stalin made to a group of Ukrainian writers on 12 February 1929 (f.558, op.1, d.4490).

84. See for his comments on *Marxism and Questions of Linguistics*: Gustav A. Wetter, *Der dialektische Materialismus. Seine Geschichte und sein System in der Sowjetunion* (Vienna, 1958), in particular pp.231, 234, 260, 263, 382, 396. Another author to have pointed out the relevance of Stalin's 'linguistics' is Anton Donoso, 'Stalinism in Marxist Philosophy', *Studies in Soviet Thought*, vol.19, 1979, pp.113-41. Prior to the publication of *Marxism and Questions of Linguistics*, Stalin discussed the matter with an expert in this field, Arnold Chikobava, whom he also ordered to write an article of his own on the subject. See Mikhail Gorbanevskii, 'Konspekt po korifeiu. Kakoi vklad vnesli v nauku stalinskie stat'i o iazykoznanii', *Literaturnaia gazeta*, no.21, 25 May 1988, p.12.
85. I.V. Stalin, *Sochineniia*, vol.3[XVI], 1946-1953 (Stanford, CA, 1967), pp.117-18, 122.
86. *Ibid.*, p.130, 120.
87. *Ibid.*, p.134.
88. *Ibid.*, pp.116, 118, 150.
89. A. Bogdanov, *Iz psikhologii obshchestva (Stat'i 1901-1904g.)* (St Petersburg, 1904), p.50.
90. A. Bogdanov, *Empiriomonizm. Kniga III* (St Petersburg, 1906), p.6. Many monographs and articles have by now appeared on Bogdanov's philosophy. In my opinion the best is K.M. Jensen's *Beyond Marx and Mach. Aleksandr Bogdanov's Philosophy of Living Experience* (Dordrecht: Boston, MA; London, 1978). See also Wetter, *op. cit.*, pp.106-15; and Leszek Kolakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism, Its Origins, Growth and Dissolution. Vol. 2 The Golden Age* (Oxford; New York; Toronto; Melbourne; 1981), pp.424f.
91. F.558, op.3, dd.13-17. In the *Institut teorii i istorii sotsializma TsK KPSS* there is the *opis'* of Stalin's books without remarks in the margins. There are some other titles by Bogdanov, but again not of relevance in the respect discussed here.