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**UKRAINIAN ANTICOLONIALIST THOUGHT  
IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE.  
A PRELIMINARY OVERVIEW\***

*Introduction*

Anticolonialism normally refers to the socialist/Marxist nationalism that emerged in Africa and Asia. It is not a theory or methodology or coterminous with postcolonialism. Since Ukrainians were ruled by Russia they have a tradition of anticolonialist thought, which those interested in people who experienced modernization through domination should know.<sup>1</sup> While

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<sup>1</sup> Those interested in anticolonialism and postcolonialism have yet to include Ukraine within their purview. N. Lazarus (Ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Postcolonial Literary Studies*. Cambridge, 2004, includes Latin America but not the Habsburg Ottoman or Russian empires or the USSR. This part of the world is also missing from Sankaran Krishna. *Globalization and Postcolonialism. Hegemony and Resistance in the Twenty-First Century*. Lanham, 2009; Margaret Kohn, Keally McBride. *Political Theories of Decolonization: Postcolonialism and the Problem of Foundations*. New York, 2011; Cheryl McEwan. *Postcolonialism and Development*. London, 2009; and Rochona Majumdar. *Writing Postcolonial History*. London, 2010. Robert J. C. Young. *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction*. Oxford, 2001. P. 124, classifies the Soviet Union as “at once colonial and anti-colonialist.” He recognizes the significance of James Connolly and Sultan-Galiev as anticolonial Marxists but makes no mention of Ukrainians or Ukrainian

leftists in the Ukrainian Party of Socialist Revolutionaries (SRs) might be considered Marxist anticolonialists alongside “federalists” in the Communist Party (Bolshevik) of Ukraine (CPU), this article covers only leftists from the Ukrainian Social Democratic Labor Party (SDs) and Ukrainian Communist Party (UCP) writings. It begins in 1906, when Ukrainians were first compared to other “oppressed peoples” of the world. It stops in 1923, when the “Indigenization” policy adopted by the Twelfth Congress of the Russian Communist Party (RCP) made most of the UCP criticisms of Russian Bolshevik policies in Ukraine redundant.

This article traces the emergence in the early twentieth century of what is today called “national communist discourse” in Ukraine. It is not intended to be a critical analysis of this discourse. It only points out the existence of a Ukrainian Marxist tradition that should be included in contemporary discussion about colonialism and its legacies.<sup>2</sup> The article focuses on one aspect of this thought; its critique of Russian tsarist and Bolshevik rule. The underlying theme is that Ukrainian Marxists deserve consideration alongside men like Amilcar Cabral, Tan Malaka, Frantz Fanon, and Aime Cesaire, and that neither the latter nor the former were as nativist, authoritarian, or exclusivist as sometimes claimed.<sup>3</sup>

It is as *nationalists* that Cabral and Fanon develop their critiques of nativism; it is as *social nationalists* that they are led to examine and to differentiate the class dynamics at work in elite formulations of nativist ideology. The same Cabral who dissects intellectuals’ “return to the source” affirms the paramountcy of “native” culture within nationalist struggles. This attentiveness to class specificity in the analysis of

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opposition to imperial rule. Ivan Dzuiba is not in the bibliography. No Ukrainian is represented in Richard B. Day, Daniel Gaido (Eds.). *Discovering Imperialism. Social Democracy to World War I*. Leiden, 2012. John C. Hawley, Revathi Krishnaswamy (Eds.). *The Post-colonial and the Global*. Minneapolis, 2008, mentions the Russian empire. A. Dirk Moses (Ed.). *Empire, Colony, Genocide: Conquest, Occupation, and Subaltern Resistance in World History*. New York, 2008, has no chapter on Soviet internal policies.<sup>2</sup> Alexander Etkind. *Internal Colonization. Russia’s Imperial Experience*. Cambridge, 2011, confused colonization with colonialism. He avoided the Ukrainian issue by ignoring it and intellectuals like Konstantin Arseniev and Nikolai Polevoi, who considered non-Russian tsarist possessions Russian colonies.

<sup>3</sup> Jackie Assayag, Neil Lazarus (Eds.). *The Cambridge Companion to Postcolonial Literary Studies*. Cambridge, 2004. P. 193. It is also ahistorical to dismiss Asian and Ukrainian anticolonialist critics for providing what today might be considered a narrow simplistic “binary” analysis of the complexities of colonialism in their country. D. Scott. *The Social Construction of Postcolonial Studies // Ania Loomba et al. (Eds.). Postcolonial Studies and Beyond*. Durham, 2005. Pp. 385-400.

nativism is something from which postcolonial studies could learn [emphasis in original].

The entire corpus of Ukrainian left SD and communist writings has not yet been published and awaits critical comparative study. This article accordingly is based only on some key essays from the UCP press and three key UCP documents: the 1920 *Memorandum* to the Comintern, the “Resolution on the National and Colonial Question” adopted by the second congress also in 1920, and Vaysl Mazurenko’s *Ekonomichna samostiinist Ukrainy* [The Economic Independence of Ukraine] (1921).

Ukrainian leftist intellectuals combined Marxism with nationalism to theoretically justify national liberation. Ukrainian SDs, like their Asian counterparts, lived in societies with a small native working class and argued that their people experienced industrialization, urbanization, and modernization in conditions of dependency. They condemned not only tsarism but the Russocentric nature of Russian Marxism. Initially supporting the Russian Bolshevik revolution, after experiencing Russian Bolshevik rule, they accused the RCP of invading Ukraine in 1918–1919, subverting its indigenous revolution, and reinforcing rather than dismantling imperial structures of domination. They documented how Russian Bolsheviks who spread their principles beyond their national borders by force undermined them just as the French Jacobins had done just over a century before. In 1961, Frantz Fanon wrote in his *Wretched of the Earth*: “Deportations, massacres, forced labour, and slavery have been the main methods used by capitalism to increase its wealth, its gold or diamond reserves and to establish its power.”<sup>4</sup> In 1919 Ukrainian Marxists would only have had to replace “capitalism” in this sentence with “Russian communism” to describe their country.

Alongside Tan Malaka, Manabendra Roy, Ho Chi Minh and Mao Tse Tung, Vasyl Shakhrai, Lev Iurkevych, Serhyi Mazlakh [Robsman], Andriy Richytsky [Pisotsky], Mykhailo Tkachenko, Ivan and Vasyl Mazurenko, “nationalized” Marxism much the way Lenin created a Russian national version of Marxism. But, unlike Lenin, Ukrainian Marxists, as representatives of a ruled nationality, regarded Bolshevism as a renewed Russian imperialism; an imposed local nationalized communism rather than a universal norm to emulate. Unlike Russian Bolsheviks, Ukrainian, and Central Asian anticolonialist Marxists Sultan Galiev and Turar Ryskulov realized that class consciousness cannot transcend the national context within which it evolves, and they claimed that the future order would not be one of classless societies but of classless nations. For them nationalism was not an ideology

<sup>4</sup> Franz Fanon. *The Wretched on the Earth*. New York, 1966. P. 79.

that weakened class unity nor did they assume that the “victorious industrial proletariat of the formerly ruling nation” would stop exploiting the formerly ruled nations. In accord with chapter 1 of Marx’s *Manifesto*, Ukrainians took it for granted that the form of the proletariat’s struggle with the bourgeoisie “is first of all a national struggle” and that each proletariat first had to settle scores with its own bourgeoisie. Shakhrai specified: “The socialization of the means of production will not automatically end the domination of one nation over another.... for as long as one nation rules and another submits there will be no socialism even if the means of production are socialized.”<sup>5</sup> Had they lived to see it these Ukrainians would have wondered what the difference was between Japan’s “Greater East-Asian Co-prosperity Sphere” and Russia’s Soviet Union, as the “liberation” and modernization both promised were built on conquest, cultural assimilation, and subordination.<sup>6</sup>

Marx and Engels assumed class consciousness was “natural” but never elaborated upon the relationship between place and community, and relations of production or exchange. They shared enlightenment assumptions about universal cosmopolitan civilization and German nationalist disdain for “non-historical small peoples” and “lesser breeds.”<sup>7</sup> Small peasant nationalities were impediments to this universalism and destined to assimilate, as progress

<sup>5</sup> V. Skorovstanskii [pseud. Shakhrai]. *Revoliutsiia na Ukraine*. 2nd ed. Saratov, 1918. P. xi. Lev Iurekvykh drew attention to this danger in his 1917 pamphlet *Russkie sotsial-demokraty i natsionalnyi vopros*. For an English translation of this pamphlet, see L. Rybalka [Lev Iurkevych]. *The Russian Social Democrats and the National Question // Journal of Ukrainian Studies*. 1982. Vol. 7. No. 1. Pp. 57-78. See also Myroslav Yurkevych. *A Forerunner of National Communism: Lev Iurkevych (1855–1918) // Ibid*. Pp. 50-57.

<sup>6</sup> Li Narangoa, Robert Cribb. *Imperial Japan and National Identities in Asia 1895–1945*. London, 2003.

<sup>7</sup> There are two basic perspectives on nationality. Those influenced by Enlightenment cosmopolitanism and classical economics (Voltaire, Adam Smith, and neoliberal capitalist advocates) ignore domination and dependency. From this perspective, European-type industrialization, urbanization, and civilization are desirable universal norms that all will adopt – voluntarily or otherwise. Cultural difference is ephemeral and destined to be replaced by a universal rationalist civilization represented, as a rule, by the country the advocate belonged to. “National liberation” is “antimodern.” Those who refuse to adapt and assimilate; to “rationally” exchange goods on the “free market” disregarding borders are “irrational” and to be ignored or repressed. The past is only “tradition” and an impediment to progress best relegated to holidays or forgotten. Nationalism is atavism and there are no “liberation wars” only “rebellions.” Those influenced by Romanticism and mercantilism (Johann Gottfried von Herder, Alexander Hamilton, and Friedrich List) justify opposition to foreign domination as rational and desirable on the grounds that each peoples should have a national state within which they should find their own way to modernity and social justice. Cultural/national difference is a human attribute that cannot be ignored. Unity is not uniformity.

demanded large centralized economic units. A failure to appreciate the distinction Marx and Engels made between the terms “nationality,” which they used in the German ethnic-linguistic sense, and “nation” which they used in the French territorial-political, subsequently led many of their followers to argue that class would trump identity and that national liberation was incidental to social emancipation and economic development. Rosa Luxemburg later considered opposition to foreign domination “mere nationalism” and not “class struggle.” Nikolai Bukharin in his *Imperialism* (1916) wrote that nationalism was regressive because small states were economically impossible. Yet, Marx and Engels accepted that once “the proletariat” took power it could “raise itself to the status of a national class [and] constitute itself as the nation.” They allowed for a “proletarian nation state” that would be a fatherland during a transition period from capitalism to communism, reconsidered their views on the relationship between large economic units and nationality, their German ethnocentrism, their views on the Irish, Poles, and Czechs, and allowed not only for “proletarian fatherlands” but for national routes out of capitalism. Marx specifically referred to Chinese and Russian versions of socialism. In chapter 1 of the *Manifesto*, he wrote that the form of the proletariat’s struggle with the bourgeoisie “is first of all a national struggle. The proletariat of each country, must, of course, first of all settle matters with its own bourgeoisie.” While in 1849 Engels thought the Czechs should not have independence because they were an “unhistorical peoples,” in 1893 he wrote that their wish for independence was “natural.” In considering the Irish problem, he realized that what socialists of large powerful nations called “internationalism” meant national oppression for socialists of small poor nations. Concurrently with these theoretical debates, government intervention in the form of social legislation and tariffs improved standards of living and made national states significant to workers. Northwest Europe’s working population by 1914, as a result, were not paupers. They had vested interests in their governments because socialism in practice became more “national” than “internationalist.” “National homeland” could not longer be unthinkingly equated with regimes of overt class privilege. Governments also used ethnic nationalism to muster support for imperial adventures and/or to justify repression, which, for better or worse, also linked nationality with government. Opposition socialists and liberals used civic nationalism to focus resistance to corporations and procorporate governments. The German Social Democrat Party in 1875 declared in its program “The working class strives for the emancipation first of all within the framework of the present-day national- state....” Many turn-of-the-century Marxists who belonged to

ruling nationalities, however, did not recognize that workers in dominated nations might also have aspired to have their independent countries, nor did they carefully distinguish between “nation” and “nationality.”

Marx thought that, with the exception of Ireland, European empires brought capitalism and progress to colonial possessions at a price and greeted opposition if it was not nativist and it had a social program. While he and Engels thought that the final liberation of colonized peoples depended on anticapitalist revolution in Europe rather than on local anti-imperialist revolutions against empires, they both nonetheless supported rebellious Poles, Indians, and Irish. This line of thought was taken up by Austrian Marxists Karl Renner, Otto Bauer, and Marxists from stateless nationalities. These did not accept that their small nations could be ignored or would inevitably disappear, or that nationality was an atavism best restricted to private life. They observed that national identity was produced by the spread of education and communications by a capitalism that made vertical national loyalties stronger than horizontal class loyalties and led ruled nations to regard ruling nations rather than capitalism as the cause of their plight. These Marxists concluded that identities and culture were plural, diverse, and permanent, that public institutions had to reflect not suppress them, and that there would be no social liberation without national liberation. Protectionism directed by former dependencies against former rulers was desirable; defensive and aggressive nationalism were not the same; and national conflicts were not eternal and intractable but contingent and solvable. Dominated colonial nationalities could emancipate themselves and deal with their native oppressors without the assistance of their purported class allies within the ruling imperial nationality. Kautsky in 1895 implicitly, and Bauer in 1920 explicitly, stated that Austro-German workers would be counterrevolutionary if they opposed the dissolution of their empires and the separation of Austria and Germany from their empires. As of 1920, Comintern tactics instructed communist parties to conditionally ally with the “national bourgeoisie.”<sup>8</sup> Ukrainian Marxists situated themselves within this line of thought.

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<sup>8</sup> Roman Rosdolsky. *The Workers and the Fatherland: A Note on a Passage in the “Communist Manifesto”* // *Science and Society*. 1965. No. 3. Pp. 330-337; John P. Himka (Ed., trans.). *Roman Rozdolsky. Engels and the “Nonhistoric” Peoples: The National Question in the Revolution of 1848*. Glasgow, 1986; Ronaldo Munck. *The Difficult Dialogue. Maxism and Nationalism*. London, 1986; Roman Szporluk. *Communism and Nationalism. Karl Marx versus Friedrich List*. Oxford, 1988; Erica Brenner. *Really Existing Nationalisms. A Post-Communist View from Marx and Engels*. Oxford, 1995; Robert Stuart. *Marxism and National Identity. Socialism Nationalism and National Socialism during the French Fin de Siècle*. Albany, 2006.

*Ukraine as Russian Colony*

Leaders of the Ukrainian national movement were political moderates and after 1905 they could legally form political parties. At the turn of the century they began to disseminate the idea that nine ethnically Ukrainian provinces of the tsarist empire [Rossiia] constituted a distinct political cultural and economic entity called “Ukraine” distinct from Russia [Velikorossiiia] and to build a middle-class infrastructure of literate peasants, retailers, and white-collar workers. These people began wondering why business, education, government, and high culture in “Ukraine” had to be in Russian and not in Ukrainian. While the majority, like their Irish counterparts, considered capitalist industrial modernity a threat to Ukrainian nationality, a Marxist minority argued that Ukrainian nationality could only develop in tandem with and in not opposition to capitalist modernity.<sup>9</sup> Before the war, self-awareness and assertion led to antagonism but remained muted. Most literate, educated Russian speakers and ethnic Russians, overwhelmingly urban white-collar or industrial workers, tolerated “Little Russians” and their folk songs. Some regarded them with condescending contempt but only the extremist imperial loyalist minority was openly hostile toward the national movement. Few Russian intelligentsia applied their humanist standards and sensitivities to Ukrainian national issues and regarded “little Russians” much the way Robinson Crusoe regarded Friday. Crusoe loved Friday, but only if Friday accepted his subordination to Crusoe.<sup>10</sup> Many ethnic Ukrainians who admired imperial modernity and identified it with Russian national identity equated their own identity with a rural backwardness and poverty that they sought to escape. Unlike European colonists in Latin or North America, monolingual Russians in the Ukrainian provinces did not evolve a “creole/mestizo” separatist nationalism. They overwhelmingly identified with the imperial metropole politically and culturally, much as did loyalists in Ireland, Germans in Bohemia, or French settlers in Algeria, rather than their peripheral territory of residence.

<sup>9</sup> For the history and platforms of Ukraine’s parties, see Ivan Maistrenko. *Borot’bism*. A Chapter in the History of the Ukrainian Revolution. 2nd ed. Stuttgart, 2007; Jurij Borys. *Sovietization of Ukraine 1917–1923*. 2nd ed. Edmonton, 1980. Pp. 73–97, 121–70; R. Vetrov. *Likvidatsiia bahatopartiinosti v Ukraini (1920–1925 rr.)* Dniprodzerzhinsk, 2007; O. Liubovets. *Natsional-kommunizm iak politychna alternatyva revoliutsiinoi doby 1917–1920* // V. Lytvyn et al. (Eds.). *Ukraina v revoliutsiinykh protsesakh pershykh desiatylyt XX stolittia*. Kyiv, 2008. Pp. 439–514. The UCP Program is reproduced in V. Shevchenko (Ed.). *Ukrainski politychni partii kintsia XIX–pochatku XX stolittia*. Kyiv, 1993. Pp. 260–290.

<sup>10</sup> Mykola Riabchuk. The Ukrainian “Friday” and the Russian “Robinson”: The Uneasy Advent of Postcoloniality // *Canadian–American Slavic Studies*. 2010. No. 1. P. 9.

Tsarist subjects Taras Shevchenko, Nicholas Kostomarov, and Mykola Kulish first imagined “Ukraine” as a single cultural/political unit overriding existing political borders. They formed Ukraine’s first modern political organization, the Cyril and Methodius Brotherhood (1846), which called for national liberation, social emancipation, and a politically autonomous Ukraine within a Slavic confederation without idle rich or working poor.<sup>11</sup> By the end of the century national activists began to question whether “Ukraine” was reaping its share of the wealth created by imperial industrialization. To study the interrelationship between it and the metropolis, they had to envisage the Ukrainian provinces not only as a single national cultural unit, but as a single economic unit. They concluded that the central government was intentionally stifling and impoverishing their outlying region. In 1906, Mykola Mikhnovsky became the first to argue that Russian rule over Ukraine was illegitimate in international law and to organize a nationalist terrorist group in tsarist Ukraine. He did not label Ukraine a “colony,” yet, like James Connolly, he placed Ukrainian issues in the context of the “oppressed peoples” of the world and specified that imperial tariffs and financial policy discriminated against Ukraine in favor of Russian provinces. Mikhnovsky described Ukraine as one of the “oppressed nations” of the world fighting for national liberty under the flag of socialism. He asserted that only national liberation globally would bring social freedom, and that the expropriation of property was a necessary condition of national liberty: “the proletariat of the ruling nation and that of the subjugated nation are two different classes with dissimilar interests.” Who are Ukrainians, Czechs, Irish, Slovenes, and Bretons, he asked: “A rural and urban proletariat.” English Democracy, he wrote, never defended the Irish, the Boers, Indians, or the colored African races, and English workers and farmers were not troubled by Irish dependency or the deaths of millions of Indians. Analogously, Americans cared little for Negroes or Indians, German peasants and workers for Poles, and Russian socialists for Ukrainians. European nations with colonies, he continued, behave like autocratic tsars there and are worse than the Huns in their attitudes toward native peoples. As a result native populations were eliminated, or survive in deserts and isolated mountains. “As we Ukrainians are also an oppressed nation, fighting for our freedom, should we not extend our hand to all oppressed peoples for a common struggle?”<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> George Stephen Nestor Luckyj. *Young Ukraine: The Brotherhood of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Kiev, 1845–1847*. Ottawa, 1991.

<sup>12</sup> The Ukrainian National Party (1902) that Mikhnovsky organized was small and uninfluential. He published its program in 1906. In 1917 he changed its name to the Ukrainian

While anti-imperial and anticolonial themes abound in modern Ukrainian literature, early twentieth-century moderate Ukrainian intellectuals did not use the word “colonialism” to describe the adverse cultural consequences of Russian rule: its “denationalization,” and the sense of inferiority or humiliation it produced.<sup>13</sup> The first survey histories of Ukraine that categorized it as a Russian colony appeared only in 1922.

In 1911, for the first time in Ukrainian thought, Mykola Stasiuk labeled the relationship between Ukraine and Russia’s imperial government as “colonialist.”<sup>14</sup> Five years later, Max Weber compared the non-Russian territories of the Romanov empire with British colonies like Ireland and India.<sup>15</sup> By March 1917, when the Central Rada declared “Ukraine” an

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Party of Sovereignist Socialists. It had members in the Central Rada, and dropped its earlier internationalist anticolonialist perspective. Shevchenko (Ed.). *Ukrainski politychni partii*. Pp. 60-63. The Revolutionary Ukrainian Party (RUP) also called for independence – but did not compare Ukraine with European colonies.

<sup>13</sup> B. Hrinchenko, M. Drahomanov. *Dialohy pro Ukrainsku natsionalnu spravu*. Kiev, 1994; D. Dontsov. *Natsionalni hermafrodyty // Nash Holos*. 1911. No. 9-10; Idem. *Moderne Moskofilstvo*. Kyev, 1913. The reaction to Dontsov was hostile. His opponents, for example, Drahomanov, claimed that although Ukraine would reject Russian cultural influences in the long run, in the short run Ukrainians benefited from them. Drahomanov. *Chudatski dumky pro ukrains’ku natsional’nu spravu // R. S. Mischuk (Ed.). Drahomanov M. P. Vybrane*. Kyiv, 1991. Pp. 555, 557; M. Zalizniak. *Pro moderne moskofilstvo // Liternaturno-naukovy vistnyk*. 1913. No. 11. Pp. 360-71; S. Petliura. *Lysty do Dm. Dontsova // Liternaturno-naukovy vistnyk*. 1931. No. 11. Pp. 984-985; H. Kasianov. *Ukrain’ska intelihentsiia na rubezhi XIX–XX stolit’*. Kiev, 1993. Pp. 138-39; E. Malaniuk. *Pro domo sua // Veselka*. 1923. No. 7-8. Pp. 54-55; *Idei i dii // Idem*. 1923. No. 9-10. Pp. 39-40. In his most outspoken work, written in 1926 but not passed by the censors, Khvylovy stated: “is Ukraine a colony or not? – we have heard such talk for a long time. Under our conditions this is a dangerous question.” M. Khvylovy. *Ukraiina chy Malorosiiia // Mykola Khvylovy. Tvory v dvokh tomakh*. Kyiv, 1991. P. 591. See also Myroslav Shkandrij (Ed.). *Mykola Khvylovy. The Cultural Renaissance in Ukraine. Polemical Pamphlets 1925–26*. Edmonton, 1986; Myroslav Shkandrij. *Russia and Ukraine. Literature and the Discourse of Empire from Napoleonic to Postcolonial Times*. Montreal, 2001.

<sup>14</sup> Konstantyn Kononenko. *Ukraine and Russia. A History of Economic Relations between Ukraine and Russia (1654–1917)*. Milwaukee, 1958, is based primarily on 1920s Soviet publications and is the best account in English for the case that the Ukrainian provinces were colonies of the Russian metropole. There is no study on Russians as settler-colonists in Ukraine analogous to David Prochaska. *Making Algeria French. Colonialism in Bone 1870–1920*. Cambridge, 1990. Steven Velychenko. *The Issue of Russian Colonialism in Ukrainian Thought // Ab Imperio*. 2002. No. 1. Pp. 323-366.

<sup>15</sup> Max Weber. *Politische schriften*. Munich, 1921. S. 90. The speech was not published until 1921.

autonomous legal political unit, the literate had already envisaged it as a cultural/national and economic unit, and academics had produced a body of literature examining Russian–Ukrainian relations in terms of colonialism and imperialism. Nonetheless, national leaders, of whom the majority were moderate socialists, built their claim to autonomy on linguistic-cultural arguments. The idea of Ukraine as a Russian colony was limited to radicals.

One reason for this marginality was the censorship that restricted what little was published on colonialism to specialist academic publications. A second reason was probably tactical. Given the absence of any criticism before 1917 of Russian imperialism among those whom moderate national leaders regarded as potential allies, they would be alienated by the radical ideas of Mikhnovsky and Stasiuk, who claimed that Ukrainians were colonized like Boers, or Zulus, or Arabs. A third likely reason was that most all of the moderate Ukrainians who supported cultural activities had government jobs. As such, they were unlikely to support a condemnation of “Russian colonialism.” Finally, Ukrainians benefited from empire inasmuch as they served as officers or administrators in non-Russian territories that radicals designated as colonies. As national leaders were reformist moderates pleading for autonomy, it made more sense for them to loyally uphold imperial prestige than to hope for its decline. Anticolonialist ideas were therefore marginal in public discourse in 1917, when, unlike Polish and Finnish socialists, Ukrainian leaders demanded only autonomy within the borders of the empire restructured as a federated republican Russia [Rossiia] – what their Irish counterparts called “imperial federation.” Anticolonialist ideas appeared in some Central Rada and later Ukrainian National Republic (UNR) publications during the revolution but it was the Ukrainian left SDs and left SRs that used anti-imperialist, anticolonialist discourse most often.

Ukrainian left SDs and SRs created a specifically anticolonialist Marxist critique of Russian rule based on the idea that Ukraine was a Russian colony. Two strong exponents of this critique were Ukrainian communists Vasyl Shakhrai and Serhyi Mazlakh who in 1918 wrote *Do Khvyli. Shcho diiet'sia na Ukraini i z Ukrainoiu*.<sup>16</sup> The UCP formed in January 1920 by left-wing Ukrainian SDs (*Ukapisty*), and dissolved in January 1925, continued that critique. Ukrainian communism as a political-intellectual current disappeared in 1933 when Mykola Skrypnyk and Mykola Khvlovnyi committed

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<sup>16</sup> The Russian edition was confiscated. One hundred Ukrainian copies were allowed into stores – in Saratov. *Do Khvyli* is translated in Peter Potichnyi (Ed.). *On the Current Situation in Ukraine*. Ann Arbor, 1970. It has yet to be republished in Ukraine.

suicide because they concluded that under Stalin, revolutionary universalism, proletarian internationalism, and national revival were impossible. By 1939, former UCP members were either in prison, in exile, or dead and their writings lay forgotten in closed archives. This Ukrainian variant of “anticolonial Marxism” reappeared in Ivan Dzuiba’s *Internationalism or Russification* (1965). It remerged as a topic of academic inquiry in Ukraine after 1991 but remains little known elsewhere.<sup>17</sup> Today there is no Ukrainian Communist Party. The still existing CPU was formed in 1918 as a subbranch of the RCP, and has never advocated Ukrainian political independence.<sup>18</sup> As such, the CPU resembled the early Communist Parties of India (1925) and Algeria (1924). Initially made up overwhelmingly of settler-colonists, as in Ukraine, The Algerian Communist party in particular, reflected the interests of the imperial metropole and did not advocate secession from the empire. It claimed that communist success in the metropole would establish communism in the colonies, and it opposed independence on the grounds that the native people were opposed to progressive ideas and exploited above all by their own noncommunist leaders and “bourgeoisie.” The Algerian party supported secession only in 1956. South African workers used the slogan: “Workers of the World Unite for a White South Africa.”<sup>19</sup>

<sup>17</sup> The major English-language works are Christopher Ford. *Outline History of the Ukrainian Communist Party (Independentists): An Emancipatory Communism 1918–1925 // Debatte*. 2009. No. 2. Pp. 193-246; James E. Mace. *Communism and the Dilemmas of National Liberation*. Cambridge, MA, 1983; Maistrenko. *Borot’bism*; Dzuiba’s book has fourteen editions including three English, three Ukrainian, one Chinese, and one Catalanian.

<sup>18</sup> The nature of the CPU is reflected on the first page of the January 4, 2006, edition of its newspaper. Above the title “Kommunist,” a picture of Lenin, and the slogan “Workers of the World Unite,” we read: “Greetings on the occasion of the birth of Christ” – all in Russian. Below, a picture and greeting of the party leader is flanked by a picture of the metropolitan of the Ukrainian branch of the Russian Orthodox Church giving Christmas greetings – in Russian.

<sup>19</sup> Bolshevik leaders condemned their French comrades in Algeria for the attitudes they had toward Ukraine, and they backed the small independent faction, the equivalent of the UCP that they condemned in Ukraine. When in 1922 local communist leaders claimed a Muslim revolution would mark a return to feudalism and that a French revolution was a precondition of an Algerian revolution, Trotsky condemned their “slave-owner mentality.” The Indian Communist Party (ICP) formed in 1920 was independent of the British Party. The ICP disappeared into the Communist Party of India (CPI formed in 1925). In 1929 Moscow subordinated the CPI to the British Communist party. The Anglocentric imperialist superiority of the British party and the deferential obsequiousness of the CPI resembled the relationship between the RCP and the CPU. Allison Drew. *Bolshevizing Communist Parties: The Algerian and South African Experiences // International Review*

Some Ukrainian Marxists considered Ukraine before and after 1917, a Russian colony – a region ethnically distinct from the metropole, the object of settlement, national and social oppression, and a source of raw materials.<sup>20</sup> This was their most fundamental difference from Russian Marxists who did not regard non-Russian territories within the empire [Rossiia] as Russian (i.e., Great Russian) colonies and did not compare the tsarist empire, which they called “Rossiia,” with any other empire, except occasionally, the Habsburg Empire, which they called “Austria,” and considered a “multinational state” such as Switzerland or the United States. For Ukrainian Marxists “Russia” [Ukr. *Rosiiia*] meant ethnic or Great Russia [*Velyka Rosiia*], and was not synonymous with the Russian empire [Russ. *Rossiia*]. Russia as the imperial metropole could not be on the same analytical field as Ukraine the colony. Nor was Rossiia a multinational state with Ukrainians as one of the oppressed “minorities.” Rossiia was an empire within which the Russians and Russified non-Russians constituted the minorities scattered among non-Russian majorities.<sup>21</sup> Few today would accept such a strict delineation, as it is generally accepted that the status of Ukrainian provinces within the Romanov empire and of Ukraine within the Russian Soviet Republic differed

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of Social History. 2003. Vol. 48. Pp. 181-185; Emmanuel Sivan. *Communisme et nationalisme en Algérie 1920–1962*. Paris, 1976. See also Sobhanlal Datta Gupta. *Comintern and the Destiny of Communism in India 1919–1943*. Calcutta, 2006.

<sup>20</sup> Colonialism involves a part of the elite in one country cooperating/collaborating as a junior partner with a ruling elite of another country in a mutually advantageous relationship. Because local elites run local affairs supervised by bureaucrats and soldiers from the center, colonialism is not only a national but also a class phenomenon. Neocolonialism does not need central supervisory personnel and exercises control via monetary, ownership, and trade policies determined by elites in former imperial metropolises.

<sup>21</sup> Since all states are created using similar methods, whether they are subsequently labeled “empire” or “national state” or “multinational state” depends much on how their elites see them and how these terms were defined at the time of formation. Until the establishment of the Mandate System of the League of Nations in 1919, public opinion considered colonial issues a matter of internal policy. Rule over colonies was legal in international law – which did not apply to colonies. After World War II, colonies became subjects in international law and the legality of “colonialism” was disputed. By midcentury, the pejorative connotation of imposed control resulting in economic exploitation initially given the word “empire” by intellectual critics had become part of its accepted definition in all languages. Ian Steven Lustick. *State-Building Failure in British Ireland and French Algeria*. Berkeley, 1985; Idem. *Unsettled States Disputed Lands*. Ithaca, 1993; Mark Beissinger. *The Persisting Ambiguity of Empire // Post-Soviet Affairs*. 1995. No. 11. Pp. 149-184; Cleonie Q. Quayle. *Liberation Struggles in International Law*. Philadelphia, 1991. Pp. 82-121. On empires as structures: Alexander J. Motyl. *Imperial Ends: The Decay, Collapse, and Revival of Empires*. New York, 1992.

in respects from that of colonies in overseas empires.<sup>22</sup> Of the four types of colonies, Ukrainian lands did, however, resemble the “mixed-settler” kind. These include Latin American countries, North African countries, Korea, and Ireland. Accordingly, the Ukrainian Marxist case deserves attention, and, for purposes of analysis, Ukraine can be compared with Ireland. Not only are both geographically and culturally European but Ukrainian national activists during the first half of the century knew about and followed Irish events.

After 1801 neither country was separated from its metropole by administrative borders, and natives from both could make careers in central government bureaucracies if they knew the imperial language. In Ireland, Catholics could work in the internal civil service as of 1829. The ruling educated English and Russians considered their respective nations agents of progress and civilization, and that it was possible to “civilize” and assimilate the Irish and Ukrainian peasants with the English and Russians, respectively. The ruling elites considered Scots, English, and Irish, on the one hand, and “Great Russians” and “Little Russians,” on the other, single nations. Ukrainian and Irish nationalist radicals at the beginning of the century were a minority and the fact they spoke English or Russian, rather than Gaelic or Ukrainian, did not make them any less nationalist or anti-imperialist.<sup>23</sup> Both bemoaned the way that co-nationals collaborated in their own oppression – as in the aphorism “put an Irishman on a spit and you will always find another to turn him.” The moderate majority sought autonomy in return for loyalty. Few settler colonists in Irish and Ukrainian provinces assimilated or became creole-nationalist separatists as happened in Latin America. Most were empire loyalists who divided the surrounding majority population into the good “loyal” and bad “treasonous” – although English leaders by 1914, unlike their Russian counterparts, no longer had illusions about assimilating that

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<sup>22</sup> Lenin’s *Imperialism the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1916) excluded the tsarist empire. Lenin later noted that this was because of censorship, but those who used his text continued to exclude Russia from their purview nevertheless. His followers did not think the Russian empire had to disintegrate as other empires were supposed to. Although the book excluded Russia, was not written to explain domination, and its analysis is simply wrong, it long defined not only leftist but also critical liberal attitudes to empires. Bill Warren. *Imperialism Pioneer of Capitalism*. London, 1980; Anthony Brewer. *Marxist Theories of Imperialism. A Critical Survey*. London, 1980.

<sup>23</sup> The leading radical populists of *Narodna Volia* (Andrei Zheliabov, Semen Iakhnenko, Mykola Kyrbachych, Sofiia Perovska, Semen Barannikov, and Valerian Osynsky) were Ukrainian-born. Like the Irish Fenians and Republicans they wanted to decentralize the empire and autonomy – for which their Russian counterparts condemned them. *Literatura sotsialno-revoliutsionnoi partii “Narodnoi Voli.”* No place, 1905. Pp. 163-164.

majority.<sup>24</sup> In Ireland, extremist empire loyalists formed the Ulster Unionist Council in 1904 to oppose the national movement while their counterparts in Kyiv two years later formed the “Kyivan Club of Russian Nationalists.” The former did not think such a thing as Irish nationality existed, just as the latter did not think a Ukrainian nationality existed.<sup>25</sup> One difference between the two countries was that Ukrainian nationalism was secular and socialist, unlike Irish republican nationalism – wherein James Connolly represented a minority. Another was the lack of paramilitary groups in the Ukrainian provinces in 1914, whereas in Ireland, loyalists and nationalists by that year had both mobilized volunteer militias approximately 100,000 strong.

In the 1970s, there was much debate about Ireland’s colonial status because not all agreed that Ireland had been a colony. What participants did agree on was that the Irish both sustained and undermined the empire they belonged to and were simultaneously colonial and imperial. Lines between metropolis and regions, center and periphery, native and foreign were not rigid. Catholics could be imperial loyalists, Protestants – Irish patriots. English rule marginalized the Irish language, and it was difficult to imagine an Irishman who was not also English. Nonetheless, the country produced one of the world’s strongest and longest existing revolutionary republican nationalist movements.<sup>26</sup> The Irish debate is relevant to Ukrainian–Russian relations because it shows that colonial-type dependency should not be thought of in spatial terms but as a process through which societies were integrated into a world system that, since the sixteenth century, was centered

<sup>24</sup> Paul McMahon. *British Spies and Irish Rebels. British Intelligence and Ireland, 1916–1945*. Woodbridge, UK, 2008. Pp. 163-714; David W. Miller. *Queen’s Rebels: Ulster Loyalism in Historical Perspective*. Dublin, 1998; Gary K. Peatling. *British Opinion and Irish Self-Government 1865–1925*. Dublin, 2001; Edward G. Lengel. *The Irish through British Eyes*. London, 2002; Michael de Nie. *The Eternal Paddy. Irish Identity and the British Press 1798–1882*. Madison, 2004.

<sup>25</sup> The Kyivan Club, alongside the “Party of Legal Order” and “Russian Brotherhood” were explicitly anti-Ukrainian organizations, but did not constitute a single coordinated extremist loyalist group in the Ukrainian provinces as did the Ulster Unionists in Ireland. Dozens of loosely related loyalist groups, usually termed “Black Hundreds,” appeared throughout the Russian empire between 1904 and 1914. The largest was the Union of Russian People.

<sup>26</sup> Liam Kennedy. *Colonialism, Religion and Nationalism in Ireland*. Belfast, 1996; Clare Carroll, Patricia King. *Ireland and Postcolonial Theory*. Cork, 2003; Kevin Kenny. *Ireland and the British Empire*. Oxford, 2004; Stephen Howe. *Ireland and Empire. Colonial Legacies in Irish History and Culture*. Oxford, 2000; Terrence John McDonough. *Was Ireland a Colony? Economy, Politics, Ideology and Culture in Nineteenth-Century Ireland*. Dublin, 2006. See also Thomas E. Hachey. *Britain and Irish Separatism from the Fenians to the Free State, 1867–1922*. Washington, 1984.

in northwestern Europe.<sup>27</sup> This, in turn, is how Ukrainian Marxists tried to understand Ukraine. Geography is irrelevant to understanding the mechanism of this integration because it was the same regardless of distance and barriers. National borders defined the specific circumstances that influenced the mechanism but did not nullify the broader universal context. Accordingly, a region or peoples can be both “European/Western” and “colonized.” From such a perspective, Ireland and Ukraine can be compared not only with each other but with Finland, Catalonia, pre-1917 Bohemia, Algeria, or Korea. Marxist anticolonialist writings from these countries can also be classified alongside African and Asian writing. Ukrainians today have yet to rethink their imperial links as thoroughly as have the Irish.<sup>28</sup>

### *Three Key Works*

Ukrainian Marxism combined national with social liberation. M. N. Roy’s account of the founding of India’s Communist Party could also describe the situation in Ukraine: “I had only told them that driving the British out of India would be no revolution, if it was followed by replacing foreign exploiters by native ones... Instinctively idealists, they readily agreed with my opinion and jumped to the conclusion that if the revolution had to liberate the toiling masses it would have to be a communist revolution.”<sup>29</sup> As a “peripheral” phenomenon, Ukrainian Marxism shared with others like it common theoretical postulates: it regarded the exploited or colonized as a “proletarian nation,” considered that changes in the relations of production did not automatically eliminate foreign rule and that the proletariat of ruling nations could be as imperialist chauvinist and exploitative in its attitudes toward former subjects as their nobility or bourgeoisie. The colonized were “proletarian” because they were dominated by a foreign ruling class and their liberation could only be socialist in nature. The future would be characterized not by classless society but by classless nations. National freedom and independent states were impossible for as long as international capital

<sup>27</sup> Joe Cleary. *Outrageous Fortune. Capital and Culture in Modern Ireland*. Dublin, 2006. Pp. 11-35.

<sup>28</sup> The study of colonialism in Latin America, where creole elites still dominate the native population and political independence did not include decolonization, also provides insights into the Ukrainian condition. Mabel Moranda, Enrique Dussel, Carlos A. Jauregui (Eds.). *Coloniality at Large. Latin America and the Postcolonial Debate*. Durham, 2008. Post-1991 Ukrainian historical discussions are summarized in V. Kravchenko. *Ukraina. Imperiia. Rosiia*. Kyiv, 2011. Pp. 391-528.

<sup>29</sup> Manabendra Nath Roy. *M. N. Roy’s Memoirs*. Delhi, 1984. P. 464.

dominated national markets, but social liberation could not occur without national liberation and the creation of a national state. “Anti-imperialist” programs had to include independent socialist republics and parties for every nation and the idea that they would unite in a confederation of equal socialist national states with their own parties. Two key differences between Ukrainian and Muslim communists were that the latter claimed that the future of the world revolution lay in colonized eastern countries, not Western Europe, and that alliances with national bourgeoisie, which included even religious parties, were necessary for the duration of the liberation struggle. Because national liberation required the participation of the bourgeoisie, class divisions had to be ignored during the struggle. To do otherwise would drive the bourgeoisie into an alliance with their imperial class allies that could defeat the revolution.<sup>30</sup> A Ukrainian SD explained in January 1919 that the destruction of the bourgeoisie as a class of exploiters would not mean the end of exploitation. The proletariat in power needs decades to rid itself of the economic legacy of the bourgeoisie and that is why Ukraine had to be an independent republic. “There is only one response [from Bolsheviks] to the demands of the Ukrainian citizen to have at least the same guarantees for [their] national and cultural rights as do the representatives of the ‘fraternal nation’ here in Ukraine,” complained another: “[that this demand is] chauvinism, middle-class and counterrevolutionary.”<sup>31</sup>

Ukrainian left-SDs initially welcomed the second Bolshevik occupation of Ukraine in January 1919. But after a few weeks they condemned the CPU as a “reactionary anti-Ukrainian party” subservient to “the imperialist Russian Bolshevik regime” [*rosiiskoho imperialistychnoho boshevyts’koho uriadu*]. “It is a party that obeys the Russian imperialist Bolshevik government. As such, it is profoundly reactionary and has no place in Ukraine.” “To us, under the slogan ‘power to the Soviets’ comes a government that calls itself Ukrainian but that we do not and cannot recognize as such.” The second CPU government proclaimed that November 1918 in Kursk was not legitimate because it had not been ratified by the Congress of Soviets, and the Ukrainians demanded: “the [newly arrived Bolshevik government] must clearly respond as to whether it actively wants to build a socialist Ukraine or

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<sup>30</sup> Sultan-Galiev wrote at the same time as the Ukrainian communists. In 1919, he was already condemning Columbus, “freedom-loving America” and cosmopolitan Europe because they were built on the bones of millions of Africans and Amerindians. Mirsaid Sultan-Galiev. *Izbrannyye Trudy* / Ed. H. G. Gizzatullin, D. R. Sharafutdinov. Pp. 141-145, 198-203.

<sup>31</sup> *Robitnycha hazeta*. 1919. 7 January; *Chervonyi prapor*. 1919. 9 March.

whether it regards her as a Russian colony.” Ukrainian leaders had no illusions about Ukraine’s Russian proletarians: “blinded by Russian Bolshevik chauvinist imperialism” but waxed philosophical about them. With time, they thought, as the Ukrainian revolution developed, the non-Ukrainian proletariat would shed these “old Russian leftovers” and march alongside the Ukrainian nation and Ukrainian proletarians.<sup>32</sup>

Russian Bolshevik rule in practice showed Ukrainian left SDs that Bolsheviks would not be “marching alongside” them and they continued their critiques. In February 1920, UCP cofounder Iury Mazurenko explained that his party and the CPU had the same goal; only the former acted through “our local proletariat” while the latter were “communist governor-generals.” “...B]ecause of this we seem to be nationalists to you and to us you represent the metropole desirous of benefiting from the colony; although it is true our mistakes lead us toward petty-bourgeois chauvinism and your mistakes [lead you] toward bourgeois imperialism.” Ukraine was of vital importance as the door to revolution in Western Europe, he continued, but that door was closed “because of the mistakes of the Russian Communist Party and its filial branch in Ukraine.” Only the UCP knew local conditions and could utilize the national movement against the bourgeoisie. The national movement was a tool that could be used by either the bourgeoisie or the proletariat, but to ignore it as did the Bolsheviks was childish. That movement, moreover, was not a matter of language and folksongs and culture but of economics – upon which states are built or destroyed. In all empires today, in places like Ireland and India, the revolution has “... the character of national economic liberation and within [those empires] the national movement will be a revolutionary factor if the party of the revolutionary proletariat can take charge of it and use it appropriately.” This included the economic decentralization of the former empire. While the national state may be undesirable in the long term, in the short term it was a necessity to retain power and prevent enemies from exploiting the national movement. As concerned the future: “...we, the communists in a former colony, can better see which paths and methods best suit the given territory than those who worked and work today in the metropole.”<sup>33</sup>

Co-leader Andryi Richytsky elaborated on differences in the treatment of “national-economic liberation,” empires and colonies in the Ukrainian

<sup>32</sup> Cited in P. Khrystiuk. *Zamitky i materialy do istorii Ukrain’skoi revoliutsii 1917–20*. Reprint ed. New York, 1969 [1921]. Part IV. Pp. 55-56, 72; Chervonyi prapor. 1919. 6, 9, 12, February 1919. “Rosiiskoho” which in Ukrainian means “Great Russian.”

<sup>33</sup> Chervonyi prapor. 1920. 8 February.

and Russian party programs. Quoting *The Communist Manifesto* on the importance of national particularities he noted that the fundamental difference between the two was that the former was the party of a subjugated proletariat. “The Russian Communist Party program is the program of a proletariat in a ruling metropolitan nation, [while] the program of the Ukrainian Communist Party is that of a proletariat in an oppressed colonial nation – that is where they differ.” One did and the other did not have to deal with a national issue except as an abstraction. The Russian program referred to the Soviet Republic system as a model but ignored that in practice the system did not work because it was not implemented as written and, because “it failed to link the national and the economic.” For that reason, the RCP program contained only vague generalities about colonial and national issues, while the UCP proposed detailed practical policies because it represented “the proletariat of the nation-colony.” Unlike the Russian program, the Ukrainian stressed that because capitalism created nations once the war had weakened the weakest empires, the Austrian and Russian, the communist revolution not only occurred first there, but was based on the national units forged by capitalism. The UCP stood for a communist revolution in the independent Ukraine that the 1917 revolution had separated from imperial Russia. Ukraine’s Bolsheviks talked about autonomy and federalism, but their policies were like those of the Kadets, in that both their leaders imagined an “economic unity of Ukraine and Russia.” There could be no independent Ukrainian SSR if Ukraine and Russia were economically united. In a polemic with CPU leaders in the summer of 1920, Rychytsky reiterated that the previous year’s Ukrainian left-SD uprising had been directed against not the Soviets but the CPU “occupation regime” in an attempt to channel the rage that CPU policies had provoked. “We stand as guilty before the revolution [for the uprising] as do you with your Russifying occupation policies in Ukraine, which demoralized the proletariat and drove the peasant masses to fight against your regime.” Ukrainian communists who had learned from that mistake were waiting that winter for Ukraine’s Bolsheviks to do the same, unite with them into one party, and recognize Ukraine as a republic with its own Red Army equal and not subordinated to Russia.<sup>34</sup>

While in *Do Khvyli*, Shakhrai and Mazlakh had clearly labeled Ukraine’s Bolsheviks “imperialists,” they accused Lenin and the RCP of imperialism only indirectly and directed their critique against the CPU. In chapter 3, they condemned the U.S. president: “And Woodrow Wilson manages everything

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<sup>34</sup> Chervonyi prapor. 1920. 4, 26, March; 19 June.

himself, he has taken upon himself the role of world gendarme and hangman of the world revolution.” After analyzing Bolshevik policy in Ukraine they asserted, “The Russian proletariat made a social revolution and praise and respect is therefore due it. But this does not mean that it did not inherit from tsarist Russia a bit of imperialism or of [so-called] historical and ethnographic rights.” Because the overwhelming majority of Bolsheviks in Ukraine were Russian or Russified, their party logically could not represent an “oppressed nation” and obviously avoided the issue of national liberation. The book closed with the observation: “When one examines the spread of Bolshevik Russia and the practice of self-determination from this vantage point, it is very difficult to see to what extent your self-determination, Comrade Lenin, differs from that of Woodrow Wilson.”<sup>35</sup> A year later the *Memorandum* omitted the comparison with Wilson but explicitly referred to Bolshevik rule in Ukraine as “Russian occupation” because it ignored national issues and imagined that these could be placated by simple “bourgeois cultural-national autonomy.” It described the CPU as totally dependent on the RCP but explicitly accused only the former of being unable to overcome “the imperialist legacy of old Russia.”<sup>36</sup>

The UCP’s *Memorandum* to the Comintern (CI) was written in Russian. It contained ideas found in the Comintern’s 1920 Manifesto and later “third world” anticolonial Marxism. Imperialism, it explained, both developed colonial economies and created nations, while simultaneously threatening the colonized with “the destruction of their national political life as well as their national culture.” Because it created a weak national bourgeoisie in backward countries such as Ukraine, national liberation coincided with a struggle against capitalism and communists had to lead the national struggle to ensure that it became a communist revolution. Inasmuch as colonized nations represented capitalism’s “weakest link,” national revolutions in colonized nations had to be exploited and taken beyond their “bourgeois democratic stage.” Without a preceding national liberation culminating in

<sup>35</sup> Potichnyj (Ed.). *On the Current Situation*. Pp. 9, 65, 97, 106, 165, 176. Article 3 of Wilson’s draft of the League Covenant, which did allow for the self-determination of British and French possessions, did not make the final version. As adopted by the Versailles Treaty, articles 6 and 10 of Wilson’s 14 points allowed the territorial integrity of the Russian and Austrian empires. The Entente recognized neither Ukraine nor Ireland.

<sup>36</sup> P. Bachynsky (Ed.). *Dokumenty trahichnoi istorii Ukrainy (1917–1922)*. Kyiv, 1999. Pp. 535–36, 544. For the English translation, see Chris Ford. *Memorandum of the Ukrainian Communist Party to the Second Congress of the III Communist International July–August 1920 // Debate*. 2009. No. 2. Pp. 248–262. The *Memorandum* was published as a pamphlet in Vienna in 1920.

a national state led by an indigenous party, and not one based in another country, no socialist revolution was possible. Each nation had to have its own socialist Soviet republic that would then be closely allied with all others. The problem in Ukraine was that its colonial legacy had left it with a large Russian urban-worker settler population isolated from and indifferent to Ukrainian national interests. As a result, the CPU leadership, imbued with “the imperialist legacy of old Russia,” ignored the national revolution. Instead of supporting and carrying this revolution through its “bourgeois” stage by creating an independent state, between 1917 and 1920 CPU leaders opposed the Ukrainian National Republic and fostered counterrevolution instead of socialism. Their internal party-dictatorship, centralization, and reliance on Russian workers and bureaucrats turned their Soviet Ukrainian republic into a “Russian [Russ. *ruskuiu*] occupation regime,” alienated Ukrainians from socialism and their party, provoked a “bourgeois restoration,” and ignited a national war between Ukraine and Russia. Only the UCP as an independent indigenous party could reverse these developments by establishing a Soviet socialist republic independent of but allied to Soviet Russia.

The task of the international proletariat [the Communist Party] is to draw toward the communist revolution and the construction of a new society not only the advanced capitalist countries but also the less developed peoples of the colonies taking advantage of their national revolutions. To fulfill this task, it must take an active part in these revolutions and play the leading role in the perspective of the permanent revolution, preventing the national bourgeoisie from limiting them at the level of fulfilling the demands of national liberation. It is necessary to continue the struggle through to the seizure of power and the installation of the dictatorship of the proletariat and, to lead the bourgeois democratic revolution to the end through the establishment of national states destined to join the universal network of the international union of the emerging Soviet republics, based on the forces of local proletarian and working masses of each country, with the mutual aid of all the detachments of world revolution.

The UCP phrased its position as follows in 1924: “The Ukrainian Communist Party is the party of the oppressed and colonized Ukrainian proletariat, called forth by life and social evolution to solve the colonial problem in the conditions that exist in Ukraine.” This could only be done via the CI and whoever opposed this opposed the CI.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Chervonyi prapor (Kyiv, mimeographed monthly), May 1924. The article was preceded by a quote from Zinoviev, who, that February, said that communist parties of those  
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Ukrainian communists accused Moscow's local agents in the CPU of seeing Ukraine from Moscow's perspective and judging it from the point of view of the Russian (i.e., Great Russian) instead of the world revolution. Economic ties did not require political union and, in any case, the war and revolution had destroyed those ties so it made no sense to try to use them to rejoin "old state formations."<sup>38</sup> Developing these ideas in February 1920, Mazurenko explained that communists had to use nationalism in the interests of revolution just as they used the state – otherwise it would be exploited by their enemies. These remarks anticipated Lenin's idea expressed five months later at the Second Comintern Conference:

...for us communists from colonies, the paths and means required on a given territory [to rebuild] are more visible and obvious than they are for those who worked and work in the metropole. What is now happening in Russia will also happen in England, the Balkans, Asia, and elsewhere; Ukraine, Ireland, India, and Macedonia, and on and on. Revolution there will have the nature of national economic liberation and the national movement there will be a revolutionary factor, if the party of the revolutionary proletariat can take it in hand and use it as it should be used.

Decentralizing the old imperial structures was as necessary as establishing a dictatorship of the proletariat on each given territory of each given nationality that would control the economic life of each given nationality. Mazurenko argued that former imperial economies had to be decentralized and placed in the hands of national states controlled by the local proletariat as a temporary expedient. This would ensure that "capitalists" could not use the nation-state against the "proletariat" and that nationalism would not be used to "divide the proletariat." This national state could also begin to deal not only with chauvinist tendencies within the petty bourgeoisie, but also with "that section of the proletariat that still suffers from it."<sup>39</sup>

The UCP "Thesis on the National and Colonial Question" differed from the Comintern's "Thesis" because it linked revolution and liberation with decentralization and condemned Russian Bolshevik principles as empty rheto-

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countries whose bourgeoisie oppress colonies should spend 50 percent of their time on colonial issues, or else they could not be considered communist.

<sup>38</sup> Chervonyi prapor. 25 February, 1919.

<sup>39</sup> Mazurenko reasoned that the Bolsheviks were responsible for the pogroms because they had placed Communist Jews in positions of authority to implement hated policies. Tsentralnyi derzhavnyi arkhiv Hromadskykh Obiednan' Ukrainy (TsDAHO). F. 8. Op. 1. Spr. 13. L. 21. Published in Chervonyi prapor. 11 March 1920.

ric. It did not demand centralization or invoke the Russian experience as the model for dealing with national issues. Written by Richytsky, it begins with the standard Leninist analysis of how the national bourgeoisie in colonies fighting against their imperialist rivals for a share of the market initially uses its own population, but then turns the struggle for an independent national state against the native proletariat and working masses. For the latter, national independence without the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the dictatorship of labor only means a change of owners and imperial protectors. For the proletariat, true freedom means freedom from both their own and foreign bourgeoisie. The “Thesis” then asserts that an independent state was the only means through which oppressed nations and colonies could attain their political, cultural, and economic liberation. Communist parties were to ensure the ultimate creation of a voluntary union of all nations. Distinguishing between paternalistic-feudal and early bourgeois-type societies, the “Thesis,” echoing *The Communist Manifesto*, specified that in the latter the proletariat can fight their own bourgeoisie if “it forms itself as a nation organized within the national framework of its country and solves its national question from the perspective of taking the bourgeois democratic revolution to completion and then struggling to establish its dictatorship.” The only way a former colony could be transformed into a Soviet republic equal in status to its former metropolitan center was if it was independent. Each national proletariat had to free the productive forces of its own country from dependency on the “artificial industrial and financial centers of the former metropolis” and control its own economy.

The October revolution that occurred in a “multinational colonial empire” was the first to place this historical national program before the proletariat but “the Russian proletariat failed to rise to the occasion.” Its chauvinist and colonialist attitudes, which Lenin foresaw, turned class struggle into nationalist wars that only helped imperialist interventionists. “Soviet power in many former outlying regions (Ukraine, Turkestan, Belarus’) was taken by colonialist, petty-bourgeois, settler-peasant, bureaucrat, and Russian intellectual elements that exploited Bolshevism for their own nationalist purposes.” Terminating these nationalist relationships meant destroying “single and indivisible” Russia [Rossiia], the psychological notion that it had comprised a “center” with “regions,” and transforming what had been the empire into a union of independent, federated, and united “Soviet Republics of the East.” For the Ukrainian proletariat the national and colonial question involved terminating colonial ties with Russia and freeing its productive forces from dependency on the old center. The Ukrainian proletariat had to

be raised to the level of a national class and Ukraine demanded the termination of all bureaucratic ties to Moscow.<sup>40</sup>

The question of development of Soviet statehood in forms appropriate to the national specificities of various nations, [including use of] their languages in administration was decided, formally, by the ruling Russian Communist Party in all the former outlying regions of Russia. However, because elements of the Russificatory petty bourgeoisie and intellectuals usurped Soviet power thanks to the weakness and low level of class and cultural development of the proletariat and workers, and the separation of the workers aristocracy of the former nonstate nations from the people because of Russification, this issue is still far from resolved. The entire [governmental] apparatus of the Ukr. SSR is filled with Russifying elements, its language is Russian, it even strongly opposes using Ukrainian, assimilating even those few Ukrainian elements in it and thus, [the apparatus], bureaucratically isolated by its desks from the masses, is objectively becoming a tool of Russification. That is why the call for Ukrainian as the state language is and long will be actual, and it is the task of the Ukrainian Communist Party to advocate it.<sup>41</sup>

Vasyl Mazurenko's 1921 study of the economy criticized Bolshevik economic centralization and confirmed what some Russian economists had argued three years earlier: that ethnic or Great Russia could exist economically without Ukraine and that if Ukraine needed manufactured imports from Russia then it was the classic result of decades of colonialist imperialism. Nothing Ukraine needed justified the continuation of political dependency as those items could be obtained by developing manufacturing in Ukraine. Mazurenko observed it was more rational for Ukraine to freely trade for what it needed with advanced developed countries than to force it to trade with technologically backward Great Russia. And even if for the moment it could trade only with the Russian and other Soviet republics, then it had to be as an equal and not as a dependency. Noting how Russian Soviet publications referred to Ukraine and Poland as "western borderlands," he asks why the Foreign Ministry wrote books condemning England's exploitation of India, while, simultaneously, the Trade and Economics Ministry published articles about "reuniting the manufacturing capacity of united Russia." Russians who talked about "reuniting our borderlands" so as to

<sup>40</sup> TsDAHO. F. 8. Op. 1. Spr. 48. Ll. 42-44, 47-48; Jane Degras (Ed.). *The Communist International 1919-1943*. London, 1955. Part I. Pp. 138-144.

<sup>41</sup> TsDAHO. F. 8. Op. 1. Spr. 48. L. 51v.

“recreate the industry of united Russia” were no different from Englishmen who thought in terms of “our inseparable borderland India,” and also that England would die without its colonies. Russia, if not most of the world, had been dependent on German chemicals. Did this mean Russia and the world had to be politically subject to Germany? Why should Ukraine be dependent on Russia for wood products if the Baltic countries, Lithuania, and Poland produced more wood products than Russia?<sup>42</sup> Systematically comparing production figures, Mazurenko argued that not only Russia but world communism would benefit if Russia began to build its economy around its own resources and not those of the old empire. Even in coal production, Russia could do without Ukraine. The International had to be told: “save communism from Muscovite imperialism!” From a socialist perspective, there was no economic rationale for centralization. It led to power for Moscow and dependency and exploitation for non-Russian republics. Why, he asked, was it acceptable for Russian planners and economists to think about making Russia maximally independent of materials and production from non-Russian areas, while simultaneously endeavoring to make the latter dependent on Russian production? “From where have such imperialist ambitions on Ukraine appeared among our Russian comrades?” asked Mazurenko. He put the blame on nonparty experts who sympathized with the new regime hoping it would restore their empire. He hoped this “unthought-out” very noncommunist Muscovite attempt to rule new colonies would pass, and he expressed absolute opposition to Ukrainian subordination to Russia.

Factories producing goods in Great Russia from raw materials imported from Ukraine did constitute an economic system but like that of a metropole and an exploited colony. If Russian comrades use this kind of argument to justify Indian independence, then they should also use it to justify Ukrainian independence as only then could Ukraine increase its industrial power. Ukraine must have no more and no less independence than would a Soviet Germany or Italy or Persia or Russia. Could anyone even imagine, he

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<sup>42</sup> V. Mazurenko. *Ekonomichna samostiinist Ukrainy v tsyfrakh*. Vienna, 1921. Pp. 8, 11, 13, 16-17; G. M. Krzhizhanovskii (Ed.). *Voprosy ekonomicheskogo raionirovaniia SSSR. Sbornik materialov i statei (1917–1929)*. Moscow, 1957, reproduces articles by the Central Planning Commission (Gosplan) planners from 1920 to 1924, which reflected the thinking Mazurenko condemned. They juxtaposed Russocentric “economically rational” central planning to planning around “leftovers of lost sovereign rights” (72), referred to “the rebirth of the Russian national economy” (120, 208) and “the future Russian economy,” and considered “the national economy of the USSR” synonymous with “the entire economy on the territory of Russia” (224).

wondered, the technologically backward Russia commanding and exploiting financially and administratively the industry of a Soviet Germany as it did Ukrainian industry?<sup>43</sup>

### *Ukrainian Anticolonialism and National Communism*

Today men such as Tan Malaka are regarded as founders of the “national” and “anticolonial” Marxism that justified secession from empires, led by a “progressive national bourgeoisie” in the name of development – also classified as a form of nationalism. Ukrainian Marxists should be included within this group. It was they, not the Yugoslavs, who created the world’s second “national communist” movement after the Russians. They also initiated the world’s first intracommunist war when they took up arms against the RCP in March 1919 – fifty years to the month before the Chinese did so.<sup>44</sup> As Shakhrai noted in 1919: “The Ukrainian revolutionary national movement gives (and will give) much historical material about the nature of national movements in general and their role in the epoch of imperialism and the beginning of the socialist proletarian revolution.”<sup>45</sup> Ukrainian Marxist writings on capitalism, national oppression, Russian colonialism, and imperialism, accordingly, should be included within the corpus of “anticolonialist Marxism.”

Scholars normally associated “national communism” with the countries of the old Soviet Bloc. Milovan Djilas popularized the term in his *New Class* (1957): “No single form of communism . . . exists in any other way than as national communism. In order to maintain itself it must become national.” A few years earlier then ex-communist Roy noted: “Communism in Asia is essentially nationalism painted Red.” However, the Dutch Social Democrat Pannakoek and Russian monarchists Nicholas Ustrialov and Vasili Shulgin pointed out as early as 1920 that it was the Russians who first “nationalized”

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<sup>43</sup> Mazurenko. *Ekonomichna samostiinist Ukrainy*. Pp. 27, 30, 34, 38, 40, 49.

<sup>44</sup> Between March and July 1919, Ukrainian left-SDs tried but failed to coordinate the massive Ukrainian anti-Bolshevik uprisings around their own military detachments led by Danylo Terpylo (Zeleny). The only secondary study to date of Independentist attempts to lead this anti-Bolshevik resistance concludes that it was a failure. M. Kovalchuk. *Rol Vseukrainskoho revkomu ta Holovnoho povstanskoho shtabu v antybilshovytskomu povstanskomu rusi // Pamiat’ stolit*. 2000. No. 5. Pp. 94-107. See also chapter 3 of my *Painting Imperialism and Nationalism Red. The Ukrainian Communist Critique of Russian Communist Rule in Ukraine* (University of Toronto Press, forthcoming).

<sup>45</sup> V. Shakhrai (Ed.). *N. Lenin. Statti po natsionalnomu pytannju*. Pereklad z Rossiiskoi na Ukrains’ku. Saratov, 1919. P. ii.

communism. This began when Lenin's Russian Social Democratic and Labor party (RSDLP) adopted practices and traits that made it unlike any other European SD party. It had to function clandestinely, it was conspiratorial, organized at places of work not residence, admitted full-time activists only, and robbed banks to finance itself. The primacy of déclassé intellectuals within the party also distinguished it from other Social Democratic parties – as admitted by Russian delegates themselves at the 1904 Socialist Conference in Amsterdam. “The economic and political conditions of his [Lenin's] Russian background had frozen him in a kind of fundamentalism that was felt [by European socialists] to be hopelessly out of tune with contemporary reality.”<sup>46</sup> Insofar as Russian Bolshevism was not a universal phenomenon but a product of a specific place, its dispersion, even within the borders of the empire, as pointed out by Muslim and Ukrainian Marxists, followed violent imposition rather than peaceful enlightenment. The first of those who were later termed “critical” or “western” Marxists, Herman Gorter and Anton Pannekoek, in 1920 also identified Bolshevism as a distinctly Russian national phenomenon produced by people ignorant of capitalism as it existed in Europe. What the Bolshevik Russian SD and later Communist Party did share with British, French, and German SDs, until 1918, however, was a refusal to allow separate organizations within the party for subject nationalities within the empire. Lenin claimed that his party was not only the single legitimate representatives of Russia's [Velikorossiiia] workers, but of all Russian and non-Russian workers in the Russian empire [Rossiia].<sup>47</sup>

By 1917, Lenin's party was distinctly “Russian” not only by virtue of the ethnic origins of most of its members but also because its organizational structure and values were those of the autocratic centralized Russian political culture in which it developed. It remained “Russian” after 1917. In power, much as the Jacobins had renewed royal centrist-etatism in France, RCP leaders renewed tsarist Russocentric etatism. The issue involved not only

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<sup>46</sup> Neil Harding. *Leninism*. Durham, 1996. P. 51.

<sup>47</sup> Bolshevik leaders refused representation in the Comintern to communist parties from any former Russian-ruled country – quashing two attempts by Ukrainians for membership in 1920 and 1924. This was contrary to Engels's views on party organization; in 1872, he supported the Irish claim for separate status from the British in the International. Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels. *Collected Works*. London, 1975–2005. Vol. 23. Pp. 154–157. In 1913 the British Labour Party (including the British Socialist Party as of 1916) recognized the Irish Labour Party as a separate party. In reaction, northerners created the Belfast Labour Party, which was not recognized by the British party. The Socialist Party of Ireland was also separate from the British Socialist Party. The latter, alongside British Communists, opposed Irish independence in 1918.

administrative centralization. First, once tsarist bureaucrats decided to end their strike in January 1918 and began working for the new government, they did so in Russian thereby effectively “nationalizing” it. Second, the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk institutionally identified the Bolsheviks with the thirty provinces of ethnic or Great Russia making them, despite their internationalist rhetoric, into the creators of the first modern Russian national state. Third, as the Bolsheviks extended their control over non-Russian territories, and educated non-Russians either fled or refused to work for them, they had to rehire and/or import from Russia, Russian and Russified tsarist personnel to fill their offices.<sup>48</sup> By working in Russian these people renewed centralized Russian-language administration beyond ethnic Russian borders. Four, Lenin’s appeal to Russian patriotism during the 1920 war against Poland, even though no Russian ethnic territory was involved, and then Stalin’s proclamation in 1924 of the theory of “socialism in one country,” explicitly legitimized the link between ethnic or Great Russia, the USSR, and communism. The USSR did not become a confederation with Esperanto as a lingua franca. Finally, almost all of the Bolshevik CPU’s overwhelmingly Russified or Russian members never lost the contempt for rural Ukrainians that they inherited from tsarist times. This contempt was reinforced by an interpretation of Marxism that dismissed rural populations as “backward” and “reactionary.” Consequently, they refused to learn and use Ukrainian, although they lived and worked in Ukraine. Accordingly, these Russians in Soviet Ukraine, like those in tsarist Ukrainian territories, can be compared to the Spanish in Latin America or French in Algeria. These people were not immigrants but settlers/colonists because they did not have to learn or use the language of the majority among whom they lived. Not all Russified Ukrainians who considered their origins and parents’ language a stigma rather than a badge before 1917, it might be added, changed their attitudes as citizens of Soviet Ukraine.

Russian Bolsheviks, nonetheless, claimed their values were universal. They considered themselves “internationalists,” not “national communists” – a term Lenin in his *Left-wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder* (1920) reserved for parties that did not follow his dictates. Although its members were oblivious to how much it was a Russian national phenomenon, the Bolshevik left-wing of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party, renamed

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<sup>48</sup> As of 1922 approximately 30 percent of Soviet Ukraine’s officials were declared Ukrainians and 60 percent were Russian and Russified non-Russians. Velychenko. *State-Building in Revolutionary Ukraine. A Comparative study of Governments and Bureaucrats 1917–1922*. Toronto, 2011. Pp. 200-203.

in 1918 the Russian Communist Party, can be considered the first national communist party, in light of which the Ukrainian figures as the second.

Ukrainian left-SDs never called themselves “national communists.” Apparently, the term appears to have been used first in August 1917, by a Russian SR criticizing Ukrainian SDs for not being “really revolutionary” like the Ukrainian SRs.<sup>49</sup> It appears again during the spring of 1919 as a term of abuse. In April 1919 when Ukrainian left-SRs were negotiating with the Bolsheviks for a share in the Soviet government, a Bolshevik critic labeled “Ukrainian national communism” as “the worst enemy of the communist revolution in Ukraine.”<sup>50</sup> That summer, in turn, a Ukrainian left SR used “national communism” to discredit “All Russian national patriotic communist Bolsheviks who want to create a Soviet Russia within the historical borders of the tsarist empire.” He claimed they had to be stopped to prevent the emergence of a huge centralized parasitic bureaucracy and not to give credence to anticommunist opponents who equated Bolsheviks with tsarist imperialists. The Ukrainian Bolshevik Dmytro Manuilsky then used the term in January 1920 to discredit the UCP: “The Ukrainian bourgeoisie want to nationalize communism and restrict the workers–peasants movement within national lines.”<sup>51</sup> Ukrainian communists, meanwhile, stressed that they were not a “national” party. An anonymous author specified in 1920 that they wanted a territorial not an ethnic Ukrainian party separate from the Russian that would include proletarians of all nationalities “within the borders of the Ukrainian revolution.” “We decisively separate ourselves from those who solve the Ukrainian revolution from the point of view of Russian interests rather than those of the socialist revolution. We will never assist such national-economic politics in Ukraine which *will be* a politics

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<sup>49</sup> V. Nahorny. *Bilshovyzm ta Ukrainykyi national kommunizm v dobu revoliutsii (1917–1920 rr.)* / Cand. Dissert., Kyivskyi Derzhavnyi lnhvistychnyi universytet, 1995. P. 61. Karl Radek used “national communism” in December 1919 to criticize the German Communist Party for cooperating with the German Right against the Entente powers. The term should not be confused with “national Bolshevism” coined by Radek that year. German left-SDs used this term to refer to the anti-Entente movement they were trying to organize. Whites in Russia who had joined the Bolsheviks hoping they would restore the empire called themselves *Smenovekhovtsy*. Lenin in 1920 condemned “German National Bolshevism” and in 1922 classified *Smenovekhovtsy* ideas as an ideology of bourgeois restoration. Mikhail Agursky. *The Third Rome. National Bolshevism in the USSR*. London, 1987.

<sup>50</sup> *Komunist*. 1 April 1919.

<sup>51</sup> S. Barannyk et al. *Istoriia KP(b)U v materiiakh ta dokumentakh 1917–1920 rr.* 2nd ed. Kharkiv, 1934. P. 630; Borotba. 1919. 21 January, 28 June.

of Russian power, a politics of disseminating national enmity. [emphasis in original]” Explaining how strong capitalist states had turned weaker countries into colonies by subordinating their internal markets to foreign markets, the author explained that socialist revolution would reverse this imposed pattern of exploitation and develop industry to meet the needs of the internal market. This would be in the interest of all who lived in Ukraine and were the product of its common historical economic and cultural conditions.<sup>52</sup> Like the Ukrainian Communists, German Communists Fritz Wolffheim and Heinrich Laufenberg also labeled Bolshevism a reincarnated Russian imperialism.

### *Conclusion*

Indigenization appropriated and nullified much UCP criticism. Adopted to undermine and win over Ukrainian opposition, the policy antagonized most of Ukraine’s urban Russians and Russified non-Russians who refused to learn and use Ukrainian. As Trotsky delicately explained in the 1923 May Day edition of *Pravda*, “the Russian core” of the party dominated it. This “core” thought out the question of the relations between the Russian proletariat and the Russian peasantry in Russia. “By simple analogy we [then] extend these relations to the whole of our Soviet Union, forgetting, or insufficiently taking into account, that on the Russian periphery there live other national groups, with a different history, a different level of development and, most important, with a mass of grievances. Most of the Great Russian core of the party is as yet inadequately aware of the national aspects [of the alliance (*smychka*) between peasants and workers], and still more inadequately aware of the national question in its entirety.” Their fears predisposed them to support Stalin when after 1933 he stopped enforcing “indigenization.” This, in turn, made Ukrainian communist criticism relevant again.

Knowing that Lenin in his *Imperialism* had included the need for resources as the cause of imperialism, Ukrainian Marxists used terms like “Russian colonialism,” “proletarian imperialism,” and “communist imperialism” to describe Moscow’s policies in Ukraine.<sup>53</sup> Given, however, that Russia (i.e.,

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<sup>52</sup> Chervonyi prapor. 1920. 4 April.

<sup>53</sup> Centrist SD Isaak Mazepa attributed Russian expansionism to the fact that Bolsheviks had come to power in a backward country that needed resources. I. Mazepa. *Bolshevizm i okupatsiia Ukrainy. Sotsialno-ekonomichni prychny nedozrilosti Ukrainskoi revoliutsii*. Lviv, 1922. Pp. 83, 148. He labeled the Ukrainian provinces a Russian colony and Russian settlers as “Ukraine’s Ulster.” P. 149.

ethnic or Great Russia) had the resources it needed and had no economic reasons to invade, Ukrainians also drew attention to preconceptions as motivating forces and analyzed Russia imperialism as the product of not only economic relations but also precapitalist mentalities – a view that appeared conterminously with Schumpeter's. Their analysis became relevant again after Stalin stop enforcing the "Indigenization" policy and should not be ignored today, particularly inasmuch as colonialism and imperialism are now studied as both cultural/ideological and economic phenomena.

Like later colonial radicals, Ukrainian Marxists sought an independent socialist state with its own communist party confederated with other socialist states with their own parties. They argued that they had to complete the "bourgeois revolution" by forming a national republic that would end national problems and focus energies on social injustice. Where they were too weak to take power, they advocated temporary support for an independent national "bourgeois" state, such as the Comintern dictated in 1920. This Ukrainian left-SD claim that Ukraine needed political independence achieved by a bourgeois nationalist revolution before a communist revolution could occur was an application of Lenin's *Imperialism* to Ukraine. Ukrainian communists imagined in 1919 that they would overthrow the UNR and then carry out the necessary "bourgeois task" of national liberation before proceeding with socialist changes. Insofar as the drive for social emancipation involved creating a state and mobilizing a population, Ukrainian Marxists did not regard nationalism as a "deviation" but a central aspect of the revolution. They were not nativists but aspired to create a popular front that included sympathetic non-Ukrainians. Their aim was not to expel Russian settlers but to expropriate "the bourgeoisie." Like radicals in any imperial dependency, Ukrainian communists sought not only social emancipation but national liberation. Their critique of Bolshevik rule exposed the hypocrisy of Russian Bolsheviks who condemned them as "petty bourgeois nationalists" while recognizing Bela Kun, Roddy Connelly, and Ho Chi Minh, who sought independence from their respective empires via communist parties independent of their imperial metropole parties. In power, Bolshevik leaders recognized that the Irish and British communist parties were separate from each other, as were those of Indonesia and Holland, and Korea and Japan. They condemned French-Algerian communists for opposing separation. They also allotted each of them, but not the UCP, let alone the CPU, separate representation in the Comintern.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> In December 1922 Lenin did decide the Irish party should be subordinated to the British one, but the Irish refused until 1934. Lenin however did not instruct the Irish party

Ukrainian Marxists considered Bolshevik policies a continuation of tsarist policies and labeled both as imperialist and colonialist. Like John Maclean, James Connolly, and Jim Larkin, who condemned the Englishness of British Socialists, Shakhrai, Mazurenko, and Richytsky condemned the Russianness of the Bolsheviks. Ukrainian SD relations with the Russian SDs were like those between Scottish and English socialists, and Ukrainian radicals, like their Celtic counterparts, also tended to be ignored by European socialists. Characteristically, the great apologists of Stalin and his Russified USSR, Sidney and Beatrice Webb, were notoriously anti-Scottish and anti-Irish.

The Ukrainian communist critique of Bolshevik rhetoric justifying Russian domination of the old empire draws attention to its resemblance to Japanese rhetoric produced twenty years later justifying domination in Asia. Both discourses referred to “liberating” claimed territories from “Western imperialism,” both claimed that their respective metropolises were models that should lead because they were the most developed, and both claimed that the metropolises were not pursuing their own national or bureaucratic interests but accommodating all interests and identities better than national elites might have. Japan and Russia were not only champions of the regional nations but leaders of broader “anti-Western” movements. The Russian elite, like the Japanese, distinguished their project as preferable to a rapacious “Western” capitalism or native backwardness. Both discourses directed animosity not toward the subject nations but toward their elites – labeled incompetent, corrupt, and venal. This elite was abstracted from “the people” who were then treated as “partners” in the new order.<sup>55</sup> The Greater East-Asian Co-prosperity Sphere, like the USSR, was justified by the claim that all members had the same interests that would be best served by the common supranational organization. Independence meant isolation. Both discourses denied domination.

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to turn itself into a subsection of the northern Ireland branch of the Communist Party of Great Britain and Ireland. It remained a Comintern member independent of its northern Ireland protestant members. Mike Milotte. *Communism in Modern Ireland. The Pursuit of the Workers' Republic since 1916*. Dublin, 1984. Pp. 36-48.

<sup>55</sup> Narangoa, Cribb. *Imperial Japan and National Identities in Asia*.

## SUMMARY

Not unlike all peoples who experienced modernization through domination, Ukrainians in the Russian Empire have developed a tradition of anticolonialist thought. This article draws attention to the Ukrainian Marxist anticolonialist critique of Russian tsarist and Bolshevik rule as a body of thought that should be included in contemporary discussions of colonialism and its legacies. Stephen Velychenko contends that Ukrainian Marxist anticolonialist thinkers who combined Marxism with nationalism to justify national liberation can be placed alongside Amilcar Cabral, Tan Malaka, Frantz Fanon, and Aime Cesaire. These Ukrainians, like their Asian/African counterparts, lived in societies with a small native working class and argued that their people were experiencing industrialization, urbanization, and modernization under conditions of dependency. They created a body of anticolonialist Marxist literature that condemned not only tsarism, but Russocentric Russian Marxism as well. The article offers an analysis of this Ukrainian “national revolutionary” body of literature that was Marxist but anti-Bolshevik, and nationalist and anticolonial at the same time.

## РЕЗЮМЕ

Подобно прочим народам, модернизация которых осуществлялась в условиях имперского доминирования, украинцы в Российской империи создали традицию антиколониальной мысли. В статье рассматривается украинская марксистская критика российского царизма и большевистской власти как целостное направление, которое должно быть включено в современные дискуссии о колониализме и его наследии. Стэфен Вельченко считает, что украинские антиколониальные мыслители-марксисты, которые сочетали марксизм с национализмом в риторике национального освобождения, могут рассматриваться в одном ряду с Амилкаром Кабралом (*Amilcar Cabral*), Таном Малака (*Tan Malaka*), Францем Фаноном (*Fritz Fanon*) и Аимо Чезаре (*Aime Cesaire*). Подобно своим африканским и азиатским единомышленникам, эти украинцы жили в обществе, где немногочисленный “национальный” рабочий класс испытывал индустриализацию, урбанизацию и модернизацию в условиях зависимости от колониальной власти. Украинские антиколониальные теоретики создали комплекс текстов, в которых осуждался как царизм, так и русскоцентричный российский марксизм. В статье

предлагается анализ этой украинской “национал-революционной” литературы – одновременно марксистской и антибольшевистской, национальной и антиколониальной.