

## NOTICE

### Warning Concerning Copyright Restrictions

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted materials.

Under certain conditions specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to furnish a photocopy or other reproduction. One of these specified conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be "*used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research.*" If a user makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excess of "fair use," that user may be liable for copyright infringement.

**New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT)** library reserves the right to refuse to accept a copying order if, in its judgment, fulfillment of the order would involve violation of copyright law.

### Fair use Guideline (Section § 107)

Notwithstanding the provisions of sections 106 and 106A, the fair use of a copyrighted work, including such use by reproduction in copies or phonorecords or by any other means specified by that section, for purposes such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship, or research, is not an infringement of copyright. In determining whether the use made of a work in any particular case is a fair use the factors to be considered shall include –

- (1) the purpose and character of the use, including whether such use is of a commercial nature or is for nonprofit educational purposes;
- (2) the nature of the copyrighted work;
- (3) the amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole; and
- (4) the effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work.

The fact that a work is unpublished shall not itself bar a finding of fair use if such finding is made upon consideration of all the above factors.

**Printing Note:** If you do not wish to print this page, then select "Pages from: first page # to: last page #" on the print dialog screen.

lence to solve its problems, to bring about the  
: I could never again raise my voice against the  
hetto without having first spoken clearly to the  
e world today – my own government.<sup>45</sup>

m X had castigated the United States as a  
ly and domestically. "There is no system,"  
t than a system that represents itself as the  
nple of democracy, and can go all over this  
to straighten out their house, and you have  
to have to use bullets if they want to cast

y in America that began in the mid-twentieth  
US Third World policies in two different  
gn policy elites the answer was to intensify  
h the Cold War, vowing to extend America's  
nome. But for many minorities the beginning  
tus and equality at home meant sympathy for  
US power for the same purposes. Though  
d never politically influential, this persistent  
of an America that concentrated on solving its  
while engaging in a dialogue with the new  
ld.

y, though, the universal Cold War became the  
s aims. It was a globalist vision that fitted the  
he United States in the late twentieth Century,  
with the character of its Communist enemy, an  
l itself as popular, modern, and international.  
a extreme answer to a question that had been at  
olicy since the late eighteenth century: in what  
ical sympathies be followed by intervention?  
old War into the Third World was defined  
re where Communism could be construed as

## Westad, Chap. 2

### 2 The empire of justice: Soviet ideology and foreign interventions

Like the United States, the Soviet state was founded on ideas and plans for the betterment of humanity, rather than on concepts of identity and nation. Both were envisaged by their founders to be grand experiments, on the success of which the future of humankind depended. As states, both were universalist in their approaches to the world and the majority of their leaders believed that friends or enemies on the international stage were defined by proximity or nonproximity to the specific ideological premises on which each of these Powers had been founded. During the Cold War both Soviet and American leaders came to define the potential for such proximity by any country's distance from the other superpower in its foreign policy and domestic political agenda.

In historical terms, much of the twentieth century can be seen as a continuous attempt by other states to socialize Russia and America into forms of international interaction based on principles of sovereignty.

In these efforts there were some successes, but many failures. The successes have mainly been connected to crises within the international system that could directly threaten Moscow or Washington themselves. For the United States, as we have seen, the Great Depression, the Second World War, and the end of the Vietnam War all led to a greater degree of accommodation to the interests of other states. For Russia, the period between the 1905 and 1917 revolutions, the aftermath of the German attack in 1941, and the Gorbachev-Yeltsin era signaled such accommodation. But the periods in which both powers have been poised to intervene unilaterally *against* the gradually developing norms of international interaction have been much more prevalent. Given the form that American and – at least during its Soviet period – Russian policy took during the twentieth century, it is reasonable to assume that the two projects – one of state sovereignty and another of global ideological predominance – cannot be reconciled, even though both Cold War superpowers at least in form came to accept alliances and international organizations.

While this chapter will argue that most of the interventionist impulses in Soviet foreign policy were unique to that specific form of a Russian state, the Communists when taking power in Russia of course became successors to an old expansionist empire, in much the same way as the American revolutionaries developed out of the British empire. In both cases the ideologies that justified intervention had developed from concerns that were formed in earlier centuries, under different regimes. For the Russian Communists, this meant that not only did they inherit a multicultural space in which Russian was spoken by less than half the population, but they also took over a state in which the tsars for at least two generations had attempted a policy of Russification and modernization of their non-Russian subjects. Many Russians in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, including some who became Communists, believed that their country had been endowed with a special destiny to clear the Asian wilderness and civilize the tribes of the East.

In the first decade of the twentieth century Vladimir Illich Ulianov – also known as Lenin – created a party that believed in a form of Marxist modernity that would drive away backwardness from European Russia and set the Asian peoples of the empire on the path to modern development. The Bolsheviks – later known as the All-Russia Communist Party and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union – placed the liberation of the productive potential of the people at the core of the political process. To Lenin, as a Marxist, that liberation meant their transformation from peasants to modern workers, but without the oppression that capitalist systems had inflicted on the industrial proletariat in other European countries. The small Russian proletariat could, the Bolsheviks believed, free itself from the capitalist stage of development if led by a revolutionary vanguard – the Communist Party. The party represented the proletariat and would direct Russia's historical development from a peasant society to a society of industrial workers.

While US and Soviet ideologies had much in common in terms of background and project, what separated them were their distinctive definitions of what modernity meant. While most Americans celebrated the market, the Soviet elites denied it. Even while realizing that the market was the mechanism on which most of the expansion of Europe had been based, Lenin's followers believed that it was in the process of being superseded by class-based collective action in favor of equality and justice. Modernity came in two stages: a capitalist form and a communal form, reflecting two revolutions – that of capital and productivity, and that of democratization and the social advancement of the underprivileged. Communism was the higher stage of modernity, and it had been given to Russian workers to lead the way toward it.

### The Russian empire and its revolution

After the fall of the Soviet Union there was a view that Russia had been a normal Communist experiment (and that it would end of Communism). The first part of that view was the Russian empire, until the very end of its existence in common with the other main European state structure. The prerevolutionary Russian state was intent on overcoming what threatened Russia from the continent through recreating new and better circumstances. What the Empire was in reality, it was argued by many, a virgin genuine and unpolluted Christian civilization would become the redeemer of a decadent Europe. Meanwhile, Russia remained an autocracy. The elite's legitimacy was built on continuous expansion, especially, in the nineteenth century, territorial expansion.

Russian territorial expansion had begun in earnest in the early eighteenth century. Peter the Great. After the Napoleonic War Russia's Western neighbors was at an end, and its interest increasingly toward the Caucasus, Siberia, and the nineteenth century less than half of the Russian population and only around two-thirds were around three-quarters of what had been described as around seventy major ethnic groups from the Norwegian to the Korean borders. The 19th century these groups outside European Russia were in the Asian and the Caucasus regions. Although Asia had taken place by force, the enormous size and periphery and the lack of qualified imperial administration in most places the empire at first had to administer on behalf of St. Peter's Crown had even subsidized Islamic proselytizing and heathen parts of the empire.

Toward the middle of the nineteenth century Russian uniqueness came together with imperialism. To create a much more self-confident imperialism of distant regions began coming under pressure to push to conquer all of the Caucasus got underway. It was declared that the region would "be connected

ie that most of the interventionist impulses unique to that specific form of a Russian taking power in Russia of course became unist empire, in much the same way as the developed out of the British empire. In both centuries, under different regimes. For this meant that not only did they inherit a Russian was spoken by less than half the over a state in which the tsars for at least ed a policy of Russification and moderniza- jects. Many Russians in the late nineteenth s, including some who became Communists, had been endowed with a special destiny to and civilize the tribes of the East.

twentieth century Vladimir Illich Ulianov – ed a party that believed in a form of Marxist away backwardness from European Russia f the empire on the path to modern develop- er known as the All-Russia Communist Party of the Soviet Union – placed the liberation of the people at the core of the political process. at liberation meant their transformation from rs, but without the oppression that capitalist the industrial proletariat in other European ian proletariat could, the Bolsheviks believed, at stage of development if led by a revolutionary st Party. The party represented the proletariat historical development from a peasant society workers.

ideologies had much in common in terms of what separated them were their distinctive city meant. While most Americans celebrated lites denied it. Even while realizing that the sm on which most of the expansion of Europe followers believed that it was in the process of s-based collective action in favor of equality and in two stages: a capitalist form and a communal olutions – that of capital and productivity, and and the social advancement of the underprivi- the higher stage of modernity, and it had been s to lead the way toward it.

## The Russian empire and its revolutions

After the fall of the Soviet Union there was – for a time – a commonly held view that Russia had been a normal European state before the Communist experiment (and that it would return to being one after the end of Communism). The first part of that judgment is certainly untrue. The Russian empire, until the very end of its development, had very little in common with the other main European powers in terms of ideology or state structure. The prerevolutionary Russian elite of the nineteenth century was intent on overcoming what they saw as an age-old exclusion of Russia from the continent through recreating European culture under new and better circumstances. What the Europeans saw as backwardness was in reality, it was argued by many, a virgin opportunity to create a more genuine and unpolluted Christian civilization in the east, which, in time, would become the redeemer of a decadent and declining continent. Meanwhile, Russia remained an autocratic state, in which much of the elite's legitimacy was built on continuous continental territorial expansion, especially, in the nineteenth century, towards the east and the south.

Russian territorial expansion had begun in the sixteenth century and had gone into high gear in the early eighteenth century during the reign of Peter the Great. After the Napoleonic Wars Russia's incorporation of its Western neighbors was at an end, and its imperialist designs were turned increasingly toward the Caucasus, Siberia, and Central Asia. By the end of the nineteenth century less than half the empire's subjects were Russians and only around two-thirds were Slavs. The rest, inhabiting around three-quarters of what had been declared Russian territory, consisted of around seventy major ethnic groups, stretching from the Norwegian to the Korean borders. The largest and best organized of these groups outside European Russia were the Muslims of the Central Asian and the Caucasus regions. Although most of the early conquest in Asia had taken place by force, the enormous distances between center and periphery and the lack of qualified imperial administrators had meant that in most places the empire at first had been content with using local elites to administer on behalf of St. Petersburg. In some regions the Crown had even subsidized Islamic proselytizing as a means of "civilizing" heathen parts of the empire.

Toward the middle of the nineteenth century, however, as concepts of Russian uniqueness came together with improved communications to create a much more self-confident imperial elite, the cultural autonomy of distant regions began coming under pressure. In the 1830s, as the final push to conquer all of the Caucasus got under way, the Imperial Council declared that the region would "be connected to Russia as one limb on the

same body, and the peoples who live there will be made to speak, think and feel Russian."<sup>1</sup> Such a mission meant that expansion became a necessary part of the imperial state, even for those who wanted reform at home. As the liberal foreign minister Aleksandr Gorchakov framed the dilemma in 1864: "The Russian situation in Central Asia is similar to that of all civilized states that come into contact with half-wild, unsettled peoples who lack a stable social organization. In such cases, both security and trade interests always demand that the civilized state exercise a certain authority over those of its neighbors that create disturbances because of their wild and impetuous habits." But the duties of civilized government were then extended, according to Gorchakov, because the effects of that "authority" meant that the half-wilds would change their behavior and gradually become more civilized, a process which in turn exposed them to raids by their neighbors. "And so a state must decide: either to give up this constant task and give its outer borders over to chaos ... or to penetrate ever further into the wild countries." When the latter road is chosen, Gorchakov notes, "it is very difficult to stop ever again."<sup>2</sup>

Faced with resistance to the project of extending civilization, Russia's wars in Asia in the mid-nineteenth century turned genocidal. In the Caucasus large numbers of Muslim noncombatants were killed or driven into exile, their villages and fields taken over by Slav migrants. By the 1860s the empire faced a question that the United States had to deal with in the very same generation: which peoples could be integrated into the state and which could only be controlled or, at worst, exterminated? Because of the way it saw its own mission, the Russian elite's main answer was a massive Russification campaign, which sought to give as many as possible of the empire's inhabitants the opportunity to become Russian and thereby assist in the spreading of civilization. The best way of convincing others of Russian superiority was through letting them take part in the spiritual and material project of extending the empire. "The Russian conquest of Turkestan brought about an immense alleviation in the lot of the common man," Count Konstantin von der Pahlen argued in the early twentieth century, when on an inspection tour of the immense areas over which the empire had taken control.<sup>3</sup> The count believed that seeing the advantages of Russian rule would help Muslims become a part of the imperial project and thereby save themselves from the extermination that noncompliance would lead to.

Increasingly, in the nineteenth century, the project of building the world's largest contiguous state became linked with the debate over reform at home. This debate often centered on the fate of the Russian peasants, most of whom up to Alexander II's Edict of Emancipation in 1861 were held as serfs. Russian serfs had more in common with

nineteenth-century American slaves. Indeed, it makes sense to speak of the Lieven does, as a form of inner color property rights and bound to provide the serfs by the mid-nineteenth century's workforce a modern capitalist economy. Reforms saw the traditions of the side as a barrier against creating a modern market as one means of redemption. Exiled to Siberia for revolutionary activi

is in all respects progressive, that it is break scale hand production which has been immo increasing the productivity of social labour, a higher living standards for the working man; which convert this possibility into a necessity proletarian" lost in the "backwoods," settled proletarian, and by converting Asiatic forms oped bondage and diverse forms of personal labour.

"The European manner of thought and the effective utilisation of machines than young Lenin added.<sup>5</sup>

By the late nineteenth century members of the economic elite were charging that political take the project of reforming the state thereby let down all the "new" peoples emancipated serfs. While the revolution distinct and rather isolated mind. "Westernizers" and "Slavophiles" show the empire had lost its direction. Both groups purpose was to fulfill its duty toward non saw salvation in selective learning from Russia's future in an idealized image of capitalism as a necessary evil, most in between the strengthening of the state development of free markets. As Russia's diction became more acute and create empire was being let down by its traditio

The response to the perceived crisis – the empire lost its wars of 1904–05. Westernizers and Slavophiles in a recon mission. While believing in the need to

who live there will be made to speak, think mission meant that expansion became a state, even for those who wanted reform. Minister Aleksandr Gorchakov framed the situation in Central Asia is similar to that of a state in contact with half-wild, unsettled, and without any administrative organization. In such cases, both security and order demand that the civilized state exercise a policy of its neighbors that create disturbances and perpetuate habits." But the duties of civilized states, according to Gorchakov, because the mission meant that the half-wilds would change their ways to become more civilized, a process which in turn would benefit their neighbors. "And so a state must decide: either to give its outer borders over to chaos ... or to conquer the wild countries." When the latter road is chosen, it is very difficult to stop ever again."<sup>2</sup>

In the project of extending civilization, Russia's nineteenth century turned genocidal. In the Caucasus, Muslim noncombatants were killed or driven from fields taken over by Slav migrants. By the mid-nineteenth century, the question that the United States had to deal with was: which peoples could be integrated into the empire, which could be controlled or, at worst, exterminated? In its own mission, the Russian elite's main answer was a campaign, which sought to give as many as possible of its inhabitants the opportunity to become Russian subjects by spreading of civilization. The best way of conquering was through letting them take part in the project of extending the empire. "The Russian government sought about an immense alleviation in the lot of the natives," Konstantin von der Pahlen argued in the early 1860s on an inspection tour of the immense areas over which he had control.<sup>3</sup> The count believed that seeing the light would help Muslims become a part of the empire, thereby save themselves from the extermination that awaited them.

In the nineteenth century, the project of building the Russian state became linked with the debate over the empire. The debate often centered on the fate of the Russian subject up to Alexander II's Edict of Emancipation in 1861. Russian serfs had more in common with

nineteenth-century American slaves than with European peasants; indeed, it makes sense to speak of them, as the historian Dominic Lieven does, as a form of inner colony within the empire.<sup>4</sup> Without property rights and bound to provide service for the *barin*, or master, the serfs by the mid-nineteenth century stood in the way of developing the workforce a modern capitalist economy needed. But even after emancipation, reformers saw the traditions of the "backward" Russian countryside as a barrier against creating a modern state. Some hailed the capitalist market as one means of redemption. The market, Lenin wrote while exiled to Siberia for revolutionary activities in 1897,

is in all respects progressive, that it is breaking down routine, disunited, small-scale hand production which has been immobile and stagnant for ages; that it is increasing the productivity of social labour, and thereby creating the possibility of higher living standards for the working man; that it is also creating the conditions which convert this possibility into a necessity – namely, by converting the "settled proletarian" lost in the "backwoods," settled physically and morally, into a mobile proletarian, and by converting Asiatic forms of labour, with their infinitely developed bondage and diverse forms of personal dependence, into European forms of labour.

"The European manner of thought and feeling is no less necessary ... for the effective utilisation of machines than steam, coal, techniques," the young Lenin added.<sup>5</sup>

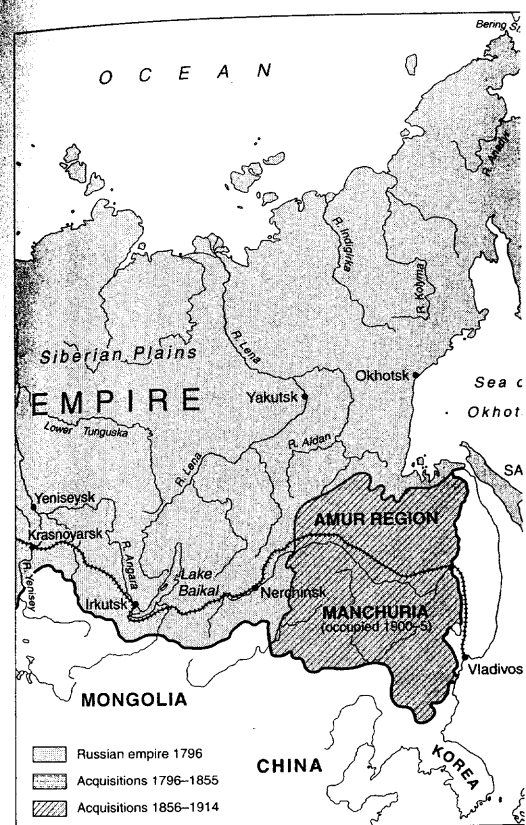
By the late nineteenth century members of the Russian intellectual and economic elite were charging that political and military leaders did not take the project of reforming the state seriously enough, and that they thereby let down all the "new" peoples in the empire, be they Asians or emancipated serfs. While the revolutionaries, such as Lenin, were a distinct and rather isolated minority, the debate between "Westernizers" and "Slavophiles" showed a widespread sense that the empire had lost its direction. Both groups believed that part of Russia's purpose was to fulfill its duty toward non-European peoples, but the first saw salvation in selective learning from the West, while the latter saw Russia's future in an idealized image of its past. While some accepted capitalism as a necessary evil, most increasingly saw a contradiction between the strengthening of the state, which they sought, and the development of free markets. As Russia began to industrialize this contradiction became more acute and created a widespread sense that the empire was being let down by its traditional elites.<sup>6</sup>

The response to the perceived crisis – which was underway well before the empire lost its wars of 1904–05 and 1914–17 – united many Westernizers and Slavophiles in a reconstructed faith in Russia's special mission. While believing in the need to create a new Russia that was



Map 2 The Russian empire in 1914.

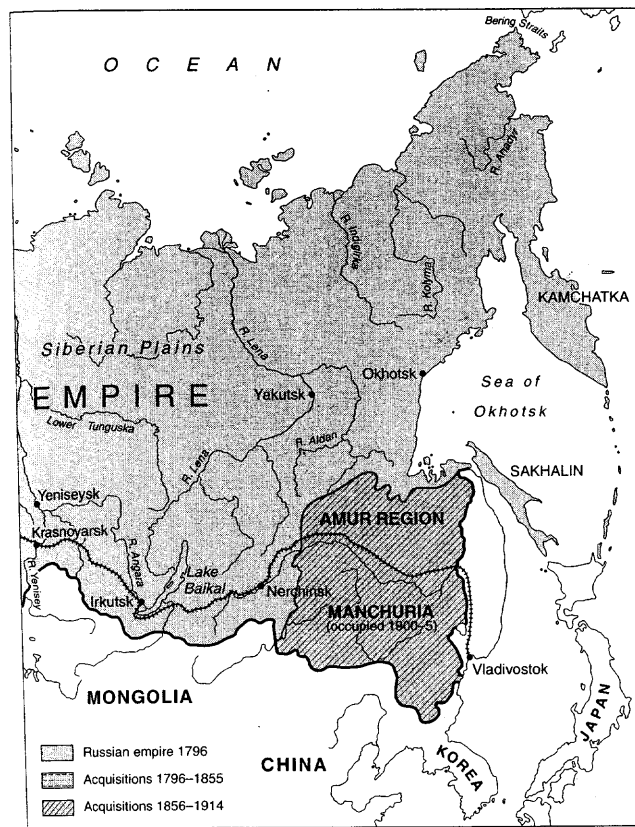
representative of its real elite – the intelligentsia – many politicians and writers underlined the fact that their country had to put technology and progress into the service of the people and thereby help create a more just social system. A significant group of reformers turned toward anticapitalism, claiming, as did the philosopher Nikolai Berdiaev, that “to be a bourgeois is ... to be a slave of matter and an enemy of eternity. The perfected European and American civilizations gave rise to the industrial-capitalist system, which represents not only a mighty economic development but the spiritual phenomenon of the annihilation of spirituality.”<sup>7</sup> No wonder that Sergei Bulgakov, a Russian Marxist later turned Orthodox priest, saw the Russian intellectual as defined by his “other-worldliness, his eschatological dream about ... a coming empire of justice.”<sup>8</sup>



What gave the reformist vision of the empire politics – and eventually drove its more extreme versions – were the wars of expansion that the tradition of the beginning of the twentieth century. Already in the Caucasus had taken up one-sixth of the world's population confronted with Japanese and German expansion. The project simply did not have enough resources to compete. Between 1905 and 1917 legitimacy began shifting to those who had a more inclusive version of the Russian mission to the East. The Bolsheviks – a revolutionary party that mixed democracy with elitist achievement, and that promised the future reordering of the world.

It would be unfair on Lenin's party to see its origins as observers have – as being a direct continuation





in empire in 1914.

lite – the intelligentsia – many politicians and  
t that their country had to put technology and  
f the people and thereby help create a more just  
it group of reformers turned toward anticapit-  
ie philosopher Nikolai Berdiaev, that “to be a  
slave of matter and an enemy of eternity. The  
American civilizations gave rise to the industrial-  
epresents not only a mighty economic develop-  
enomenon of the annihilation of spirituality.”<sup>7</sup>  
i Bulgakov, a Russian Marxist later turned  
Russian intellectual as defined by his “other-  
logical dream about ... a coming empire of

What gave the reformist vision of the empire’s role its chance in Russian politics – and eventually drove its more extreme elements to the forefront – were the wars of expansion that the traditional elites had begun losing by the beginning of the twentieth century. Already in the late 1850s the wars in the Caucasus had taken up one-sixth of the state income. When confronted with Japanese and German expansionism, the Russian imperial project simply did not have enough readily available resources to compete. Between 1905 and 1917 legitimacy in the political debates began shifting to those who had a more representative and a more inclusive version of the Russian mission to offer. Among these stood the Bolsheviks – a revolutionary party that mixed visions of radical democracy with elitist achievement, and that promised Russians a key role in the future reordering of the world.

It would be unfair on Lenin’s party to see its policies – as many Western observers have – as being a direct continuation of Russian expansionist



ideology: eternal Russia disguised as proletarian internationalism. Much of the party's nationalist rhetoric – before the revolution and after – was indeed merely propaganda, and was misleading in terms of the party's real internationalist aims. Lenin had no time for Berdiaev's spiritualist Russian exceptionalism; "Marxism," Lenin said, "is materialism. As such, it is relentlessly hostile to religion."<sup>9</sup> The leader of the Bolsheviks – constituted as a separate party from 1912 – also stressed their enmity toward Russification and the oppression of minorities: "Complete equality of rights for all nations; the right of nations to self-determination; the unity of the workers of all nations" were among the slogans Lenin put forward on the eve of the outbreak of World War I, the war that would break the back of the Russian empire and give the well-organized Bolsheviks their chance to take power through a coup in November 1917. But Lenin also warned:

In this situation, the proletariat of Russia is faced with a twofold or, rather, a two-sided task: to combat nationalism of every kind, above all, Great-Russian nationalism; to recognise, not only fully equal rights for all nations in general, but also equality of rights as regards polity, i.e., the right of nations to self-determination, to secession. And at the same time, it is their task, in the interests of a successful struggle against all and every kind of nationalism among all nations, to preserve the unity of the proletarian struggle and the proletarian organisations, amalgamating these organisations into a close-knit international association, despite bourgeois strivings for national exclusiveness.<sup>10</sup>

The Bolsheviks shared with the elites within the Russian empire a conviction that their country would eventually become the center of a new world civilization that would be both modern and just. Lenin believed that having been the first country that experienced a socialist revolution, Russia could do much to help revolutionaries in other countries – it could function as a base area and rear guard for the revolutions in the more advanced countries of Europe, which, Lenin believed, would follow soon. But in spite of the country's social and technological backwardness, Lenin believed that the organization of its proletariat through the Communist Party had given Russia the edge – and that it could teach the lessons of the October Revolution to other proletarian parties. "To wait until the working classes carry out a revolution on an international scale means that everyone will remain suspended in mid-air," Lenin said in May 1918.<sup>11</sup> The very fact that the main imperialist powers had intervened against the new Soviet state in the civil war that followed the October Revolution proved to the Bolsheviks how crucial their section of the front against imperialism was.

Having taken power in the main cities and begun – however slowly – to extend their territory through civil war and to construct their own state,

The empire of justice: Soviet ideol



Fig. 1 Bolshevik soldiers in 1917: inspired many Third World leaders

the Bolsheviks soon found themselves threatened by the forces of the empire but also of its empire. In the immediate wake of the revolution, the major nationalities within the empire were to be left to their own administrations. But whenever they came into conflict with those of the strategy of the revolution, the latter representing the needs not only of the empire but also worldwide – the Communist Party of the Ukraine, Lenin told its parliament in December 1917, that "even if the recognition as the uncontested organ of the revolution, the independent bourgeois Ukrainian republic to declare war on it without any hesitation would be an unexampled betrayal of the revolution and its enemies of the national independence and of the work of the revolution." In 1921 – having for all practical purposes been a Communist colony where a socialist regime had been established a few years earlier. Josif Vissarionovich Stalin, a veteran Georgian Bolshevik calling himself the great leader – declared that the form of the revolution had been "a vehicle of bourgeois influence."

used as proletarian internationalism. Much more – before the revolution and after – was and was misleading in terms of the party's enin had no time for Berdiaev's spiritualist Marxism," Lenin said, "is materialism. As to religion."<sup>9</sup> The leader of the Bolsheviks – party from 1912 – also stressed their enmity to oppression of minorities: "Complete equality of nations to self-determination; the nations" were among the slogans Lenin put outbreak of World War I, the war that would destroy the Russian empire and give the well-organized Bolsheviks the power through a coup in November 1917:

Russia is faced with a twofold or, rather, a twofoldism of every kind, above all, Great-Russian nationalism, equal rights for all nations in general, but also equality, i.e., the right of nations to self-determination. At the same time, it is their task, in the interests of a successful revolution, to preserve a kind of nationalism among all nations, to preserve the struggle and the proletarian organisations, amalgamated into a close-knit international association, despite all exclusiveness.<sup>10</sup>

with the elites within the Russian empire a country would eventually become the center of a world that would be both modern and just. Lenin, the first country that experienced a socialist revolution, so much to help revolutionaries in other countries – a base area and rear guard for the revolutions in other parts of Europe, which, Lenin believed, would be the country's social and technological backbone – that the organization of its proletariat through the revolution given Russia the edge – and that it could teach the Russian Revolution to other proletarian parties. "To carry out a revolution on an international scale will remain suspended in mid-air," Lenin said. The fact that the main imperialist powers had created the Soviet state in the civil war that followed the Russian Revolution led the Bolsheviks how crucial their section of the world was.

the main cities and begun – however slowly – to carry out the civil war and to construct their own state,

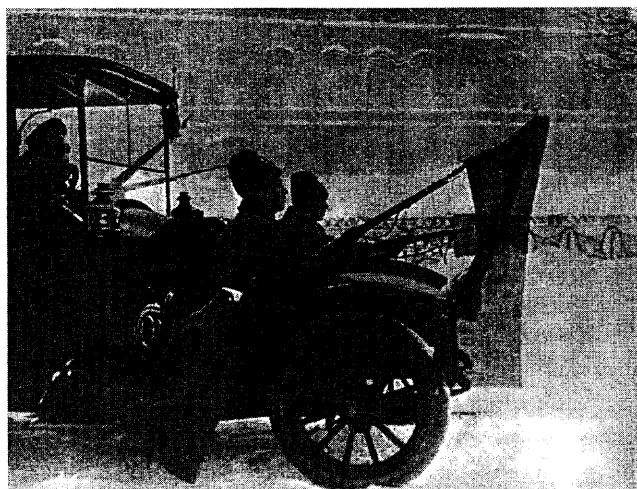


Fig. 1 Bolshevik soldiers in 1917: the Russian revolution inspired many Third World leaders.

the Bolsheviks soon found themselves the inheritors not only of Russia, but also of its empire. In the immediate wake of the 1917 revolution all of the major nationalities within the empire had broken away to set up their own administrations. But whenever the principles of national sovereignty came into conflict with those of the strategic needs of the new Soviet state – the latter representing the needs not only of proletarians within Russia but also worldwide – the Communist Party opted for the latter. In the case of the Ukraine, Lenin told its parliament (Rada) in an ultimatum as early as December 1917, that "even if the Rada had received full formal recognition as the uncontested organ of supreme state power of an independent bourgeois Ukrainian republic, we would have been forced to declare war on it without any hesitation, because of its attitude of unexampled betrayal of the revolution and support of ... the bitterest enemies of the national independence of the peoples of Russia, the enemies of Soviet power and of the working and exploited masses."<sup>12</sup> In 1921 – having for all practical purposes won the civil war – the Communists even invaded and occupied Georgia, a former Russian colony where a socialist regime had come to power through its own revolution a few years earlier. Josif Vissarionovich Dzhugashvili – a veteran Georgian Bolshevik calling himself "Stalin" after the pattern of the great leader – declared that the former socialist regime in Tblisi had been "a vehicle of bourgeois influence on the proletariat" and that

"in view of the utter hostility of the capitalist states toward the Soviet countries, the totally isolated existence of Soviet Georgia, or of any other Soviet country, is inconceivable both from the military and from the economic point of view. The mutual economic and military support of the Soviet states is a condition without which the development of these states is inconceivable."<sup>13</sup>

As the new Soviet Commissar for Nationalities, Stalin exerted a key influence on Communist policy toward the non-Russian peoples within the "Red Empire." Himself a Russified Georgian, he strongly believed that modernity could only come to the more backward peoples within the union through the extension of the influence of the Russian working class. A crude but dedicated Marxist, Stalin saw development as a set of hierarchies, fashioned throughout by the greater or shorter distance from the existence of a class-conscious proletariat directed by a Communist Party. Similar to some of the Russian imperialists of the nineteenth century, he felt that Russia, being on the periphery of Europe, was in a better position to work with non-European peoples than were other advanced nations. As Lenin lay dying in 1922, even he – who had sanctioned the forced integration into the Soviet Union of the former colonies and the brutal crushing of their nationalist leaderships – sensed that Stalin's centralism might conflict with the party's Marxist creed. "Stalin's haste and his infatuation with pure administration," Lenin wrote in a comment on the Sovietization of Georgia, could hinder the processes of natural social development toward socialism not only in the colonies, but also within Russia itself. "The infinitesimal percentage of Soviet and Sovietized workers will drown in that tide of chauvinistic Great-Russian riffraff like a fly in milk," the leader predicted with characteristic hyperbole.<sup>14</sup>

In the short term, however, the many young Russian Bolsheviks who set out to remake the Asian parts of the new Soviet Union proved their founding father wrong. They were driven not so much by chauvinism as by complete dedication to the Communist ideals of social justice and technological development. Their message was different from that of the former colonial administrators in stressing that colonized peoples had rights, and that the most downtrodden of them – those who had been exploited both by the colonial authorities and by the local elites – were the natural allies of the new regime. Only through profound social change – stimulated by Russia but carried out by the minorities themselves – could their peoples become little wheels in the great machine that would produce Soviet socialism. As would happen later elsewhere in the Third World, the Communist recipe for change was certain to split whole societies apart – on the one hand, a small group of committed local

The empire of justice: Soviet ideal

followers wanted to move their country toward a socialist goal, and, on the other, large groups whose loyalties lay with their communities or with the Soviet Union none of these could be tolerated. Those who opposed the Communists – anarchists, nationalists, and others – were driven into exile, imprisoned, or executed. It is hard to learn to keep their doubts to themselves. In Central Asia did armed resistance continue against the Bolsheviks called *Basmachi* (bandits). Their reputation anti-Soviet fighters in Afghanistan honor two generations later.<sup>15</sup>

### The Comintern and the Third World

It was not only inside the Soviet Union that in order to fulfill its promise of social justice, its followers saw a sharp distinction in terms of what had been the Russian empire and what was to be. Lenin the main purpose of his revolution was for other revolutions to come; first, in the East and then, as their social conditions matured, in the West. In order to assist and promote this, in 1919 set up the Communist International organization headquartered in Moscow. Its members were invited as members. Lenin's aim was to help "Bolshevize" the main socialist parties. The result followed – in their eagerness, Lenin's supporters abroad found themselves excluded from the mainstream organizations. Communist parties, or, as the Soviets liked to call them, chapters of the Comintern.

From its nineteenth-century origins, the analysis and predictions on Europe and Asia were of interest in those countries where it had been established as the main vehicle of change. In Russia, Karl Marx had seen the path of development, in which the existence of a proletariat was the key distinguishing factor – those countries would also be the first to advance toward socialism that grew directly out of the specific form of European and American workers lived against. Asia and Africa, Marx conceded

y of the capitalist states toward the Soviet existence of Soviet Georgia, or of any other able both from the military and from the mutual economic and military support of on without which the development of these

issar for Nationalities, Stalin exerted a key policy toward the non-Russian peoples within a Russified Georgian, he strongly believed me to the more backward peoples within the of the influence of the Russian working class. arxist, Stalin saw development as a set of oughout by the greater or shorter distance class-conscious proletariat directed by a to some of the Russian imperialists of the It that Russia, being on the periphery of osition to work with non-European peoples ations. As Lenin lay dying in 1922, even he – rced integration into the Soviet Union of the utal crushing of their nationalist leaderships – dsm might conflict with the party's Marxist l his infatuation with pure administration," on the Sovietization of Georgia, could hinder cial development toward socialism not only in in Russia itself. "The infinitesimal percentage vorkers will drown in that tide of chauvinistic a fly in milk," the leader predicted with char-

ever, the many young Russian Bolsheviks who an parts of the new Soviet Union proved their hey were driven not so much by chauvinism as to the Communist ideals of social justice and at. Their message was different from that of the rators in stressing that colonized peoples had t downtrodden of them – those who had been onial authorities and by the local elites – were the regime. Only through profound social change – carried out by the minorities themselves – could ple wheels in the great machine that would pro- As would happen later elsewhere in the Third : recipe for change was certain to split whole : one hand, a small group of committed local

followers wanted to move their countries rapidly toward the common goal, and, on the other, large groups of waverers or resisters whose loyalties lay with their communities or with other ideals. In the Soviet Union none of these could be tolerated. By the mid-1920s all of those who opposed the Communists – anarchists, left-socialists, liberals, tsarists – were driven into exile, imprisoned, or executed, while the waverers had learnt to keep their doubts to themselves. Only among the Muslims of Central Asia did armed resistance continue into the 1930s, in groups that the Bolsheviks called *Basmachi* (bandits), and whose name and ferocious reputation anti-Soviet fighters in Afghanistan would take up as badges of honor two generations later.<sup>15</sup>

### The Comintern and the Third World

It was not only inside the Soviet Union that Communism had to expand in order to fulfill its promise of social justice for all. Very few of Lenin's followers saw a sharp distinction in terms of political activity between what had been the Russian empire and countries outside it – indeed, to Lenin the main purpose of his revolution had been to prepare the ground for other revolutions to come; first, in the developed capitalist countries of Europe and then, as their social conditions allowed for it, in the colonial territories. In order to assist and promote such revolutions the Bolsheviks in 1919 set up the Communist International, or Comintern, a world-wide organization headquartered in Moscow, to which all workers' parties were invited as members. Lenin's aim for the Comintern was also to help "Bolshevize" the main socialist parties, but in most cases the opposite result followed – in their eagerness to join the new International, Lenin's supporters abroad found themselves marginalized and often excluded from the mainstream organizations and forced to set up new Communist parties, or, as the Soviets liked to think of them, new local chapters of the Comintern.

From its nineteenth-century origins Marxism had concentrated its analysis and predictions on Europe and America, and had had little time for or interest in those countries in which capitalism had not yet been established as the main vehicle of exploitation. Like his later adherents in Russia, Karl Marx had seen the world as organized in a hierarchy of development, in which the existence of an industrial working class was the key distinguishing factor – those countries that had a proletariat would also be the first to advance toward socialism, through a process that grew directly out of the specific forms of capitalist exploitation that European and American workers lived within and, ultimately, rebelled against. Asia and Africa, Marx conceded, had in the past gone through a

different development from Europe – from an historical perspective, the journey of these continents toward capitalism had only just begun. What Marx called the Asiatic mode of production was distinguished by isolated peasant communities vaguely connected to a despotic and inefficient state – a social system that forced people into an “undignified, stagnatory, and vegetative life.” Under these circumstances imperialism was an agent for progress, in spite of Marx’s sympathy with its victims. “England,” he concluded as Britain was crushing the Indian Mutiny in 1853, “has a double mission in India: one destructive, the other regenerating – the annihilation of old Asiatic society, and the laying of the material foundations of Western society in Asia.”<sup>16</sup>

As a profoundly unorthodox Marxist, Lenin’s thinking – especially toward the end of his life – had begun awarding a much broader tactical role to Marx’s “semibarbarian societies.” In his key work *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*, written directly before the 1917 revolution, Lenin argued that the intense conflict between European states over colonial possessions in the late nineteenth century had changed capitalism as a system and advanced its decay.

To the numerous “old” motives of colonial policy, finance capital has added the struggle for the sources of raw materials, for the export of capital, for spheres of influence, i.e., for spheres for profitable deals, concessions, monopoly profits and so on, economic territory in general. When the colonies of the European powers, for instance, comprised only one-tenth of the territory of Africa (as was the case in 1876), colonial policy was able to develop – by methods other than those of monopoly – by the “free grabbing” of territories, so to speak. But when nine-tenths of Africa had been seized (by 1900), when the whole world had been divided up, there was inevitably ushered in the era of monopoly possession of colonies and, consequently, of particularly intense struggle for the division and the redivision of the world.<sup>17</sup>

The intensity of capitalist imperial rivalries gave new possibilities and new significance to the anti-imperialist struggle of people in the Third World, according to Lenin, especially after the European revolutions that he had predicted after World War I had failed to materialize. While never openly contradicting Marx’s belief in stages of development, Lenin thought that the Russian revolution had shown that some of these stages could be very brief indeed, and began bringing Third World socialists to Moscow already in the immediate aftermath of the 1917 Communist coup. In November 1919, in a speech filled with missionary exhortations, Lenin told one such gathering that their “task is to arouse the working masses to revolutionary activity, to independent action and to organization, regardless of the level they have reached; to translate the true Communist doctrine, which was intended for the Communists of the

more advanced countries, into the language of the masses. Years later Lenin had concluded, in desperation, that Western civilization now largely depends on the East into political activities.”<sup>19</sup>

The first opportunity the Bolsheviks got outside their own borders was in Mongolia, where the government after 1911. A small group of revolutionaries, having come into contact with Bolsheviks during the Russian civil war, began seeing China through the lens of both independence and modernity, and there they were escaping Mongolia’s nomadic and Buddhist past. When Mongol Bolshevik soldiers occupied Ulaanbaatar, the living Buddha, and made it the capital of a new Republic, Mongolia became a testing ground for Soviet policy in the Third World: methods of education, and antireligious propaganda that had been used in other countries on other continents were first introduced in Mongolia, who ran the country on behalf of the young Soviet advisers were in a hurry, not that Mongolia was a drain on scarce resources. A representative instructed the leaders in Ulaanbaatar

Within ten years we must have built up socialism in Mongolia. The instructions ... to completely end the importation of foreign goods is urgently required to develop agriculture. It is necessary to develop a procurement plan. As the external situation of Mongolia is very serious, it is necessary to kill, arrest, and imprison feudal lamas and

The Comintern was to be the vehicle through which the revolution should set off rebellions against colonialism. The Third World who opposed foreign domination had been a signal event: not only did the Bolsheviks state of their own that did away with colonial domination, but they also promised to support other countries that had the same aim. And most important, in the next chapter – the Communists had both a new model and a pattern for a new state at the same time. The image of the October Revolution that propagandists spread worldwide was one that intellectuals found immensely attractive as a new model. No wonder, then, that by the early 1920s had been set up in most of the key states in

Europe – from an historical perspective, the upward capitalism had only just begun. What of production was distinguished by isolated and disconnected people into an “undignified, stagnatory, these circumstances imperialism was an agent of its sympathy with its victims.” “England,” he was ushering the Indian Mutiny in 1853, “has a destructive, the other regenerating – the society, and the laying of the material foundation.”<sup>16</sup>

Orthodox Marxist, Lenin’s thinking – especially had begun awarding a much broader tactical role in societies.” In his key work *Imperialism: The written* directly before the 1917 revolution, “the conflict between European states over the late nineteenth century had changed capitalism’s decay.

As of colonial policy, finance capital has added the materials, for the export of capital, for spheres of profitable deals, concessions, monopoly profits and general. When the colonies of the European powers, one-tenth of the territory of Africa (as was the case in the late nineteenth century – by methods other than those of “grabbing” of territories, so to speak. But when nationalized (by 1900), when the whole world had been ushered in the era of monopoly possession of particularly intense struggle for the division and

As imperial rivalries gave new possibilities and anti-imperialist struggle of people in the Third World, especially after the European revolutions that World War I had failed to materialize. While never Marx’s belief in stages of development, Lenin’s revolution had shown that some of these stages had begun bringing Third World socialists to the immediate aftermath of the 1917 Communist revolution, in a speech filled with missionary exhortations, urging that their “task is to arouse the working class to independent action and to organize at the level they have reached; to translate the true meaning which was intended for the Communists of the

more advanced countries, into the language of every people.”<sup>18</sup> Two years later Lenin had concluded, in desperation, that “the destiny of all Western civilization now largely depends on drawing the masses of the East into political activities.”<sup>19</sup>

The first opportunity the Bolsheviks got to implement their credo outside their own borders was in Mongolia, where China had lost control of the government after 1911. A small group of Mongolian revolutionaries, having come into contact with Bolsheviks who had fled there during the Russian civil war, began seeing Communism as incorporating both independence and modernity, and therefore as an ideal vehicle for escaping Mongolia’s nomadic and Buddhist past. In 1921 Russian and Mongol Bolshevik soldiers occupied Urga, the winter quarters of the last living Buddha, and made it the capital of a Mongolian People’s Republic under the name of Ulaanbaatar (Red Hero). As the first People’s Republic, Mongolia became a testing ground for much of Communist policy in the Third World: methods of education, cultural work, collectivization, and antireligious propaganda that would appear later in other countries on other continents were first introduced by Soviet advisers in Mongolia, who ran the country on behalf of its Communist rulers. The young Soviet advisers were in a hurry, not least because support for Mongolia was a drain on scarce resources at home. The Comintern representative instructed the leaders in Ulaanbaatar:

Within ten years we must have built up socialism in Mongolia. In order to fulfill the instructions . . . to completely end the importation of flour from the USSR, it is urgently required to develop agriculture. It is required to overfulfill the meat procurement plan. As the external situation of Mongolia is unstable, it is necessary to kill, arrest, and imprison feudal lamas and noblemen.<sup>20</sup>

The Comintern was to be the vehicle through which the Communists should set off rebellions against colonialism. For many of those in the Third World who opposed foreign domination, the Russian revolution had been a signal event: not only did the Bolsheviks want to set up a new state of their own that did away with colonial oppression and ethnic domination, but they also promised to support all movements worldwide that had the same aim. And most important of all – as we will see in the next chapter – the Communists had both a model for how to overthrow the former regime and a pattern for a new state that was just and modern at the same time. The image of the October Revolution that Comintern propagandists spread worldwide was one that many young organizers and intellectuals found immensely attractive as a future for their own countries. No wonder, then, that by the early 1920s Communist parties had been set up in most of the key states in the Third World – China,

India, Indonesia, Turkey, and Iran all saw Communist parties established in 1920 or 1921. The leaders of these parties – those who had not already been arrested or shot by the regimes in power – congregated in Moscow for the Comintern congresses, as did European Communist leaders. The records of the meetings show not only how diverse the early Communist movement was, but also how difficult the encounters between the Russians and Marxists from other backgrounds turned out to be.

The Soviets had expected opposition (and not a little condescension) from Western European Marxists who attended the first Comintern congresses. What surprised them more was the ability and willingness of Third World Marxists to stake out independent positions on the understanding of social developments and the political course of Communism. While in no way presenting a uniform critique of Soviet socialism, the voices of these leaders described some of the difficulties that would prove impossible to overcome in their Third World policy for later generations in the Kremlin. The young Indian Communist Mahabhendra Nath Roy, for instance, criticized Lenin at the Second Comintern Congress for being too reluctant to give Third World Communist parties a leading role in the anticolonial revolutions in their countries. While agreeing with the Soviet leader that the Communists had to ally with the local (or “national”) bourgeoisie against the colonial power, Roy believed that the Communists had to propagandize independently among and recruit from all social layers for their own party, which would form a “vanguard of the working class,” even in areas where that class was very small relative to the peasant masses. Claiming that an alliance with the Soviet Union could help Third World countries avoid capitalist development altogether, Roy saw the possibility, at least in some areas, of Communist parties coming to power before the working class was fully developed, and therefore having to carry out both “petty bourgeois reforms, such as the division of land” and the construction of proletarian power simultaneously.<sup>21</sup>

Even worse from a Soviet perspective was the critique voiced by the Bashkir Communist Mirsaid Sultan Galiev. Born in 1892 into an ethnic group that had been colonized by Russia, Galiev argued for the revolution as first and foremost meaning the liberation of enslaved peoples. As founder of the “Militant Tatar Organization of Socialists-Internationalists,” Galiev had already in 1914 called on Tatar and Bashkir soldiers in the tsar’s army to rebel, since the cause of the war was that “Russians, not content to have conquered the Tatars, Bashkirs, Turkestanis, the [peoples of the] Caucasus, etc., wanted to conquer the Turks and Persians as well.”<sup>22</sup> Galiev joined the Bolsheviks in Baku in 1917, and soon became the most prominent party leader with a Muslim

background. As Stalin’s deputy as Comintern, Galiev argued that “all colonial peoples” without strong class consciousness of the colonies was an essential precondition for the West. “So long as international imperialism exists, it is the absolute master of the colonies where it is the absolute master,” Galiev stressed, “it is assured of a favorable economic clash with the metropolitan.”<sup>23</sup> Understandably, as Stalin’s deputy, Galiev’s fell. He was expelled from the Comintern for wanting to organize a separate anticolonial movement and for wanting to give a progressive role for Islam in the liberation of the colonies.

As Stalin’s hold on the Soviet party tightened, the voices from the Third World were stifled within the Comintern. Roy was sacked from the Comintern. The role of the international Communist organization in the Third World was to play a more independent role for the Chinese and the nationalist alliances that Stalin had created. In the final battle with Trotsky, Stalin in 1926–27 forced the CCP to join with the Chinese nationalists in opposing foreign imperialism and in carrying out a permanent stage of development could be a bourgeois and socialist revolutions, Stalin’s cases to be processes in which a fully developed bourgeoisie came into being before the working class bourgeoisie for power. Confronted with the Chinese Communist armed forces, the Soviet Union crushed the [Guomindang] Right. It has capable and lead it against the imperialists.”<sup>25</sup> When in Russia, his advice to the Chinese Communist recipients. In April 1927 the Guomindang crushed the Chinese party and arrested Communism was finished as a main political force for a decade. But people such as Roy – who requested for the Chinese was nothing new in Russia in 1917 – drew no benefit from

In the 1930s, as Stalin’s real and imagined labor camps or killing fields, Soviet Communist myths about the October Revolution, all class power and his dogmatic views about



Iran all saw Communist parties established of these parties – those who had not already regimes in power – congregated in Moscow, as did European Communist leaders. The not only how diverse the early Communist how difficult the encounters between the other backgrounds turned out to be. opposition (and not a little condescension) Marxists who attended the first Comintern them more was the ability and willingness to stake out independent positions on the developments and the political course of way presenting a uniform critique of Soviet se leaders described some of the difficulties to overcome in their Third World policy for Kremlin. The young Indian Communist for instance, criticized Lenin at the Second being too reluctant to give Third World ing role in the anticolonial revolutions in their with the Soviet leader that the Communists or “national”) bourgeoisie against the colonial ie Communists had to propagandize indepen- tom all social layers for their own party, which f the working class,” even in areas where that ive to the peasant masses. Claiming that an nion could help Third World countries avoid gether, Roy saw the possibility, at least in some ies coming to power before the working class herefore having to carry out both “petty bour- ie division of land” and the construction of neously.<sup>21</sup>

Soviet perspective was the critique voiced by Mirsaid Sultan Galiev. Born in 1892 into an een colonized by Russia, Galiev argued for d foremost meaning the liberation of enslaved ne “Militant Tatar Organization of Socialists- / had already in 1914 called on Tatar and ar’s army to rebel, since the cause of the war ontent to have conquered the Tatars, Bashkirs, of the] Caucasus, etc., wanted to conquer the ell.”<sup>22</sup> Galiev joined the Bolsheviks in Baku in the most prominent party leader with a Muslim

background. As Stalin’s deputy as Commissioner for Nationalities, the Bashkir Communist argued that “all colonized Muslim peoples are proletarian peoples” without strong class contradictions, and that the liberation of the colonies was an essential precondition for revolutions in the West. “So long as international imperialism ... retains the East as a colony where it is the absolute master of the entire natural wealth,” Galiev stressed, “it is assured of a favorable outcome of all isolated economic clashes with the metropolitan working masses, for it is perfectly able to shut their mouths by agreeing to meet their economic demands.”<sup>23</sup> Understandably, as Stalin’s star rose within the government, Galiev’s fell. He was expelled from the party in 1923, accused of wanting to organize a separate anticolonial International and for claiming a progressive role for Islam in the liberation of Asian peoples.<sup>24</sup>

As Stalin’s hold on the Soviet party increased in the 1920s, dissident voices from the Third World were stifled both within the Soviet Union and within the Comintern. Roy was sacked from his leading position in the international Communist organization in 1928 because of his support for a more independent role for the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) within the nationalist alliances that Stalin had ordered it to join. In his last and final battle with Trotsky, Stalin in 1926–27 had made an issue of the need for the CCP to join with the Chinese nationalist party – the Guomindang – in opposing foreign imperialism and in constructing a new Chinese state. Against Trotsky’s concept of a permanent revolution, in which the capitalist stage of development could be a very brief period between the bourgeois and socialist revolutions, Stalin saw these transitions in all cases to be processes in which a fully-fledged capitalist social system came into being before the working class could successfully challenge the bourgeoisie for power. Confronted with Chinese requests to establish its own Communist armed forces, the Soviet leader declared that “we need the [Guomindang] Right. It has capable people who still direct the army and lead it against the imperialists.”<sup>25</sup> While Stalin won the political battle in Russia, his advice to the Chinese Communists proved disastrous for the recipients. In April 1927 the Guomindang army under Chiang Kai-shek crushed the Chinese party and arrested or murdered its main leaders. Communism was finished as a main political force in China for almost a decade. But people such as Roy – who claimed that what they had requested for the Chinese was nothing more than what Lenin had done in Russia in 1917 – drew no benefit from having been right.

In the 1930s, as Stalin’s real and imagined opponents disappeared into labor camps or killing fields, Soviet Communism created a set of key myths about the October Revolution, all designed to help Stalin’s claim to power and his dogmatic views about the Marxist laws of historical

development. According to these myths, 1917 was a workers' revolution carried out by the most advanced groups of the industrial proletariat under the direction of the Communist Party. Since the emphasis was on advanced, numbers almost did not matter – it was the “objective” role of the Petersburg coup-makers to represent the working class as a whole. What they carried out a revolution against was a bourgeois state that had gradually come into being since 1905, and which had manifestly been in power since February 1917. That way Stalin could emphasize that the Bolsheviks had “in a natural manner” followed the laws of development by replacing a bourgeois regime with a proletarian one (even if the bourgeoisie had only had the blessing of their own state for about eight months). The reason why there could be such a brief period of transition in Russia was *not* a permanent revolution, but the organizing abilities of the Russian Communists, led by Lenin and Stalin. By instituting these myths as an integral part of what now became known as Marxism-Leninism, Stalin emphasized his own role and that of the party, but he also effectively kicked away the ladder that could help impatient Third World Communists climb rapidly toward socialism. “One cannot trifle with the laws of historical development,” Stalin said accusingly after the Chinese debacle.<sup>26</sup>

The major internal transformation in Stalin's Soviet Union – and the foundation for the Communists' claim to have modernized Russia – was the collectivization of agriculture. For seven years, between 1929 and 1936, a war was raging in the Soviet republics between Communist officials and peasant resistance, leading to famine and devastation. The battlefield moved back and forth – in March 1930 58 percent had been forced into collectives, by June 1930 more than half of them had escaped. Gradually, by using terror – confiscation of land and supplies, mass arrests, deportations to labor camps, executions – the Bolsheviks turned the tide of opposition. Stalin's purpose was simple: he wanted to create a modern state by liquidating the internal colony that serfs had been in imperial Russia. The only way to achieve this aim, Stalin and his supporters thought, was to do away with the individualistic and localistic “peasant mentality” and to streamline agriculture, like the rest of the economy, under central state control. To the Stalinists, this was the greatest revolution ever and an example of how socialist transformation could happen elsewhere. Making the peasants create the state-controlled surplus that was necessary for jump-starting an industrial economy was a way in which even backward countries and societies could aspire to modernity.<sup>27</sup>

While the Comintern went through several hair-curling twists in its general policies between 1928 and 1941 – from the intensely anti-Social

The empire of justice: Soviet ideolc

Democratic “third period” between 1928 and 1934, to the alliances between 1934 and 1939, to the alliance with Hitler – its policies toward the world were not stable. Throughout the prewar period Africa, Asia, or Latin America had any stable government because the historical conditions for Communist parties did not yet exist there. Communist parties never quite gave up on Lenin's faith in the “rapidly toward socialism,” Stalin was always skipping of stages” to explain Communist setbacks that often came out of policies like the Comintern's influence in the Third and 1943, with several of the key parties called by their opponents. In India in the the Sixth Comintern Congress had d because of its “religious conceptions” and ically reactionary ways of living” – the Comintern had some twenty members (0.000006 percent of the world's population, Ken Post points out).<sup>28</sup>

The Comintern's importance, and the way it was controlled, was through the many future leaders who passed through their ranks. In Vietnam's Ho Chi Minh or Brazil's Luiz Gonzaga, the Comintern confirmed a lifetime's devotion to a unified and international. For anticolonialists like Malaka, who went from the Communist nationalist regime with Japanese support to the United States, who had been a delegate to the February 1935 Congress of Oppressed Nationalities organized on Communist lines, the Comintern was how to construct their movements and activists who studied at schools and universities such as Moscow's Sun Yat-sen University. Students – were impressed with their Soviet absolute faith in their cause. Even non-Communists who broke with Communism often continued to see the Soviet Union as a progressive country and a model for other countries. American leader W. E. B. Du Bois, who for years had seen Russia as a victim of a determined propaganda campaign, the present Russian Government succeeds in trying to do must and will be done so to progress.”<sup>29</sup>

ese myths, 1917 was a workers' revolution enced groups of the industrial proletariat mmunist Party. Since the emphasis was on l not matter – it was the “objective” role of to represent the working class as a whole. ation against was a bourgeois state that had ce 1905, and which had manifestly been in. That way Stalin could emphasize that the manner” followed the laws of development game with a proletarian one (even if the e blessing of their own state for about eight re could be such a brief period of transition nt revolution, but the organizing abilities of d by Lenin and Stalin. By instituting these art of what now became known as emphasized his own role and that of the ly kicked away the ladder that could help mmunists climb rapidly toward socialism. laws of historical development,” Stalin said debacle.<sup>26</sup>

formation in Stalin's Soviet Union – and the nists' claim to have modernized Russia – was culture. For seven years, between 1929 and 1 the Soviet republics between Communist ance, leading to famine and devastation. The d forth – in March 1930 58 percent had been une 1930 more than half of them had escaped. r – confiscation of land and supplies, mass or camps, executions – the Bolsheviks turned in's purpose was simple: he wanted to create a ng the internal colony that serfs had been in way to achieve this aim, Stalin and his support- away with the individualistic and localistic to streamline agriculture, like the rest of the state control. To the Stalinists, this was the nd an example of how socialist transformation Making the peasants create the state-controlled y for jump-starting an industrial economy was a toward countries and societies could aspire to

went through several hair-curling twists in its 1928 and 1941 – from the intensely anti-Social

Democratic “third period” between 1928 and 1933, to “popular front” alliances between 1934 and 1939, to the moribund defense for Stalin's alliance with Hitler – its policies toward the Third World stayed relatively stable. Throughout the prewar period Stalin refused to believe that Africa, Asia, or Latin America had any short-term potential for socialism, because the historical conditions for the creation of proletarian Communist parties did not yet exist there. Although the Soviet leader never quite gave up on Lenin's faith in “backward countries” moving rapidly toward socialism, Stalin was always very willing to use the “non-skipping of stages” to explain Communist setbacks in the Third World, setbacks that often came out of policies he himself had devised. Overall, the Comintern's influence in the Third World declined between 1928 and 1943, with several of the key parties decimated politically or physically by their opponents. In India in the early 1930s, for instance – after the Sixth Comintern Congress had declared war on “Gandhi'ism” because of its “religious conceptions” and “most backward and economically reactionary ways of living” – the Communist Party was reduced to some twenty members (0.000006 percent of the population, as historian Ken Post points out).<sup>28</sup>

The Comintern's importance, and that of the organizations it controlled, was through the many future leaders of the anti-Western resistance who passed through their ranks. For Communists such as Vietnam's Ho Chi Minh or Brazil's Luis Carlos Prestes, their work for the Comintern confirmed a lifetime's dedication to seeing socialism as unified and international. For anticolonialists such as Indonesia's Tan Malaka, who went from the Communist Party to set up an Indonesian nationalist regime with Japanese support, or India's Jawaharlal Nehru, who had been a delegate to the February 1927 Brussels Congress of Oppressed Nationalities organized on Comintern orders, the encounters with Communism and the Soviet Union provided succinct ideas about how to construct their movements and their states. The thousands of activists who studied at schools and universities in the Soviet Union – such as Moscow's Sun Yat-sen University, set up primarily for Asian students – were impressed with their Soviet comrades' dedication to and absolute faith in their cause. Even non-Communists or those who later broke with Communism often continued to believe in the Soviet Union as a progressive country and a model for emulation as a state. The Afro-American leader W. E. B. Du Bois, who first visited in 1928, found “that Russia is a victim of a determined propaganda of lies. And that whether the present Russian Government succeeds or not, the thing that it is trying to do must and will be done sometime if the world continues to progress.”<sup>29</sup>

Within the Soviet Union itself, all attempts at devising policies that reflected its own multinational form as a state drowned – quite literally in blood – during Stalin's purges. Most of the early leaders of the minority peoples within the Soviet state perished between 1935 and 1941, to be replaced by a mixture of Russian and local Stalinists. Stalin – the man these new leaders called their *vozhd* (boss) – in November 1937 gave his inner circle a lesson in his views on the role of ethnicity:

The Russian tsars did a great deal that was bad. They robbed and enslaved the people. They waged wars and seized territories in the interests of the landowners. But they did one thing that was good – they amassed an enormous state, all the way to Kamchatka. We have inherited that state ... We have united the state in such a way that if any part were isolated from the common socialist state, it would not only inflict harm on the latter but would be unable to exist independently and would invariably fall under foreign subjugation. Therefore, whoever attempts to destroy that unity of the socialist state, whoever seeks the separation of any of its parts or nationalities – that man is an enemy, a sworn enemy of the state and of the peoples of the USSR. And we will destroy each and every such enemy, even if he was an old Bolshevik; we will destroy all his kin, his family. We will mercilessly destroy anyone who, by his deeds or his thoughts – yes, his thoughts – threatens the unity of the socialist state.<sup>30</sup>

The ruthlessness of Soviet Stalinism and its inability to work with other parties of the Left was shown most clearly in the Spanish Civil War, the main Soviet foreign intervention between the 1920–21 war against Poland and the Hitler–Stalin Pact. The Spanish events are highly important in order to understand later Soviet interventions in the Third World: not only was it the first long-distance intervention directed by Moscow, but it also provided the personal experience that many leaders of the Cold War period fell back on to plan or execute involvements abroad. While most Spanish Republicans saw their state as having been defeated by Franco's armies in part because of Communist sectarianism and Soviet perfidy, Moscow's lessons were quite different. Stalin and his colleagues saw the failure in Spain as resulting from the "carelessness" and "undue haste" of the Spanish Republicans themselves, including many members of the Communist Party. If an "isolated" struggle like the one in Spain was to succeed in the future, it would have to be directed by Soviet officers, even if the aim was defensive rather than offensive. Only if the Soviet experience was brought directly to bear on the local situation, Stalin decreed, could such struggles have any chance of succeeding.

By 1941 the Stalinist regime in Moscow had removed much of the early Communist emphasis on revolution in the Third World. While crushing the aspirations of Soviet minorities for their own autonomous developments, Stalin had focused on building an authoritarian noncapitalist state

with his own role and that of the party at the time. Colonial leaders on other continents continued to see the Soviet state as an inspiration – as we shall see in the next section. Direct involvement in Third World affairs had begun already by the mid-1930s, when Stalin began co-operating with the war in Europe. Until Hitler disabused him of this, Stalin believed that World War II was "between the two camps" – (poor and rich as regards colonies, raw materials for the redivision of the world ... We see nothing but a good hard fight and weakening each other ... on the other side."<sup>31</sup> The Soviet leader did expect to attempt to rebel during a war between the imperial powers, but that any country outside Europe was developed enough to defend such a revolution unless given direct Soviet aid.

### Defining intervention: Iran, China

The German attack in 1941 meant a complete change in foreign policy and of Stalin's instructions to international revolutionaries. The Stalinist regime was fighting for its survival against domestic enemies, and it now needed to spend more resources against Hitler and those within the Soviet Union who saw an attack as a welcome opportunity to rid themselves of the desperately needed allies, and much effort was put into the relationship with Britain and the United States. While never imagining that such an alliance would last the war, Stalin believed that the two capitalist powers were standing with the Soviet Union as long as it was in the war, probably, through the initial phase of postwar reconstruction.

Soviet planning for the postwar world began on a defensive ground to a halt in 1942. Stalin wanted to end the war in Europe – crucially, along its western border with Germany itself. But he was very careful with predicting the precise outcome of the war. Convinced from 1942 on that Germany could not defeat the capitalist powers to seek peace with Germany's present regime. Fearful that such a separate peace would allow Germany to continue its war against the Soviet Union, Stalin decided, instead, to minimize friction with his allies and to threaten to throw them to the wolves, while, at the same time, to minimize the chances for a Japanese attack on

themselves, all attempts at devising policies that would form a state drowned – quite literally in the sea. Most of the early leaders of the minority states perished between 1935 and 1941, to be replaced by Russian and local Stalinists. Stalin – the man known as *vozhd* (boss) – in November 1937 gave his views on the role of ethnicity:

... that was bad. They robbed and enslaved the colonized territories in the interests of the landowners. It is good – they amassed an enormous state, all they inherited that state ... We have united the state in isolation from the common socialist state, it would be better but would be unable to exist independently and without subjugation. Therefore, whoever attempts to destroy the state, whoever seeks the separation of any of its parts is an enemy, a sworn enemy of the state and of the people. We will destroy each and every such enemy, even if he destroys all his kin, his family. We will mercilessly destroy his deeds or his thoughts – yes, his thoughts – threatens

30

... that Stalinism and its inability to work with other states was most clearly in the Spanish Civil War, the intervention between the 1920–21 war against the Ottoman Empire. The Spanish events are highly important later Soviet interventions in the Third World: long-distance intervention directed by Moscow, personal experience that many leaders of the Cold War had to plan or execute involvements abroad. While the Soviet Union saw their state as having been defeated because of Communist sectarianism and Soviet policies were quite different. Stalin and his colleagues were resulting from the “carelessness” and “undue republicanism” themselves, including many members of the Politburo. If an “isolated” struggle like the one in Spain in the future, it would have to be directed by Soviet Russia. It was defensive rather than offensive. Only if the struggle brought directly to bear on the local situation, such struggles have any chance of succeeding. The regime in Moscow had removed much of the early revolutionary spirit in the Third World. While crushing the national minorities for their own autonomous development and on building an authoritarian noncapitalist state

with his own role and that of the party at the center. While many anti-colonial leaders on other continents continued to see the Soviet party and state as an inspiration – as we shall see in the next chapter – Moscow's direct involvement in Third World affairs had declined precipitously already by the mid-1930s, when Stalin began concentrating on a coming war in Europe. Until Hitler disabused him of the notion in June 1941, Stalin believed that World War II was “between two groups of capitalist countries – (poor and rich as regards colonies, raw materials, and so forth) – for the redivision of the world ... We see nothing wrong in their having a good hard fight and weakening each other ... Next time, we'll urge on the other side.”<sup>31</sup> The Soviet leader did expect that the colonies would attempt to rebel during a war between the imperialists, but did not think that any country outside Europe was developed enough to successfully defend such a revolution unless given direction and aid by the Soviet Union.

### Defining intervention: Iran, China, Korea

The German attack in 1941 meant a complete redirection of Soviet foreign policy and of Stalin's instructions to international Communism. The Stalinist regime was fighting for its survival against both foreign and domestic enemies, and it now needed to spend all its resources on the war against Hitler and those within the Soviet Union who saw the German attack as a welcome opportunity to rid themselves of Stalin's terror. It also desperately needed allies, and much effort was spent on developing the relationship with Britain and the United States into a firm wartime alliance. While never imagining that such an alliance would much outlast the war, Stalin believed that the two capitalist powers needed an understanding with the Soviet Union as long as the war was still on and, probably, through the initial phase of postwar reconstruction.

Soviet planning for the postwar world began as soon as the German offensive ground to a halt in 1942. Stalin wanted to extend Soviet influence in Europe – crucially, along its western borders, but also, if possible, into Central Europe and Germany itself. But the Soviet leaders had to be very careful with predicting the precise outcome of the war. While convinced from 1942 on that Germany could not win, Stalin expected the capitalist powers to seek peace with Germany after the collapse of Hitler's regime. Fearful that such a separate peace would leave Germany free to continue its war against the Soviet Union, Stalin needed, on the one hand, to minimize friction with his allies and thereby reduce their temptation to throw him to the wolves, while, on the other hand, also to minimize the chances for a Japanese attack on the Soviet Union in the

east, an attack that Stalin knew would mean the end of the Soviet state. Moscow therefore had to downplay any revolutionary aims to come out of the war. Communist parties in the Third World were ordered not to engage in anti-imperialist propaganda, but to support the allied war effort. In 1943 the Comintern was formally dissolved, in part as a gesture toward London and Washington, though its *apparatus* was kept intact and later, as the core of the international departments of the Soviet Communist Party, came to play a key role in developing its Third World policies.<sup>32</sup>

Toward the end of the war – and finally convinced that his allies were not aiming for a separate peace – Stalin began choosing between the different Marxist perspectives that had been offered to him through Soviet wartime planning. His appetite increased by the Soviet victories on the Eastern Front, the Soviet leader now foresaw a security belt along its western border consisting of states whose foreign policies depended on the Soviet Union. But he also expected postwar Germany – the big prize in terms of Europe's future development – to move toward socialism and an alliance with Moscow. Through attacking a weakened Japan, the Soviet Union would secure its influence on the postwar settlements in China and Korea. Elsewhere in the colonies, the Soviet Union would also stake its claims in the redivision that would follow the war. Stalin based these optimistic perspectives on the continued competition among the main imperialist powers – Britain and the United States – in the coming battle for spoils. While the imperialists continued their rivalry, the Soviets could – through a mix of diplomacy and force – become a socialist world power.

Only gradually, between 1944 and 1947, did it become clear to Stalin that the prediction of intense imperialist rivalries for the redivision of the postwar world was wrong. Instead of powers competing, the weak European states, including Britain, sought protection of their security and the interests of world capitalism as such from the United States. To see this new, unipolar capitalist world was a hard-won realization for the Soviet leaders. It did not fit any of the Marxist maps that had been offered during the war, and it had to be explained as a temporary phenomenon, brought about by the West European capitalists' need to import American capital and technology. What was clear to Stalin was that a world dominated by the United States was much more dangerous for the Soviet Union than a system in which one could play imperialist powers off against each other. The advent of a capitalist hegemony meant that a concerted strategy for strangling the socialist state was in the making, Stalin thought.

The imposition of Communist regimes in the Eastern European countries under Soviet military control, carried out between 1945 and 1948,

was to a great extent a response to these perspectives on what the postwar world would be. That later would form important lessons for the Third World, Moscow helped plot strategies in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, and elsewhere to set up a separate socialist state in the part of Europe occupied by Soviet troops. Stalin made it clear to the Communists that their political strategies could be decided by the Soviet Union and by its Red Army. Disregarding the qualities of the local Communist leaders, the circle that the Soviet steps had been taken in the name of immediate social revolution – just like the Bolsheviks after 1917, the Communists and the Soviet Union held the line *until* the local society and party found their true revolutionary path – patterned, of course, on the Soviet model. Meanwhile, the local Communists set about their task the only way they and their Soviet advisers knew: the destruction of all independent opposition.

The change of perspectives that muddled Europe in the immediate postwar period also applied to the Third World. Toward a state like Turkey – where hopes for a revolution because of the dominance of Turkish nationalism in a multiethnic state – Soviet security concerns, first and foremost for control of the Black Sea. Promising to “drive the Turks into the sea” rhetorically already in 1940: “What is Turkey for the Georgians there, one and a half million Armenians there, and for the Soviets?” In 1945 the Soviets demanded naval bases at the Turkish border “readjustments” in eastern Turkey, but with determination to defend its possessions – the Soviet Union – Stalin already in the fall of 1946 decided that the Turkish crisis was not worth the price. The lesson that the Turkish nationalists were planning to establish an “Eastern bloc” in response to Turkey's own “policy” and its high level of dependence on American aid was not “interesting.”<sup>34</sup> That the Turkish crisis had been profound found no place in Moscow's analysis.<sup>35</sup>

Stalin's postwar appetite for Soviet influence extended to the colonies of the defeated Axis powers in Asia. The Soviet leaders thought that Tripoli, the former Italian colony of Libya, was a particular area for Soviet expansion – there “we could establish





Mediterranean basin," Maksim Litvinov told the Politburo in June 1945.<sup>36</sup> According to the perspective of a world dominated by post-war imperialist rivalry, the former Commissar for Foreign Affairs told the leadership that a Soviet "presence in North or East Africa will not be opposed by the United States; on the contrary, it will rather be encouraged as a way of weakening English influence."<sup>37</sup> As the United States sided with Britain in blocking the Soviet claim, Stalin made sure that Molotov held to the rather ridiculous line at the Allied Foreign Ministers' meetings that "the Soviet government considered the future of Tripolitania as of primary importance to the Soviet people, and they must press their request to assume trusteeship of that territory."<sup>38</sup> But, again, by the end of 1946 Stalin had concluded that a direct role in North Africa was eluding his grasp because of hardening US policies. While instructing his diplomats to give up on the Soviet demand, he expected them to let the British and the Americans know that "those days when the USSR could consider itself as an insignificant state regarding all kinds of mandate territories, have passed." Justifying his retreat, he added that

we should not be more leftist than the leaders of these territories. These leaders ... in their majority are corrupt and care not so much about the independence of their territories, as about the preservation of their privileges regarding the population of these territories. The time is not yet ripe for us to clash over the fate of these territories and to quarrel over their future with the rest of the world, including their corrupt leaders themselves.<sup>39</sup>

In Iran, the Soviets' biggest neighbor to the south, the problems in Stalin's postwar Third World policy were connected to much higher stakes than in his Libyan adventure. In 1941 the Soviet Union had – in agreement with its Western allies – occupied the northern part of the country to keep it from German control, while Britain had taken over the south. Meanwhile, the British had engineered the ousting of the Iranian emperor – the shah – and replaced him with the young Crown Prince, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. Within Iran, the shattering experience of foreign occupation had thrown the door open for new political groups and ideas, which challenged not only the traditional authoritarian monarchy, but also the social and religious fundamentals for the shah's power. The Communist-led People's Party, or Tudeh, had become the country's largest and best-organized political group, and the voice of a growing movement of industrial and agricultural trade unions. Leaders of the ethnic minorities – Azeris, Kurds, and Arabs – had started agitating for autonomy or outright independence. And in Qum – Iran's leading religious center – young clergymen, among them Ruhollah Khomeini, had begun calling for resistance to the foreign powers and to their agent, the shah.<sup>40</sup>

The sense of national humiliation brought by occupation intensified political competition in Iran. Elections to the national assembly showed strong support for the Tudeh candidates, although the majority of representatives went with any party. And although the young shah managed to appoint a succession of conservative governments in two years, the political initiative in the nation gradually passed to liberal nationalists such as Mohammad Mossadeq.

While the Tudeh in its messages to Moscow emphasized the potential for a revolutionary uprising in Iran, Stalin, with that perspective. His main preoccupations were to prevent the imperialists access to the oil resources in Iran. In a treaty with the leftist bourgeois nationalists in Iran, Stalin's thinking turned to using northern Iran to meet Soviet demand for an area of 216,000 sq km in a joint Soviet-Iranian oil exploration enraged the Iranian Communists to reach his aim. Stalin's proposal made by the party leader in Soviet Azerbaijan and other provinces of northern Iran, instructing him to "organize a separatist democratic party in southern Azerbaijan under the People's Party of Iran and attracting all support from all layers of society."<sup>42</sup> The Tudeh may have hoped for the unification of Soviet Azerbaijan and Iran. Stalin obviously intended to use the threat of the disintegration of Iran to pressure the Iranian government to deal with Moscow for oil and influence.<sup>43</sup> The Tudeh were understandably furious. "If the enemies of Iran plan against it, they could not possibly invent anything to take place at the present time," they wrote in 1945.<sup>44</sup>

But Stalin and Bagirov were not discouraged. In early 1946 the Soviets continued to direct the Tudeh regime in Iranian Azerbaijan, based in Tabriz, against any attempts at carrying out a revolution in the Kurdish areas – where the Soviets supported the Party of Kurdistan (DPK) – the reforms had to be told many times that we do not want to see a struggle among the Azerbaijanis. All forces – those who disturb us in our battle for the aut

m Litvinov told the Politburo in June  
pective of a world dominated by post-war  
Commissar for Foreign Affairs told the  
ence in North or East Africa will not be  
on the contrary, it will rather be encour-  
English influence."<sup>37</sup> As the United States  
the Soviet claim, Stalin made sure that  
culous line at the Allied Foreign Ministers'  
government considered the future of  
importance to the Soviet people, and they  
assume trusteeship of that territory."<sup>38</sup> But,  
in had concluded that a direct role in North  
because of hardening US policies. While  
give up on the Soviet demand, he expected  
Americans know that "those days when the  
s an insignificant state regarding all kinds of  
ssed." Justifying his retreat, he added that

in the leaders of these territories. These leaders ...  
I care not so much about the independence of their  
ation of their privileges regarding the population of  
not yet ripe for us to clash over the fate of these  
their future with the rest of the world, including  
s.<sup>39</sup>

gest neighbor to the south, the problems in  
ld policy were connected to much higher stakes  
e. In 1941 the Soviet Union had – in agreement  
upied the northern part of the country to keep it  
e Britain had taken over the south. Meanwhile,  
the ousting of the Iranian emperor – the shah –  
he young Crown Prince, Mohammad Reza  
hattering experience of foreign occupation had  
few political groups and ideas, which challenged  
uthoritarian monarchy, but also the social and  
he shah's power. The Communist-led People's  
come the country's largest and best-organized  
oice of a growing movement of industrial and  
Leaders of the ethnic minorities – Azeris, Kurds,  
gitating for autonomy or outright independence.  
ding religious center – young clergymen, among  
i, had begun calling for resistance to the foreign  
t, the shah.<sup>40</sup>

The sense of national humiliation brought on by the great power  
occupation intensified political competition in Teheran. The 1943 elec-  
tions to the national assembly showed strong support for liberal and leftist  
candidates, although the majority of representatives were still unaffiliated  
with any party. And although the young shah, helped by the British,  
managed to appoint a succession of conservative premiers over the next  
two years, the political initiative in the national assembly, the Majlis,  
gradually passed to liberal nationalists such as Ahmed Qavam and  
Mohammad Mossadeq.

While the Tudeh in its messages to Moscow stressed the immediate  
potential for a revolutionary uprising in Iran, Stalin strongly disagreed  
with that perspective. His main preoccupations were defensive – denying  
the imperialists access to the oil resources in northern Iran and securing a  
treaty with the leftist bourgeois nationalists in Teheran. In 1944, as the  
Soviet demand for an area of 216,000 sq km in the north to be set aside for  
joint Soviet-Iranian oil exploration enraged nationalists of all kinds in  
Iran, Stalin's thinking turned to using northern ethnic separatists rather  
than the Iranian Communists to reach his aims.<sup>41</sup> The *vozhd* took up a  
proposal made by the party leader in Soviet Azerbaijan, Mir Bagirov,  
instructing him to "organize a separatist movement in southern  
Azerbaijan and other provinces of northern Iran" and to "create a demo-  
cratic party in southern Azerbaijan under the name 'Azerbaijani  
Democratic Party,' founded by reforming the Azerbaijani branch of the  
People's Party of Iran and attracting all supporters of the separatist  
movement from all layers of society."<sup>42</sup> The Azeri nationalist Bagirov  
may have hoped for the unification of Soviet and Iranian Azerbaijan, but  
Stalin obviously intended to use the threat of Soviet support for the  
disintegration of Iran to pressure the Iranian bourgeoisie into striking a  
deal with Moscow for oil and influence.<sup>43</sup> The Teheran Communists  
were understandably furious. "If the enemies of the USSR had created a  
plan against it, they could not possibly invent anything better than what is  
taking place at the present time," they wrote to Stalin in September  
1945.<sup>44</sup>

But Stalin and Bagirov were not discouraged. All through 1945 and  
early 1946 the Soviets continued to direct and build an autonomous  
regime in Iranian Azerbaijan, based in Tabriz, while warning the Tudeh  
against any attempts at carrying out a revolution.<sup>45</sup> Even in Azerbaijan  
and the Kurdish areas – where the Soviets supported the Democratic  
Party of Kurdistan (DPK) – the reforms had to be moderate: "You have  
been told many times that we do not want to spark a civil war or class  
struggle among the Azerbaijanis. All forces ... must be used against  
those who disturb us in our battle for the autonomy of Azerbaijan and

northern Kurdistan," Bagirov warned his comrades south of the border.<sup>46</sup> To some extent the Kurdish nationalist regime in Mahabad was more to the Soviets' liking than that of Pishvari's socialists, especially since the DPK president Qazi Mohammad – a well-read and broad-minded Islamic judge – understood that the occasional use of radical slogans would help in enlisting Soviet support and got the help of Kurds who had studied in Teheran to make up a list for official use.<sup>47</sup>

The Iranian elite in early 1946 started realizing that there was a real danger that their country could split apart and that a military conflict with the Soviet Union may be approaching. The Majlis turned to Ahmad Qavam, a wealthy 76-year-old landowner from northern Iran with a record of political radicalism, as the new prime minister. Qavam wanted to reform politics and social affairs in Iran and defeat the challenges from the northern separatists, the Tudeh, and the royalist right wing. The new prime minister was hated by the British, with whom he had clashed on several occasions during his long political career, and was distrusted by the Americans, who viewed him as a shifty and intriguing old-style politician.<sup>48</sup> The Russians regarded him as a "bourgeois democrat and nationalist," who realized that he would have to seek support for his reform plans either from the United States or the Soviet Union. Qavam wanted a compromise on Soviet oil concessions, and might support "reforms" in Azerbaijan, but could not grant autonomy to the Azeris and survive in power, Moscow noted.<sup>49</sup>

The Soviet-Iranian negotiations in Moscow in February–March 1946 showed the limitations of Stalin's approach to the Third World. Stalin and his foreign minister Molotov wanted Qavam to agree to oil concessions – together with a series of connected "rights" – and some form of self-rule for Azerbaijan. Any of these two measures would give Moscow control of northern Iran, a fact which left Molotov free to be "flexible" on the Azeri question. Some form of compromise could be found, according to Molotov, whereby real military and political power in the north would remain with the Teheran government. Pishvari "could die or become ill."<sup>50</sup> But a solution to the Azeri question, and a timetable for the withdrawal of Soviet forces, both depended on Qavam granting Moscow the economic concessions Stalin wanted.<sup>51</sup>

Qavam would not accept Stalin's and Molotov's Cold War logic. He suggested a compromise in which he, in return for a Soviet commitment to withdraw, would propose to the Majlis limited self-rule for the Azeris and comprehensive talks with Moscow on political and economic relations. But Molotov was not impressed. "The Soviet government wants to expedite the oil issue," the foreign minister said, and if Qavam was in no position to grant oil concessions, the Soviets would discuss the issue with the

government in Tabriz.<sup>52</sup> Then Molotov limited self-rule scheme for Azerbaijan – disinterest in the overall fate of Pishvari of negotiations between Iran and the northern Iran for a joint oil exploration 51 percent of which was to be owned. Molotov wrote, "will be completely with Iranian government liquidates all enemy relations with the Soviet Union, establishes Iran, and introduces a friendly policy to

Encountering such demands, and so little wonder why Qavam turned to the crafty diplomacy for time. As US pressure to withdraw the Red Army from northern Iran promised Stalin a treaty on oil concessions. He also took three members of the Tudeh the last of the Soviet soldiers had left confronted by the West and still believing nationalists would have to come to an end off Western pressure, Stalin decided on a regime. The Tabriz leadership was understood Bagirov during a secret meeting in

Having turned the Shah's government against them before them ... No matter how much I am prepared to die on the fields of battle in the name of them out ... With your help, we democrats of Iran's constitution, breaking it, discrediting it ever forgive us? Even in the middle of our weakness my doubts about you, and whether you would more, I don't believe you at all. Comrades, I

Stalin, however, would not let the Azeris have them a final lecture on Marxism. In Moscow:

You here want to emulate Lenin [by calling the movement] laudable ... However, the situation in Iran is a profound revolutionary crisis in Iran. The movement is poorly organized ... We decided to withdraw in order to seize this tool from the hands of the liberation movement in the colonies and to make it more justified and efficient.

Qavam, Stalin stressed, remained a program, in Tabriz, Teheran, and Moscow,

nned his comrades south of the border.<sup>46</sup> ionalist regime in Mahabad was more to Pishevari's socialists, especially since the 1 – a well-read and broad-minded Islamic sional use of radical slogans would help in t the help of Kurds who had studied in ficial use.<sup>47</sup>

46 started realizing that there was a real split apart and that a military conflict with roaching. The Majlis turned to Ahmad 1 landowner from northern Iran with a is the new prime minister. Qavam wanted airs in Iran and defeat the challenges from adeh, and the royalist right wing. The new he British, with whom he had clashed on ng political career, and was distrusted by him as a shifty and intriguing old-style garded him as a "bourgeois democrat and at he would have to seek support for his United States or the Soviet Union. Qavam oviet oil concessions, and might support t could not grant autonomy to the Azeris w noted.<sup>49</sup>

ations in Moscow in February–March 1946 alin's approach to the Third World. Stalin otov wanted Qavam to agree to oil conces- s of connected "rights" – and some form of / of these two measures would give Moscow ct which left Molotov free to be "flexible" on m of compromise could be found, according litary and political power in the north would overnment. Pishevari "could die or become Azeri question, and a timetable for the with- h depended on Qavam granting Moscow the n wanted.<sup>51</sup>

t Stalin's and Molotov's Cold War logic. He which he, in return for a Soviet commitment o the Majlis limited self-rule for the Azeris and oscow on political and economic relations. But d. "The Soviet government wants to expedite inister said, and if Qavam was in no position to e Soviets would discuss the issue with the

government in Tabriz.<sup>52</sup> Then Molotov presented his own proposals: a limited self-rule scheme for Azerbaijan – which clearly signaled Moscow's disinterest in the overall fate of Pishevari's regime – and the immediate start of negotiations between Iran and the Soviet Union on a concession in northern Iran for a joint oil exploration and production company, 51 percent of which was to be owned by Moscow. "Soviet troops," Molotov wrote, "will be completely withdrawn from Iran as soon as the Iranian government liquidates all enemy and discriminating measures in its relations with the Soviet Union, establishes peaceful conditions in northern Iran, and introduces a friendly policy toward the Soviet Union."<sup>53</sup>

Encountering such demands, and such a negotiating strategy, there is little wonder why Qavam turned to the Americans for support and to crafty diplomacy for time. As US pressure increased for the Soviets to withdraw the Red Army from northern Iran, the Iranian prime minister promised Stalin a treaty on oil concessions to ease the Soviet departure. He also took three members of the Tudeh into his new government after the last of the Soviet soldiers had left at the end of May 1946. Himself confronted by the West and still believing that Qavam and the bourgeois nationalists would have to come to an agreement with Moscow to stave off Western pressure, Stalin decided to drop the Azerbaijani separatist regime. The Tabriz leadership was understandably dejected. As Pishevari told Bagirov during a secret meeting in April 1946:

Having turned the Shah's government against ourselves, we cannot go on our knees before them . . . No matter how much I might want to, I just cannot do it. I am prepared to die on the fields of battle in the interest of the people, but I can't sell them out . . . With your help, we democrats and leaders followed a path in violation of Iran's constitution, breaking it, discrediting it . . . After all that, how can Qavam ever forgive us? Even in the middle of our work . . . there were moments when I had my doubts about you, and whether you would help us to the end . . . and now, all the more, I don't believe you at all. Comrades, I repeat, I don't believe you anymore.<sup>54</sup>

Stalin, however, would not let the Azerbaijani leaders fall without giving them a final lecture on Marxism. In May 1946 he wrote to Pishevari:

You here want to emulate Lenin [by calling for revolution]. This is very good and laudable . . . However, the situation in Iran today is totally different. There is no profound revolutionary crisis in Iran. There are few workers in Iran and they are poorly organized . . . We decided to withdraw troops from Iran and China, in order to seize this tool from the hands of the British and Americans, to unleash the liberation movement in the colonies and thereby render our liberationist policy more justified and efficient.

Qavam, Stalin stressed, remained a progressive bourgeois. The Communist am in Tabriz, Teheran, and Moscow, should be to "wrench concessions



t, isolate the Anglophiles."<sup>55</sup> But by the end of 1947, the Communists had retaken all the northern areas, where they were opposed by the Azeri and Kurdish separatists. Pishvari died in a car crash after having been shot by the Azeri regime and the Red Army. With both the Azeri regime and the Red Army out of the Teheran government, and the Shah in December 1947. Two years later, the Communists and its leaders driven underground or into exile, were very close to the United States.

and the dogmatic view of social and political theory were based helped defeat the Iranian Left. The Communists were suicidal to openly question the *vozhd*'s views, but they knew that some leaders in Moscow and in the East as to the outcome of Stalin's policies and that the Communists could not do better in its competition with the West for the vast majority of Soviet officials the Communists of the West's increasingly aggressive policies and against socialism. "In all of the Near and Middle East, an intensification of American activity," one Soviet official said, "from which rises the smell of oil, military preparation of an aggressive war. Behind the talks of military help, 'control activities' of military and intelligence in the ... increased penetration of American troops into countries with the goal of turning them into its satellite states."<sup>56</sup>

The USSR – was the only major Third World state in the world in which the *vozhd* did not manage to control the local Communists on behalf of Soviet interests. It was Mao Zedong's determination not to risk following each and every instruction he might be given by Stalin, while believing in Stalin's strategic genius and in the Soviet experience in China in a concrete form, that led to the USSR's orders to make peace with the Chinese Nationalist government (GMD), after Chiang had driven the Communists out of China in 1946. As in Iran, Stalin had tried to keep the Nationalist government in China after the end of the war, but – as in Iran – the government had refused to exclude imperialist influence and secure border areas, but – as in Iran – the government had refused to successfully resist Soviet pressure. In the case of Turkey or Iran, Chiang's regime

in China had been significantly weakened by the war and – to make matters worse for itself – began taking on all of its domestic enemies at once in the postwar period. As a result, the Communists not only survived the initial military onslaught, but were gradually able to turn the situation on the battlefield to their advantage. By 1948, as it became clear that the GMD could not defeat Mao's forces and that the Americans were unwilling to bail Chiang's government out of its economic and military predicament, Stalin began a significant program of support for the Chinese Communists. As the GMD armies broke down, Communism finally seemed set to make a major advance in the Third World.

But even in victory Stalin's dogmatic adherence to the Marxist patterns of development shone through. In 1948–49, as Mao's forces were preparing their final push to the south, Stalin warned the Chinese Communists not to put socialism on the agenda:

some representatives of [opposition] parties will have to be incorporated in the Chinese people's democratic government, and the government as such [will have] to be proclaimed as coalition ... It should be kept in mind that after the victory of the people's liberation armies of China – at least, in a postvictory period for which the duration is difficult to define now – the Chinese government, in terms of its policy, will be a national revolutionary-democratic government, rather than a Communist one. This means that nationalization of all lands and cancellation of the private ownership of land, confiscation of properties from the whole, major and petty, industrial and trade bourgeoisie, confiscation of properties from not only large, but middle and small landowners, who live together with their hired labor, cannot be effected yet.<sup>57</sup>

Even during the victorious Mao Zedong's visit to Moscow in 1949–50 Stalin persisted in treating the Chinese Communists as representatives of a "national revolutionary-democratic government, rather than a Communist one." Uncertain about the long-term viability of a Communist leadership in Beijing, Stalin aimed at getting a treaty that was conducive to Soviet security, rather than an alliance between two Communist-led states. It took concerted and courageous intervention by his key advisers to get him to offer the Chinese something that would give them the recognition they craved as revolutionaries from the head of the world Communist movement. But even after the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance, and Mutual Assistance was signed, on 14 February 1950, Stalin kept his doubts about the authenticity of the Chinese Communist leaders. If they were genuine Communists, the *vozhd* explained to his coterie, they would not last long in power in a country at China's level of development. If the Beijing government seemed secure, that in itself was evidence of its non-Marxist character.

Stalin's last Third World adventure, the Korean War, testified to how far down the road toward theoretical tautologies the Boss came during his final years. Seeing socialism in only the northern part of Korea as unviable in the long run, in spite of the new Democratic People's Republic of Korea under Kim Il Sung being contiguous to the Soviet Union and receiving aid from it, Stalin by early 1950 claimed that "the South was determined to launch an attack on the North sooner or later and it was important to forestall this aggression." In giving Kim the go-ahead to attack the US-supported regime in South Korea, Stalin also pointed to "the significant strengthening of the socialist camp in the east: the victory of the Chinese revolution, the signing of an alliance between the USSR and the PRC, and the USSR's acquisition of an atomic bomb," as well as "the obvious weakness of the reactionary camp: the shameful defeat of America's intervention into Chinese affairs, Western troubles in Southeast Asia, and the inability of the South Korean regime and its American masters to improve the social, economic, and political situation in South Korea." For Stalin, indirect support of Kim's war would also be a way of getting back at "the dishonest, perfidious, and arrogant behavior of the United States in Europe, the Balkans, the Middle East, and especially its decision to form NATO."<sup>58</sup>

It was pessimism and not optimism about the future of the Korean revolution that led Stalin to accept Kim's plan for reunification by military force. As many of the Communists who were in charge of Soviet foreign policy realized, the Korean War showed that Stalin had left behind any hope that social processes in the Third World by themselves would lead toward socialism. Even under the best of geographical and political circumstances – such as in North Korea – the primary objective of Third World Communism should be to serve Soviet purposes in the global Cold War, because the defined circumstances under which they themselves could carry out a successful social transformation were so narrow as to be almost nonexistent. It was as if Stalin – having started the climb toward socialism in one country – was deliberately kicking away the ladder for others to follow.

### The Soviet rediscovery of the Third World (1955–60)

Stalin's last known in-depth comments on Third World problems are in his secret instructions to the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) from January 1951. After having criticized the Indonesian party for their "leftism" both during the failed 1948 rebellion against the nationalist independence movement under Sukarno and during the subsequent gradual reestablishment of the party under Chinese tutelage, the Boss

The empire of justice: Soviet ideology and

went on to show the impossibility of an Indonesian revolution. Even building on the Chinese model would

they [the Chinese] at last found a good way out, when they found a solid rear [base] in the friendly Soviet state. [the] Chinese comrades got a solid rear base in Mao leaning against the USSR as against their own rear, to encircle them and the Chinese Communists found an offensive against Chiang Kai-shek's army from north that the Indonesian comrades, after they have gained, have the opportunity, as the Chinese comrades did, against their own rear [base] and thus deprive the enemy of the opportunity to encircle them? No, we cannot say that, as Indonesia is encircled by seas, and the Indonesian comrades could

To the Soviet Communists who took over after 1953, the Boss's Third World policy seemed a serious disagreements as to the future of socialist armed interventionism, such as in Korea: government-to-government links that could be declared socialist regimes – such as China – but a regimes ("Jacobins," in Comintern terms), such as Nasser's Egypt, or Nehru's India. The new party line underlined the new policies by making a trip to major visit abroad, and by traveling to India, Burma following year. During his trip to South Asia, the Soviet Communist Party (renamed the Communist Union, CPSU, in 1952) stressed Soviet willingness "national development" of nonsocialist countries in economic and military terms. The common enemy: colonialism and imperialism on a worldwide scale.

For Khrushchev – an intelligent but unschooled – made his way up Stalinism's slippery slope by the hard work – visiting India was just the beginning of a campaign for gaining influence in the Third World. His grip on power within the Soviet state, Khrushchev's policies toward Asia, Africa, and Latin America. On the one hand, the *vozhd* had neglected focusing too narrowly on those national-bourgeois themselves had sought friendship and cooperation and by not attempting "actively" to forge links with them. On the other hand, Stalin had failed to see that transitions to socialist different forms, and that more assistance to Third World was needed, even if some of these parties had no



adventure, the Korean War, testified to how rhetorical tautologies the Boss came during his only the northern part of Korea as unviable the new Democratic People's Republic of being contiguous to the Soviet Union and by early 1950 claimed that "the South was back on the North sooner or later and it was aggression." In giving Kim the go-ahead to time in South Korea, Stalin also pointed to the victory of the socialist camp in the east: the signing of an alliance between the USSR and the acquisition of an atomic bomb," as well as the reactionary camp: the shameful defeat of the Chinese affairs, Western troubles in the inability of the South Korean regime and its the social, economic, and political situation, indirect support of Kim's war would also be dishonest, perfidious, and arrogant behavior in Europe, the Balkans, the Middle East, and the NATO."<sup>58</sup>

Not optimism about the future of the Korean to accept Kim's plan for reunification by military Communists who were in charge of Soviet the Korean War showed that Stalin had left all processes in the Third World by themselves. Even under the best of geographical and such as in North Korea – the primary objective of the policy should be to serve Soviet purposes in the defined circumstances under which they put a successful social transformation were so nonexistent. It was as if Stalin – having started in one country – was deliberately kicking away the stool.

### discovery of the Third World (1955-60)

depth comments on Third World problems are as to the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) for having criticized the Indonesian party for their failed 1948 rebellion against the nationalist government under Sukarno and during the subsequent years of the party under Chinese tutelage, the Boss

went on to show the impossibility of an Indonesian Communist revolution. Even building on the Chinese model would not work:

they [the Chinese] at last found a good way out, when they moved to Manchuria and found a solid rear [base] in the friendly Soviet state. Characteristically, only after [the] Chinese comrades got a solid rear base in Manchuria and after they began leaning against the USSR as against their own rear, the enemy lost the chance to encircle them and the Chinese Communists found an opportunity to wage a planned offensive against Chiang Kai-shek's army from north to south. Can we suppose that the Indonesian comrades, after they have gained a guerrilla-liberated area, will have the opportunity, as the Chinese comrades did, to lean against frontiers as against their own rear [base] and thus deprive the enemy of the opportunity to encircle them? No, we cannot say that, as Indonesia represents a group of islands encircled by seas, and the Indonesian comrades could not lean anywhere.<sup>59</sup>

To the Soviet Communists who took over after Stalin's death in March 1953, the Boss's Third World policy seemed self-defeating. In spite of serious disagreements as to the future of socialism, they all agreed to end armed interventionism, such as in Korea, and to emphasize the government-to-government links that could be built not only with self-declared socialist regimes – such as China – but also with radical bourgeois regimes (“Jacobins,” in Comintern terms), such as Sukarno's Indonesia, Nasser's Egypt, or Nehru's India. The new party leader, Nikita Khrushchev, underlined the new policies by making a trip to Beijing in 1954, his first major visit abroad, and by traveling to India, Burma, and Afghanistan the following year. During his trip to South Asia, the new first secretary of the Soviet Communist Party (renamed the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, CPSU, in 1952) stressed Soviet willingness to cooperate with the “national development” of nonsocialist countries in the Third World both in economic and military terms. The common enemy, the Soviets stated, was colonialism and imperialism on a worldwide scale.

For Khrushchev – an intelligent but unschooled peasants’ son who had made his way up Stalinism’s slippery slope by boundless enthusiasm for hard work – visiting India was just the beginning of a much broader campaign for gaining influence in the Third World. As he solidified his grip on power within the Soviet state, Khrushchev attacked Stalin’s policies toward Asia, Africa, and Latin America in two different directions. On the one hand, the *vozhd* had neglected the Third World, by focusing too narrowly on those national-bourgeois movements that by themselves had sought friendship and cooperation with the Soviet Union, and by not attempting “actively” to forge links with others. On the other hand, Stalin had failed to see that transitions to socialism could take many different forms, and that more assistance to Third World workers’ parties was needed, even if some of these parties had no chance of gaining power

on their own in the short run. Khrushchev's big fear was that Stalin's policies had nearly made the Soviet Union miss the train in the new and historical departure away from colonial empires and toward the establishment of independent states. In 1956, at the 20th Congress of the CPSU, Khrushchev – after sensationally condemning Stalin's general behavior as “vile,” “monstrous,” and “terrorist” – declared that

The new period that Lenin predicted in world history when peoples of the East take an active part in settling the destinies of the whole world and become a new powerful factor in international relations, has arrived ... In order to create an independent national economy and to raise the living standards of their peoples, these countries, though not part of the world socialist system, can benefit by its achievements. They now have no need to go begging to their former oppressors for modern equipment. They can obtain such equipment in the socialist countries.<sup>60</sup>

Typically for Khrushchev's regime, the new leadership – while condemning Stalin – were unable to move away from much of the dogmatism that the Boss had bequeathed to Soviet ideology. In its Third World policies, this meant that the narrow thinking about “stages of development” was still in place, as was the Soviet-centrism of Moscow's perceptions of the outside world. What did improve was Soviet knowledge about the Third World, through a full-scale revamping of the institutions that provided the information upon which the leadership could act. In its self-criticism after the twentieth party congress, the Academy of Sciences' Institute of Oriental Studies declared that its work had “been greatly harmed by a failure to understand the nature and the depth of the contradictions existing between the forces of imperialism and internal reaction, on the one hand, and those of national progress in the nonsocialist Eastern countries on the other.”<sup>61</sup> The institute's work was expanded, and new institutes for the study of Africa and Latin America were set up in 1960 and 1961 respectively. The Soviet intelligence services were reorganized, and both the Committee for State Security (Komitet gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti, KGB) and military intelligence (Glavnoie razvedivatelnoie upravleniie, GRU – Chief Intelligence Directorate of the General Staff) were given specific geographical briefs relating to Third World information gathering. Most important of all, the Central Committee reorganized its international work, setting up two new departments, the International Department (Mezhdunarodnyi otdel, MO) and the Department for Relations with Communist and Workers' Parties of Socialist Countries (later called the International Liaison Department). Both departments were under the control of Comintern veteran Boris Ponomarev, who was also made a member of the Secretariat.<sup>62</sup>

The empire of justice: Soviet ideolog

Of all the big tasks Khrushchev foresaw for the Third World, building the alliance with the United States was the most important. Not just the First Secretary, but Khrushchev himself was convinced that the socialist transformation of the Third World was a task that the Soviet Union alone could not carry out. The Soviet Union not only confirmed their Marxist world view, but also the universal centrality of the Soviet experience. The assistance program carried out under the leadership of Khrushchev was the Soviet Union's Marshall Plan – although after Stalin's death, Moscow agreed to increase the aid over two years, and the total cost of the program was twenty billion roubles in export prices, Sergei Goncharenko estimates as equal to the total income for the period. It was a massive program of socialism on China – in every department, from large factory, in every city, army, or university, to specialists, or experts who worked with the Third World country and move their society toward socialism. It changed the Chinese economy forever, and the experts or their Chinese comrades – we can see the Chinese capitalist revolution of the 1980.

Out of the increasingly close cooperation with the Third World, a future international socialist community center – that replicated many of the functions of the Third World had (*sans* capitalism, of course). The center would supply standardized and modernized technology from Berlin to Shanghai, research and training for socialist countries, as would innovation in economic planning, and ideological questions would be discussed at congresses. In the Chinese case, however, the integration was that the basic acceptance of the integration underpinned all of Khrushchev's projections by the late 1950s. Mao Zedong was attracted to “cheaper” socialism, and by designing “Third World” he broke decisively with all Soviet advice. At the same time, through its conflict with India and the United States, China broke with the Soviet Union, setting the tune for the “socialist camp.”

By 1959 the Sino-Soviet relationship was in a state of crisis. Mao Zedong saw the Soviet slogan of “peaceful coexistence” as class treason, and Moscow's alliance with the United States as

in. Khrushchev's big fear was that Stalin's Soviet Union miss the train in the new and colonial empires and toward the establish- In 1956, at the 20th Congress of the CPSU, ally condemning Stalin's general behavior as "errorist" – declared that

icted in world history when peoples of the East take destinies of the whole world and become a new, d relations, has arrived ... In order to create an and to raise the living standards of their peoples, rt of the world socialist system, can benefit by its to need to go begging to their former oppressors for obtain such equipment in the socialist countries.<sup>60</sup>

v's regime, the new leadership – while conse- ple to move away from much of the dogmatism eathed to Soviet ideology. In its Third t that the narrow thinking about "stages of lace, as was the Soviet-centrism of Moscow's world. What did improve was Soviet know- /orld, through a full-scale revamping of the the information upon which the leadership icism after the twentieth party congress, the nstitute of Oriental Studies declared that its armed by a failure to understand the nature adictions existing between the forces of imperi- on, on the one hand, and those of national st Eastern countries on the other."<sup>61</sup> The insti- d, and new institutes for the study of Africa e set up in 1960 and 1961 respectively. The es were reorganized, and both the Committee mitet gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti, KGB) (Glavnoie razvedivatelnoie upravleniie, GRU – torate of the General Staff) were given specific ng to Third World information gathering. Most entral Committee reorganized its international ew departments, the International Department , MO) and the Department for Relations with rs' Parties of Socialist Countries (later called the epartment). Both departments were under the eteran Boris Ponomarev, who was also made a iat.<sup>62</sup>

Of all the big tasks Khrushchev foresaw for the Soviet Union in the Third World, building the alliance with China was by far the most important. Not just the First Secretary, but the whole party leadership was convinced that the socialist transformation of the most populous country on earth was a task that the Soviet Union had to engage in – it not only confirmed their Marxist worldview, but also highlighted the universal centrality of the Soviet experience in building socialism. The assistance program carried out under the Sino-Soviet Friendship Treaty was the Soviet Union's Marshall Plan – already in May 1953, two months after Stalin's death, Moscow agreed to increase aid to China sevenfold over two years, and the total cost of the program up to 1960 was about twenty billion roubles in export prices, something which the historian Sergei Goncharenko estimates as equaling 7 percent of Soviet national income for the period. It was a massive attempt at stamping Soviet socialism on China – in every department of every ministry, in every large factory, in every city, army, or university there were Soviet advisers, specialists, or experts who worked with the Chinese to "modernize" their country and move their society toward socialism. Their achievements changed the Chinese economy forever and – unbeknown to the Soviet experts or their Chinese comrades – were to lay the foundation for the Chinese capitalist revolution of the 1980s and 1990s.<sup>63</sup>

Out of the increasingly close cooperation, Khrushchev saw developing a future international socialist community – with the Soviet Union at the center – that replicated many of the functions the capitalist world economy had (*sans* capitalism, of course). International distribution networks would supply standardized and unified production lines from Berlin to Shanghai, research and training would be shared between socialist countries, as would innovations in technology, defense, and planning, and ideological questions would be decided at international congresses. In the Chinese case, however, the problem with increasing integration was that the basic acceptance of the Soviet model – which underpinned all of Khrushchev's project – was beginning to be questioned by the late 1950s. Mao Zedong wanted "more, faster, better, and cheaper" socialism, and by designing "The Great Leap Forward" in 1958 he broke decisively with all Soviet advice about caution and stages. At the same time, through its conflict with India and its criticism of Soviet *détente* with the United States, China broke with the key concept of Moscow setting the tune for the "socialist camp" in international affairs.

By 1959 the Sino-Soviet relationship was in crisis. The personal diplomacy that Khrushchev engaged in by visiting Beijing had little effect. Mao Zedong saw the Soviet slogan of "peaceful competition" with the West as class treason, and Moscow's alliance policies with nonsocialist Third

World regimes as directed against China. Khrushchev tried to defend his new line as tactics – “Nehru,” he said, “may go over to the United States. He is among our fellow travelers who go with us when it is to their advantage. When we delivered assistance to Nasser, we knew that he might turn against us. Had we not given him this credit, Nasser would have ended up in America’s embrace.”<sup>64</sup> But Mao could not be mollified, and in the summer of 1960 Khrushchev reacted to the steady pinpricks of criticism coming from Beijing by abruptly withdrawing most Soviet experts from the PRC. The First Secretary and those working with him failed to understand that for Mao Zedong the real issue was the future of the Chinese revolution – by sticking too closely to the advice the Soviets gave, the rapid advance toward socialism that the Chairman envisaged would simply not be possible. By 1962 Khrushchev had condemned the Chinese as careless, ungrateful, and chauvinist peasants, and although it took up to 1965 for the final remnants of the alliance to vanish, the increasingly heated public polemics between Moscow and Beijing convinced the Soviets of the future problems the confrontation with Chinese socialism would pose.

The difficulties with China presented the Soviet leaders not only with new security issues and with increased competition for influence in the Third World. It also posed a formidable challenge to Soviet foreign policy ideology. The relationship to China had been lauded as the ultimate proof of socialism’s applicability to the Third World, and, up to 1958, Soviet experts had held the People’s Republic of China up to the North Vietnamese and the North Koreans as the near perfect application of Marxist political theory in “oriental” countries. With the alliance in tatters, Moscow had to explain what had gone wrong and to stake out the road ahead. On the one hand, the wrecking of the supposedly irreversible gains made in China was explained by the wrongheadedness of the “Mao-clique,” which had come to power due to the Chinese party’s lack of “proletarian experience.” On the other hand, the combination of immense disappointment and no proper cause for failure led many Soviet leaders to racist explanations: the Soviet effort in China was failing because of the inborn deviousness and selfishness of the Chinese.

Just like the United States in the 1950s, the Soviet Union in the 1960s made no attempts to learn from its failure in China. On the contrary, the former alliance became a taboo area of Soviet foreign policy, rarely touched on in official or unofficial discourse. The many advisers who had served in China, and whose experience could have benefited future Soviet Third World policy, instead became the “lost generation” in foreign affairs, rarely allowed near international relations in any form again. Those who were put in charge of what Khrushchev envisaged to be a

The empire of justice: Soviet ideal

full-scale attempt at competing with liberated countries in Africa and Asia very little experience abroad. Their record in China but the successes the Soviet Union produced in the 1950s. It was Soviet production for Communism abroad, as socialism showed its full productive potential. The Soviet assistance to the Third World was the space program. The attempt at bringing acres of previously uncultivated land in Siberia, begun in 1954, was a flagship phase that the Soviet Union claimed amounts of irrigation and chemical fertilizers. Khrushchev’s leadership assumed a way of intensifying food production. The Sputnik, in 1957 and the first manned flight in 1961 convinced most Soviets that they were in technology and science. Together, Science and industry would revolutionize production in countries moving toward socialism to resist temptations to the West. In his speech to the Congress, Khrushchev saw the joining of nations with socialism’s productive potential as

Everyone knows that the economics of the underdeveloped countries are dictated to the mercenary interests of foreign monopolies. The economic development of these countries is being deliberately impeded and that these countries and territories are in a position to make ample use of their resources with their industrialization, and that a better world ... no doubt have a beneficial effect on the development of the countries of the East but also on the development of the countries of the West.<sup>65</sup>

To his audiences within the party and the movement, such as at a closed meeting in Moscow, Khrushchev used ideological terms:

Bourgeois and revisionist politicians claim that socialism develops independently of the struggle for power. They claim that socialism develops independently of the support of the socialist masses. They claim that socialism bestows freedom on the peoples of the world. These fabrications are to isolate the newly independent

1st China. Khrushchev tried to defend his  
le said, "may go over to the United States.  
lers who go with us when it is to their  
d assistance to Nasser, we knew that he  
e not given him this credit, Nasser would  
brace."<sup>64</sup> But Mao could not be mollified,  
Khrushchev reacted to the steady pinpricks of  
g by abruptly withdrawing most Soviet  
First Secretary and those working with him  
Mao Zedong the real issue was the future of  
ticking too closely to the advice the Soviets  
ard socialism that the Chairman envisaged  
. By 1962 Khrushchev had condemned the  
ul, and chauvinist peasants, and although it  
ial remnants of the alliance to vanish, the  
olemics between Moscow and Beijing con-  
re problems the confrontation with Chinese

ia presented the Soviet leaders not only with  
h increased competition for influence in the  
formidable challenge to Soviet foreign policy  
to China had been lauded as the ultimate  
ability to the Third World, and, up to 1958,  
People's Republic of China up to the North  
Koreans as the near perfect application of  
a "oriental" countries. With the alliance in  
plain what had gone wrong and to stake out  
ne hand, the wrecking of the supposedly irre-  
ina was explained by the wrongheadedness of  
had come to power due to the Chinese party's  
ience." On the other hand, the combination of  
and no proper cause for failure led many Soviet  
ations: the Soviet effort in China was failing  
riousness and selfishness of the Chinese.  
utes in the 1950s, the Soviet Union in the 1960s  
n from the its failure in China. On the contrary,  
me a taboo area of Soviet foreign policy, rarely  
nofficial discourse. The many advisers who had  
se experience could have benefited future Soviet  
stead became the "lost generation" in foreign  
near international relations in any form again.  
charge of what Khrushchev envisaged to be a

full-scale attempt at competing with the United States in the newly  
liberated countries in Africa and Asia were mostly young people with  
very little experience abroad. Their main frame of reference was *not*  
China but the successes the Soviet Union had had in technology and  
production in the 1950s. It was Soviet modernity that would win people  
for Communism abroad, as socialism – freed from Stalin's shackles –  
showed its full productive potential. Two key projects that would inspire  
Soviet assistance to the Third World were the Virgin Lands campaign and  
the space program. The attempt at bringing into cultivation 32 million  
acres of previously uncultivated land in Kazakhstan and southwestern  
Siberia, begun in 1954, was a flagship of the new and intensive growth  
phase that the Soviet Union claimed to have entered. Using massive  
amounts of irrigation and chemical fertilizers to develop the barren  
plain, Khrushchev's leadership assumed that they had devised a new  
way of intensifying food production. The launch of the first space vessel,  
the Sputnik, in 1957 and the first manned space flight by Iurii Gagarin in  
1961 convinced most Soviets that they had the upper hand over the West  
in technology and science. Together, Soviet know-how in agriculture and  
industry would revolutionize production at home and make it possible for  
countries moving toward socialism to move faster and with fewer conces-  
sions to the West. In his speech to the United Nations in 1960,  
Khrushchev saw the joining of national liberation in the Third World  
with socialism's productive potential as symbolizing the future:

Everyone knows that the economics of the colonies ... are at present subordin-  
ated to the mercenary interests of foreign monopolies, and the industrialization of  
these countries is being deliberately impeded. Imagine that the situation has  
changed and that these countries and territories, having become independent,  
are in a position to make ample use of their rich natural resources and to proceed  
with their industrialization, and that a better life has begun for their peoples. This  
would ... no doubt have a beneficial effect, not only on the economic develop-  
ment of the countries of the East but also on the economies of the industrially  
developed countries of the West.<sup>65</sup>

To his audiences within the party and the international Communist  
movement, such as at a closed meeting on political theory and propa-  
ganda in January 1961, Khrushchev stressed the same idea in more  
ideological terms:

Bourgeois and revisionist politicians claim that the national-liberation movement  
develops independently of the struggle for socialism waged by the working class,  
independently of the support of the socialist countries, and that the colonialists  
themselves bestow freedom on the peoples of the former colonies. The purpose of  
these fabrications is to isolate the newly independent states from the socialist

camp and to try to prove that they should assume the role of a "third force" in the international arena instead of opposing imperialism. Needless to say, this is sheer humbug. It is a historical fact that prior to the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution the peoples failed in their attempts to break the chains of colonialism. History proves that until socialism triumphed in at least a part of the world there could be no question of destroying colonialism.<sup>66</sup>

By the early 1960s Soviet ideology had already reached a stage where the competition for influence in the Third World was an essential part of the existence of socialism. As in the United States, the Soviet elites saw their mission as part of a world-historical progression toward a given goal. Their view of their own role in that process was conditioned not just by Marxist-Leninist political theory but also by Russian exceptionalism and by the experiences of the Soviet leadership since 1917. In spite of setbacks and retreats the Soviet elite firmly believed that socialism would replace capitalism as the main international system within a generation. Stalin's successors held that the transition could be managed without global war only if the imperialists became convinced that they could not successfully intervene against social revolution outside their own borders. The Soviet Union's role was to help make the world safe for revolution and thereby to assist in the progress of humankind.

### The revolutionaries: ant and transformations

From the mid-nineteenth century up to people in Africa and Asia came under France, Russia, the Netherlands, and Portugal powers – were followed by the newly Belgium, and, in a somewhat hesitant manner Japan – itself a victim of imperialist exploitation – joined the club of aggressors. What arose from the changes in technology, organization that took place in the nineteenth century search for markets and raw materials to replace. By the early twentieth century most people stopped asking for motives: imperialism to order of things, just like the Cold War was.

In spite of the vigorous defense put up often took decades after the attacks before organized comprehensive resistance to colonial invasions and occupations were fearful – direct and indirect death toll from the colonial half million. In addition, as Mike Davis global droughts reached catastrophic proportions the late nineteenth century in part because of social structures that in times past might have been. The new colonial territories were vast and decimation – was usually sparse. When some form of order, the colonies they established colonized peoples' own states, identities, and gave plentiful opportunities for "divide and conquer" attacks were also held back by the many victims as we have already seen in the American and cultural assimilation to extermination and.

The period of successful resistance against the aftermath of World War I, just as the Cold