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The Ethnic Roots of Class Universalism: Rethinking the “Russian” Revolutionary Elite¹

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This article retrieves the ethnic roots that underlie a universalist class ideology. Focusing empirically on the emergence of Bolshevism, it provides biographical analysis of the Russian Revolution’s elite, finding that two-thirds were ethnic minorities from across the Russian Empire. After exploring class and ethnicity as intersectional experiences of varying significance to the Bolsheviks’ revolutionary politics, this article suggests that socialism’s class universalism found affinity with those seeking secularism in response to religious tensions, a universalist politics where ethnic violence and sectarianism were exclusionary, and an ethnically neutral and tolerant “imperial” imaginary where Russification and geopolitics were particularly threatening or imperial cultural frameworks predominated. The claim is made that socialism’s class universalism was as much a product of ethnic particularism as it was constituted by it.

Most sociology on the Russian Revolution assumes that its leadership was from the Russian intelligentsia and its socialist ideology was a response to the class conflicts and exclusions generated by an autocratic, industrializing Russian state (Moore 1966; Skocpol 1979; McDaniel 1988). This article challenges both the Russianness and the class basis of revolutionary Bolshevism. It takes as its point of departure the empirical finding that the Bolsheviks were largely ethnic minorities. Ethnic Russians were a substantial minority, but Jews, Latvians, Ukrainians, Georgians, Armenians, Poles, and others made up nearly two-thirds of Russia’s revolu-

¹ For comments or discussion on this or earlier versions of this article, I thank James Kennedy, John A. Hall, Jack Goldstone, Michael Mann, Dingxin Zhao, Dominic Lieven, and the *AJS* reviewers. Direct correspondence to Liliana Riga, Department of Sociology, School of Social and Political Science, University of Edinburgh, Chrystal Macmillan Building, 15a George Square, Edinburgh, Scotland EH8 9LD. E-mail: L.Riga@ed.ac.uk

tionary elite. And, in a highly distinctive social composition, ethnicity was strongly aligned with class, suggesting that class and ethnicity were intersectional experiences of varying significance in the revolutionary radicalism of the Bolshevik elite.

Bolshevism may, therefore, represent an interesting case in the construction of universalist class ideology from ethnic networks and experiences. Whether socialist or liberal, universalist ideologies are usually products not of “citizens of the world,” but of very specific material and social conditions (Calhoun 2003). But if the social and political conditions that give rise to and sustain universalist ideas are kept analytically distinct from the ideological content of the universalist projects themselves, then a universalist ideology about classes and class conflict may not necessarily be a response to class conflict alone. Indeed, this article argues that Bolshevism’s Russian-inflected class universalism was especially appealing in those social locations across the Russian Empire most affected by ethnic or imperial exclusions. It particularly appealed to those seeking secularism in response to religious tensions, a universalist politics where ethnic violence and sectarianism were exclusionary, and an ethnically neutral and tolerant “imperial” imaginary where geopolitics or Russification were especially dangerous, or where imperial cultural frameworks predominated, in the case of the ethnic Russians. But because Bolshevism emerged from particular imperial experiences of (socio)ethnic exclusion, it necessarily embedded ethnicity into its socialist class universalism.

Four related claims are offered. First, in exploring class and ethnicity as intersectional experiences, I argue that ethnocultural background is generally the more salient dimension in understanding the marginalization of the Bolshevik leadership. While class and ethnicity fused or converged in complex ways—variously reinforcing, undermining, or articulating each other—class was usually experienced through ethnic location, and exclusion or alienation, with certain exceptions, tended to be ethnically inflected in an illiberal multiethnic empire. Second, as noted, class backgrounds were strongly aligned with ethnicity/nationality:² with few exceptions, the Bolsheviks of lower-class, peasant-worker origin were Russian, while most of upper-middle- and middle-class or professional/intellectual origin were national minorities. Third, other radical groupings

² The terms *ethnicity* and *nationality* are both used here throughout. I follow the generally accepted distinction (Weber 1968; Gellner 1983; Eriksen 1993): ethnicity (in the Russian context, variously *narodnost*, *narod*, or *plemia*) is the more inclusive term, which includes culture, nationhood, language, etc.; nationality (*natsional’nost*) invokes a political principle and specific forms of community claims to political autonomy or independence. In imperial Russia, both existed in practice and in official classification. Although ethnicity is the more accurate description of most of the empire’s diversity until 1914, the state referred to its interventions as nationality policies.

(Socialist Revolutionaries [SRs], Mensheviks, Liberal Constitutional Democrats [Kadets]) were similar in composition to the Bolsheviks, prompting a rethinking of the class basis of Russia's revolutionary politics more generally: I relate the radical organizations' ethnic diversity to wider imperial/nationalist processes and argue that lower-class Russians and upper-middle- and middle-class ethnic minorities universalized particular imperial exclusions because they disproportionately sustained the social and political burdens of empire in the half century before the revolution. And fourth, Russia's imperial experience had embedded within it an incomplete Russian nationalism or nation-building process, creating partially assimilated non-Russian intelligentsias and a lower class of Russians with a weakly articulated Russian identity but strong imperial identities. Together, this new imperialist elite, in a multiethnic mobilization, reimagined diverse ethnocultural frameworks into a homogeneous, Russian-inflected class universalism—a functional requirement of the social movement that also served as nationalist homogeneity in a key nation-state-building moment.

Following a methodological note and contextualization of the study and of the leadership, I present the argument in two stages. In the first, I analyze the imperial context, relating the intersection of Bolshevism's ethnic/class experiences to the Russian Empire's strategies of inclusion, exclusion, and Russification. The second part situates individual biographies in this imperial context to explore the precise appeal, or elective affinity, between Bolshevism and its constituent ethnicities and, thereby, to examine the ethnocultural roots of Bolshevism's class universalism.³

CLASS, ETHNICITY, AND BOLSHEVISM

It has long been acknowledged that the early Soviet elite included a significant number of non-Russians. Yet most scholars have focused on their class origins and paid little attention, with the exception of the case of the Jews, to how ethnic backgrounds might have influenced Bolshevism (key exceptions are Brym [1978], Frankel [1981], and Rieber [2001]). Early accounts of the Bolsheviks, for instance, viewed them as part of the Russian intelligentsia—rootless, alienated intellectuals drawn to radical ideologies and to the eschatological aspects of Russian socialism—whose moral and messianic politics were seen as responses to an exclusionary state or to disengagement from a weak civil society (Pipes 1964; Seton-Watson 1967; Schapiro 1986). In response to these political accounts, and prompted in part by Thompson's (1963) classic work, sociologists of rev-

³ I thank an anonymous reviewer for useful comments on this framing.

olutionary Russia shifted attention away from elites and intellectuals to popular social movements (Haimson 1965; Koenker 1981; Bonnell 1983; Mandel 1983; Smith 1983), seeing the Bolsheviks as modernizers, or functional elites, who emerged for developmental purposes in “backward” states to organize the process of catching up (Moore 1966; Janos 1991; Jowitt 1992).

Despite the considerable differences among these accounts, however, “class” remained the dominant idiom for understanding both elite and popular radical mobilization—and “Russian” remained the implicit or explicit contextual reality. And yet in 1917, tsarist Russia was only 44% ethnically Russian, with over 130 recognized nationalities (Bauer, Kappeler, and Roth 1991; Kappeler 1992). This was not yet a modern class society but an intricate multiethnic empire: socioeconomic class positions were cross-cut by traditional status categories of estate (*soslovie*), confession, occupation, region, culture, ethnicity, and emergent nationalities. In fact, the field has recently seen excellent empirical research on the Russian Empire’s nationalities and the sociological workings of the imperial realm (see, e.g., Lieven 2000; Suny and Martin 2001; Lohr 2003; Brown 2004; Miller 2004; Miller and Rieber 2004; Gerasimov et al. 2005). Not only did these nonclass identities predominate in both official categorization and self-ascription (Reshetar 1952; Freeze 1986; Haimson 1988; Wirtschaftfer 1992, 1994; Fitzpatrick 1993; Slocum 1998; Pomeranz 1999; Cadot 2005), but there was also an exceedingly thin distinction between foreign and nationality policies (Starr 1978; Von Hagen 1998; Lieven 1999; Weeks 2001; Lohr 2003, chap. 4; Baron and Gatrell 2004; Rieber 2004), with the Russian state’s most socially consequential domestic policies resulting from the entwining of geopolitics and multiethnicity (Seton-Watson 1967; Kappeler 1982; Lieven 2000). This new research, in other words, adds the very imperial qualities that were omitted from previous works’ focus on Russia as essentially an autocratic state (e.g., Skocpol 1979; McDaniel 1988).

This article integrates this research into a retheorization of the Bolsheviks and Bolshevism. This means moving beyond class alienation theories of the revolutionary intelligentsia by sociologically embedding the early Soviet elite within the “fourth time zone” of nationalism (Gellner 1994)—an imperial realm of complex ethnic stratifications and ethnopolitics, where imperial rule entailed socioethnically differentiated access to elite, professional, and bureaucratic hierarchies, and where the burdens and benefits of empire were inequitably distributed across both classes and ethnicities. Class and ethnicity became intersectional social experiences for both ethnic Russians and minorities, and social inequalities were most visible by their ethnic markers. So if distinctive patterns of social mobility precede revolutions (Goldstone 1991), then attention should be

paid to those groups that disproportionately bore the costs of empire if we are to better understand routes to radical mobilization.

But this also entails an analytical reorientation. It moves away from conceptualizing radical politics in revolutionary Russia as the reflection of either working-class formations or the alienation of privileged elites and intellectuals and toward an analysis of key social (ethnic) groups in civil society, and of the positions of professionals and “middling class” groups in particular (e.g., Zhao 1998, 2001; Goldstone 2001; Mann 2004; Clemens 2007). If marginalized groups, in articulating alternative social orders, can be critical to the spread of “transformative” ideologies (Skocpol 1979; Goldstone 1991, p. 425), then a set of otherwise diverse social groups can share a common dimension of experience or social location that funnels them into revolutionary politics: I highlight, for instance, the empire’s borderlands, multiethnic urbanism, and quasi- or problematic assimilationism as such shared dimensions of experience.

But transformative socialist ideologies also require a sense of “totality and alternative” (Mann 1993). When the politics of class is confined to workplaces and does not involve ethnic spaces, totalizing ideologies are undermined (Katznelson 1981). Yet ethnic ties can provide the necessary shared experiences and social trust to form the basis of certain workplaces’ radicalisms, and Gould’s work on revolutionary France showed that, in 1871 in Paris, insurgents’ identities were rooted in neighborhoods and urban communities that became the basis for the emergence of a unified class-conscious radicalization (Gould 1995, pp. 27–29, 154, 181, 197–201). In imperial Russia, class (economy) and status (politics) were both autocratically organized around ethnicity; imagined class communities were most often built around ethnic solidarities. This, and the fact that social inequalities were combined with ethnic or cultural markers, made totalizing challenges to the larger social order easier: political repression first incorporated and then suppressed ethnic divisions and so helped shape the emergence of a class-universalist ideology constituted by ethnic/imperial marginality.

DATA, METHODS, AND SOURCES

This article therefore explores the intersectional or entwined experiences of class and ethnicity to better understand the social roots and emergence of socialist universalism. However, three important methodological issues need to be addressed: the choice of data set, the measurement of class, and the analysis of the sources. The choice of data set implies certain judgments. Focusing on Lenin and the small pre-1917 Bolshevik Party renders the data set exceedingly small and limits the theoretical scope to

the ideological influence and social significance of a handful of revolutionaries (e.g., Haimson 1955; Lane 1975). Recent work using the 1917 Central Committee and Military Revolutionary Council similarly limits theorization only to those elites who seized power at a particular moment in 1917.⁴ And yet a data set comprising the leadership from 1917 (or earlier) through the 1930s, or the close of the longer revolutionary period, would count more than 700 individuals and would require theorization of high Stalinism as well as revolutionary Bolshevism. It would also virtually preclude detailed biographical reconstruction.

Therefore, this study follows Mawdsely (1995) and uses the 93 members (full or candidate) of the Russian Social Democratic Worker's Party (Bolshevik)/Russian Communist Party (RSDRP[b]/RKP) central committees (CCs) in the key revolutionary years 1917–23, inclusive. These CCs included members of the Politburo, the Orgburo, and the Secretariat—the key organs of power in the new Soviet state. The CC membership of 1917–23 provides a useful historical, analytical, and practical demarcation. Analytically, these elites were the social carriers of Bolshevik ideology in its insurgent, revolutionary, or transformative phase: this leadership took power in a key moment of (geo)political collapse, dismantled the existing order, and designed a new social order with Lenin largely in control of the revolutionary effort. It was this early elite that provided the ideological and institutional frameworks that mapped the transition from an empire problematized by ethnicity to a “nation-state” problematized by class.

This data set also offers a useful historical demarcation. While there was little biographical variation within the 1917–23 elite, significant qualitative and quantitative changes took place in the CCs from 1924, when Lenin died: Stalin's consolidation hugely expanded subsequent CCs and proletarianized and Russified the Soviet elite. So 1924 marks off the heterogeneity of revolutionary Bolshevism—a product of the empire—from the homogeneity of the Stalin years—a product of the revolution.

An additional issue is raised in this connection: there may have been lots of ethnic minorities in the leadership because they were purposely recruited to solve strategic and political problems in the peripheries (which explains the presence of many Caucasians, but not why there were so few Ukrainians and so many Jews); or because of Lenin's well-known fondness for Jews and Latvians; or because of Bolshevism's popularity (or lack thereof) in a given region; or, indeed, for any combination of these reasons. However, first, we know too little about the inner workings of the early Bolshevik Party to fully assess its mechanisms for recruitment. There is, for instance, evidence that the ethnic minorities were themselves instru-

⁴ I am grateful to Michael Mann for discussion on this point.

mental in recruiting coethnics, in the border regions especially, shifting the question from one of recruitment into the leadership to one of ethnic mobilization (e.g., in the Caucasus; Rieber 2001, p. 1682). Second, while certain patterns of recruitment were no doubt operating, the selected individuals would have had to be available for recruitment in the first instance, still leaving open the question of the appeal of Bolshevism to various minorities. But most significantly, as argued in the penultimate section of this article, other radical parties of the center-left (Kadets, SRs, and Mensheviks) were very similar in socioethnic profile to the Bolsheviks. So unless they all had the same recruitment mechanisms and rationales, something contextual also had to be operating: if other radical organizations had similar ethnic compositions, then ethnic diversity is more likely related to wider imperial or nation-building processes than to the nature of Bolshevik recruitment.

The second key methodological issue concerns the measurement of class. Measurement of two key classes in revolutionary Russia—the intelligentsia and the working class—is particularly difficult, because they were relatively new socioeconomic realities. As late as 1917, official categories for socioeconomic position were still represented by the *sosloviia* or estates (similar to *états* or *Ständer*). *Sosloviia* were ascriptive and usually hereditary, and they defined individuals' rights and obligations toward the state. But official classification bore little resemblance to economic realities: the *sosloviia* became poor social indicators as increased education, urbanization, migration, and geographic penetration of industrial capitalism created new socioeconomic positions. The intelligentsia and urban working classes did not fit easily into these *sosloviia*. In practice, *sosloviia* were ceding to professional and occupational social ascriptions, particularly among the urban and middle strata, Russian and non-Russian. So any meaningful measurement of class in imperial Russia has to incorporate this modernizing tension between *sosloviia* and *sostoianiiia*—respectively, the legal status assigned by the state and the occupation in which one actually engaged (Haimson 1988, p. 1; Cadoit 2005).

I therefore situate the class origins of the Bolsheviks using a combination of *soslovie*, profession, and class, because together they capture the complex reality of social identities in the last decades of the empire, and because these ascriptions are variously—if unevenly—found in (auto)biographies, census data, and tsarist Okhrana (police) records (see apps. A and B). This, then, necessarily combines Marxist and Weberian criteria such as landholding, relations to the state, occupational or employment positions, relational positions to capital, and educational market positions (for an example on the mixing of these criteria, see Mann [1993, pp. 546–71]). For example, the (lower and upper) middle class or, more commonly in Russia, the intelligentsia (urban and rural, petty and upper)

in effect drew from several *sosloviia* to include the classic petite bourgeoisie, or well-off independent artisans and small shopkeepers (the *meshchanstvo*), at one end and professionals, intellectual and cultural elites, and high-level civil bureaucrats (in Russia, usually “service nobility”) at the other. I also distinguish between the educated middle classes and the commercial or capitalist bourgeoisies, both urban and rural. Similarly, references to working and peasant classes (and the corresponding *sosloviia*) include urban and rural positions relative to occupation, education, and capital. Given high levels of migration in Russia’s industrialization, most urban workers were from the rural areas, but they were officially considered peasants (hence the common use of the term *peasant-worker*). This working-class category includes skilled and unskilled factory labor of peasant origin, while the term *peasant* is reserved for skilled and unskilled rural laborers only.

Appendix tables A1 (fathers’ occupation) and A2 (Bolsheviks’ occupation) offer both class and *soslovie* classifications for the 93 Bolsheviks, broken down by ethnicity/nationality; these are followed by a more detailed discussion of the intersectional measurement of class and *soslovie* in appendix B. For example, in official documentation, Lenin was from the noble estate, because his father had risen up in the Education Ministry to formally attain noble rank; but in practice, Lenin was in effect second-generation professional middle class, since the Education Ministry was the least noble of all the ministries, and since the noble *soslovie* had anyway lost much of its earlier potency and coherence, especially among the lower strata in government service. Put differently, most of the bureaucratic nobility was in reality a professional or careerist middle class by the last decades of the empire, despite official *sosloviia* classifications. So I locate Lenin in the noble (service) estate, since he was officially classified this way, but I categorize Lenin’s social origins as (upper) middle class.

The third and final methodological issue concerns the use and analysis of biographical sources (also included in app. A). I explore how socioethnic experiences influenced routes to socialist radicalism through an interpretive use of historically situated or embedded biographies. I draw mostly on pre-Sovietized (auto)biographical accounts written before the late 1920s,⁵ supplemented by tsarist Okhrana arrest records to identify socioethnic backgrounds and early politics often omitted from other accounts. But the biographical data have certain limitations. First, they are of uneven quality, quantity, and reliability across individuals: for some, sources abound, while for others there is scant reliable evidence. Second, because

⁵ Especially useful is *Granat* (1989), a collection of pre-Sovietized autobiographical and authorized biographical accounts that are often remarkably candid about social origins.

of the repressiveness and fear surrounding social identities in tsarist Russia, and because of the subsequent Sovietization of the revolutionary movement, unambiguous and non-Sovietized self-ascriptive motivations were rare, particularly where ethnicity was concerned. Ethnicity had become entwined with Russia's repressive system of social control and surveillance (Steinwedel 2001), so through constant migration, name changes, and falsified passports and identity documents, individuals could (re)create identities to evade authorities, for self-protection, for advancement or social mobility, to claim rights, to conduct radical politics, or to obscure stigmatizing backgrounds (Shearer 2004, p. 881). Matters hardly changed during the revolutionary period—stigmatized identities merely shifted from ethnicity to class (e.g., Torpey 1997, pp. 849–50). So, first as socialist revolutionaries, and then as Soviets, the figures in the (auto)biographies struggle with the need to erase problematic social/ethnic identities and political affiliations, and this has to be taken into consideration. The Bolsheviks' Marxist language of class—and ethnicity—is not taken at face value; I do not read these identities as biographical background, but as intersecting dimensions of class/ethnic experiences, specific to certain social locations, and important to reconstructing social worlds.

The claim is made that for some individuals in certain social locations—particularly those with problematic ethnic biographies—a Russianized socialist universalism had powerful appeal: class universalism was a product of specific ethnocultural conditions. However, this is not intended as reductionist or socially determinative: not all individuals in these locations became Bolsheviks. Individual temperaments, psychologies, access, and so forth mattered, and indeed, two brothers could embrace opposing political orientations. Individuals from similar backgrounds could, and did, gravitate to different groupings. But if not everyone in these social locations became Bolsheviks, all the Bolsheviks *did* come from these social locations—and this requires explanation. So in method, this follows Mann's general sociology by showing how particular socioethnic coordinates (e.g., borderlands, multiethnic cities) provided opportunities for action that could, in turn, accommodate a variety of motives and sustain group emergence (Mann 1993, chap. 6; 2004, 2005; Clemens 2007).

THE BOLSHEVIK ELITE

The ethnic minority presence in Russia's radical movements has been noted (Mosse 1968; Rigby 1968; Lane 1975; Brym 1978; Mawdsely 1995), but the numbers have been underestimated. Important exceptions are studies on Jewish socialists (Schapiro 1986; Brym 1978; Frankel 1981; Haberer 1995; Service 2000; Slezkine 2004). But if Jews were the most

significant minority contingent after the Russians, Bolshevism's nationality profile was on the whole much more complex. Their ethnic/national composition and the corresponding representation of those groups in the empire are shown in table 1. The birthplaces of most of the Bolsheviks—and for most of them, the places of radicalization—were in the empire's southern and western peripheries. Only one in four came from the Russian heartland, and the rest came from the empire's geopolitically sensitive borderlands, highlighting the borderland factor in the emergence of Bolshevism.

Only 39 Bolsheviks (42%) were ethnic Russians. This is a generous figure, since the number of non-Russians was likely in the range of 66%–70%. This is because I have defaulted as Russian those Bolsheviks for whom I was not able to obtain sufficiently reliable data on ethnic background or on whom the sources were conflicting. A second source of skepticism is the fact that sources often reflect name Russifications; in all likelihood several were Jewish, Belarusian, German, or Ukrainian, the “invisible” nationalities.

Non-Russians were overrepresented in the Bolshevik leadership as against their overall 56% representation in the empire; this figure is within statistical odds by very conservative counting, but, as noted, was likely much higher in reality. Interestingly, however, there were significant variations across nationalities, and this requires explanation: Jews, Georgians, and Armenians were each overrepresented by a ratio of 4:1, and Latvians by 7:1, while Poles and Ukrainians were underrepresented, and Estonians and Poles and Jews from Russian Poland were absent.

Data on social background (father's occupation) are notoriously difficult to get precise, not only because of the unevenness of the source material, but also, as noted, because of the complexity of overlapping estate and class ascriptions. Across the entire elite, 43% of the Bolsheviks were of peasant-worker origin, 44% were from the middling classes, and 13% were from noble or military families (see app. A). These figures are consistent with key works on wider data sets of revolutionaries (Mosse 1968; Haupt and Marie 1969; Lane 1975), particularly with Lane's (1975) finding of a disproportionately large noble element inside Bolshevism, but they depart substantially from Mawdsely's (1995) study of the Bolsheviks, which found a higher proportion (60%) of workers.⁶ Putative estate membership confirms this class stratification: 25 of 93 Bolsheviks derived from the most privileged and exclusive *sosloviia*: the nobility, distinguished citizen, clergy, and merchant estates. This places one-third of this revolutionary leadership in the most privileged 2.4% of imperial society; if the

⁶ Variations are also due to different data sets and/or different criteria for social categorization.

Ethnic Roots of Class Universalism

TABLE 1
ETHNIC COMPOSITION OF THE BOLSHEVIK LEADERSHIP AND
THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE

Ethnicity	<i>n</i>	% of Bolshevik Leadership	% of Empire's Population
Russian	39	42	44
Jewish	14	15	4
South Caucasian ...	9	10	2
Ukrainian	8	9	19
Latvian	6	6	1
Polish	3	3	6
Lithuanian	1	1	1
Belorussian	1	1	1
German	2	2	1
Other	10	11	. . .

NOTE.—*N* = 93. The “other” percentage of the empire’s population is left blank because those remaining nationalities in the Bolshevik leadership do not correspond to the far larger number of nationalities across the Russian Empire not enumerated here.

meshchanstvo is also taken into consideration, two-thirds of the Bolshevik revolutionaries had their social origins in the top 13% of the empire’s population.⁷

In this most general sense, then, the Bolsheviks were typical, in social profile, of most historical revolutionary elites (e.g., the Jacobins, the Chinese Communist elite). However, distinctive patterns emerge when (a) occupation is taken into consideration to assess patterns of social mobility and (b) social origin and occupation are broken down by ethnicity. Comparing the Bolsheviks’ fathers’ occupations with those of the Bolsheviks themselves suggests something about social mobility. Most immediately, those whose fathers were in the middling classes were nearly evenly divided between those involved in commercial pursuits (*Besitzburgertum*) and those involved in the educated professions (*Bildungsburgertum*). Yet none of these Bolsheviks were occupationally in the commercial or petty capitalist arenas. In addition, nine of the 11 sons of rural/urban nobility and clergy families and three of the four sons and daughters of military fathers found employment in the urban liberal professions. Comparing fathers with sons (social origin with occupation), there was marked occupational movement from rural/urban commercial or capitalist enterprises to the educated, urban professions. Within these professions, there was considerable occupational diversity—six lawyers, five doctors, five teachers, five economists, and four professional journalists—distinguish-

⁷ See Bauer et al. (1991) for figures derived from the 1897 census, used here throughout.

ing the Bolsheviks from other revolutionary elites, in which the legal profession is usually overrepresented.

Occupationally, then, the Bolshevik leadership comprised three main socioeconomic groups: the urban liberal professions, the rural *déclassé* but propertied nobility/service gentry, and urban laborers of rural origin. In an important sense, traditional scholarship had much of this right: these revolutionaries largely derived from new migrant labor and from the new, educated, professional and semiprofessional intelligentsia, as the first generation to slip out of the traditional *sosloviia*. But my data also reveal that blocked social mobility in a strictly economic sense was a factor of varying significance to the revolutionaries' social experiences.

But when social origin is considered in terms of ethnicity, strong class-ethnicity alignments emerge. Of the 35 Bolsheviks of peasant-worker origin, 22 were ethnic Russians; the Russian Bolsheviks had proportionately greater working-class representation (nearly two-thirds were classic proletarians). By contrast, of the 39 Bolsheviks in the middling classes, only 11 were ethnic Russians, the remainder being mostly Jewish, Caucasian, or Ukrainian. Of the nine Bolsheviks of (impoverished or service) gentry/noble origin, four were Russian and five were non-Russian, mostly Georgian. Drawn from the most privileged social strata of the empire's national minorities, one-half of the Jewish Bolsheviks would have been among the top 3% of Jewish society in terms of occupation; three of the four Georgians were within the only 0.58% of Georgians in the free professions; five of the eight Ukrainians fell within the 0.46% of Ukrainians in the free professions, and four of the eight were from the three most elite estates in the empire.

In other words, class representation was relatively homogeneous within ethnic groups, but heterogeneous across them, and class and occupation were closely aligned with ethnicity. The Bolsheviks comprised (*a*) an urban middle class of non-Russian nationalities, (*b*) a predominantly ethnic Russian working class with rural origins, and (*c*) a small (often impoverished) service gentry or propertied rural bourgeoisie, drawn from ethnic Russians and minorities. So with the exception of a small number of upper intelligentsia or service gentry Russians, Bolsheviks of the lower classes were Russian, and those of the middle-higher classes were national minorities. However, the ethnic minority Bolsheviks experienced socially insecure status ascriptions more acutely than the Russians because of their overrepresentation in the liberal professions and because of imperial strategies of ethnic exclusion, to which I now turn.

Imperial Rule and Ethnic Exclusion

The Bolsheviks' socioethnic composition turns attention to how Russian imperial rule affected social experiences and radicalizations. Imperial society was characterized by complex socioethnic stratifications: *sosloviia*, *Berufstande* (German-type estates), and professional and occupational categories, both urban and rural, were both cleaved by and organized around ethnicity/nationality and religion as the most significant social markers (Iukhneva 1984, 1987; Haimson 1988; Kappeler 1992; Cadoit 2005). Industrialization, urbanization, secularization, Russification, and the empire's centralizing and nationality policies had contributed to the collapse of traditional hierarchies of estate and confession. *Sosloviia* were still used in tsarist Okhrana records to indicate the social backgrounds of arrested revolutionaries and participants in social movements, yet most educated society viewed the *sosloviia* as an anachronistic and embarrassing relic of backwardness and stressed the need for alternative Western-style class representations (Haimson 1988). So social identities were caught in tension between the ascriptions imposed by state authority and subjective self-definitions (Werth 2000, p. 494). In this moment of social crisis, with identities in flux and individuals creating their own social definitions, revolutionary politics could construct new social identities and new solidarities.

Three social dynamics in this connection were particularly important. First, tsarist policies sought to sustain particularistic social boundaries while homogenizing the population for control purposes. The Russianization of the bureaucracies and professions, an edict of religious toleration, and the militarization of social surveillance after the 1905 revolutions combined to make ethnicity/nationality the most consequential social identity marker and challenged the reliability of estate and confessional markers (Slocum 1993; Ascher 2001, chap. 7; Steinwedel 2001, pp. 78–82; Cadoit 2004; Shearer 2004). The state increased its reliance on ethnic forms of identification to control elections to the Duma and to police social radicalism, entwining ethnicity and surveillance in a kind of ethnic essentialism (Steinwedel 2001, p. 79; Shearer 2004, esp. pp. 842 n. 13, 845). As domestic stability and geopolitical survival became entwined with multiethnicity, imperial politics ethnicized. This was also reflected in rightist and leftist (socialist and nationalist) politics, which increasingly invoked "nation" (*natsional'nost'*) in their political demands. Bolshevism's distinctive socioethnic composition, then, gave it a powerful set of social resources with which to construct alternative identities and solidarities: by mobilizing vertical ethnic groups along horizontal class lines, it effectively competed with, and incorporated, emerging nationalist politics.

Second, ethnic groups were becoming increasingly internally socially

stratified because of educational opportunities, greater social mobility, and urbanization and professionalization. The Jewish petite bourgeoisie, for instance, entered middle-class urban professions thanks to midcentury openings in *gimnazii* (the Russian version of the German gymnasium or classical high school) and universities (Halevy 1976); social boundaries were redrawn, marking new cultural and status distinctions from lower-class shtetl Jews. Education and social mobility meant assimilation into Russian society and therefore detachment from ethnic communities (Brym 1978; Nathans 2002). So greater social differentiation *within* ethnic groups undermined stable ethnopolitical patterns, often excluding and radicalizing the newly assimilated or quasi-Russified. This characterized the experiences of the ethnic minority Bolsheviks.

And third, changes in patterns of social mobility created multiethnic urban middle classes. The upward mobility of lower-class ethnics (e.g., Jewish and Latvian Bolsheviks) into urban middle classes challenged professional hierarchies; at the same time, rural landed bourgeoisies and landed nobilities (e.g., Polish and Georgian Bolsheviks), confronted with socioeconomic decline and political repression, experienced downward mobility into the same urban intelligentsia milieu. By the last decades of the 19th century, the sons of previously privileged Russian, Polish, and Georgian elites descended into urban middle-class professions while upwardly mobile Jews, Ukrainians, and Armenians rose into them.

Here, Tocqueville's analysis of the French middle classes before 1789 helps to better understand the ethnic exclusions in Russia's multiethnic intelligentsia that produced many leftist radicals, including the Bolsheviks. For Tocqueville, the creation of the French urban middle classes was characterized by groups of differing social origins becoming similar socioeconomically, but remaining divided from each other by unequal access to political rights and preferments because of the state's divide-and-rule politics (Tocqueville [1856] 1955, chaps. 8–10; see esp. Hall 1995, pp. 8–10). As socioeconomic leveling made them more homogeneous in terms of class, competition for political privileges kept them in politically isolated competition with each other. A similar dynamic was at work in imperial Russia: by the late 19th century, emergent middle classes were socioeconomically homogeneous but ethnically differentiated (see, e.g., Iukhneva 1987; Nathans 1996). So while there was general opportunity for social advancement, ethnicity remained a key criterion for incorporation into the state (Kappeler 1992; Weeks 1996, p. 70; 2001). In illiberal Russia, the new multiethnic middle classes competed for the same sources of social mobility and for the state's inequitable distribution of political resources, generating new ethnic exclusions. Social class inequalities were marked by ethnocultural differences.

So Russian rule entailed specifically imperialist policies that had the

effect of inequitably distributing the costs of maintaining social cohesion and geopolitical stability. Liberalizing reforms from the 1860s through the 1880s admitted most ethnicities into elite and professional hierarchies and opened access to education and geographical mobility. This had the intention—and the effect—of creating Russified minority elites loyal to the imperial state through the offer of social advancement and an attractive high culture into which to assimilate (particularly appealing to culturally marginalized elites in the peripheries). These policies opened possibilities for the Bolsheviks' parents.

But from the 1880s, and especially after 1905, the empire found its Russianness and entered an illiberal and nationalizing phase characterized by repressive policies of socioethnic exclusion and Russification (table 2). Midcentury reforms gave way to bureaucratic ethnic closures, minority elite co-optation ceded to political exclusion, and Russification consisted alternatively of assimilatory homogenizing policies and ethnically exclusionary ones (there is a large literature on this: e.g., Weber [1905] 1989, pp. 109–28; Kreindler 1970; Raeff 1971, 1984; Hagen 1978; Thaden 1981; Kappeler 1982, 1992; Anfimov and Korelin 1995; Klier 1995; Velychenko 1995, 2000; Weeks 1996; Rodkiewicz 1998, chap. 4; Werth 2004). Either because of geopolitical sensitivities in the borderlands, or because of worries of a growing and undesirable cosmopolitan civil society, the tsarist state was as concerned with vertical associations between social strata as it was with horizontal associations within them. It was as necessary to divide cultural elites from coethnic peasants as it was to repress within-class radicalism, making certain groups especially vulnerable to ethnic exclusion.

Crucially, these policies directly affected the Bolsheviks, who derived almost entirely from those social locations in the exclusionary repressive category of table 2. And as we will see, other leftist mobilizations were also products of these socioethnic locations, while rightist, conservative groupings were products of those social locations categorized as integrationist conciliatory. So the Bolsheviks' social composition—upper-middle- and middle-class nationalities and ethnic Russian peasant-workers—closely approximated the empire's general patterns of social mobility and radicalism from the 1870s onward. Goldstone (1991, chaps. 2, 3, esp. pp. 109, 227–28) showed that patterns of social mobility preceding revolutions involve *absorption* (upward mobility of newcomers with expansion of elite hierarchies), *turnover* (downward mobility with traditional elites' loss of position), and *displacement* (elite exclusion by newcomers). In the Russian case, the midcentury openings and expansions of imperial hierarchies allowed the upward mobility of ethnic minority middle classes, but the ethnic closures of the 1880s blocked certain ethnic minorities, while repression of the Russian urban working classes intensified. This accords

TABLE 2
IMPERIAL STRATEGIES OF EXCLUSION AND INTEGRATION, 1861–1914

EXCLUSIONARY REPRESSIVE		INTEGRATIONIST CONCILIATORY	
Group	Constituents	Group	Constituents
		Urban Groups	
Intellectuals	All, Russians, Jews, Armenians, Poles, Turks (Azerbaijani), Ukrainians	Urban estates	
Liberal professions	Jews, Poles, Armenians, Ukrainians, Turks (Azerbaijani), Georgians, Russians	Licensed urban professions	
Urban lower classes	Jews, peasant-workers of all ethnicities including Russian	Imperial civil service nobles	
		Nationalities in civil service	Baltic Germans, Armenians, Tatars, wealthy Georgian and Polish magnates and service nobles, court Jews, lower and mid-level Ukrainian, Russian, Estonian, and Latvian civil service
		Urban large capital	Jewish haute bourgeoisie, Russian, Armenian and Tatar merchants, Baltic German capital, Greeks
		Rural Groups	
Landed nobles/elites	Polish, some Lithuanian, Georgian small/middle, some Russian, all Jewish	Peasants	Polish, Ukrainian, Lithuanian, Belorussian, Estonian, Latvian
Rural clerics	Polish and Lithuanian	German colonists (despite their being Lutheran or other Protestant)	
Rural non-Russian capital	Polish and Jewish	Rural clerics	Russian Orthodox

with the timing and sequencing of social mobilization: radicalism was initially characterized by the influx of minority middling classes excluded from professional and official hierarchies, followed by the entry of excluded Russian lower classes in the years of labor repression and reaction.

In a multiethnic autocratic empire, then, both class (capitalist/economic) and status (political) conflicts were almost entirely organized around ethnicity. Tsarist elites responded with Russification, centralization, and an exclusionary Russian nationalism. Against this, the Bolshevik mobilization inverted social identities and redefined social conflict. As an imperial intelligentsia, the Bolsheviks offered, on the one hand, de-Russification, ethnic decentralization, and an erasure of Russianness as an identity category with content. On the other hand, they offered political centralization based on class—a new, and as yet unstable, social identity marker. Bolshevism's class universalism offered an alternative imperial representation, an effective mobilizational response to key sources of *ancien régime* conflict and exclusion.

“ELECTIVE AFFINITIES”: CLASS, ETHNICITY, AND SOCIALIST UNIVERSALISM

We can situate Bolshevism's precise ethnoclass composition within this imperial context. There were many roads to Bolshevism: a Russian peasant-worker in Moscow, an Armenian intellectual in Tiflis, an impoverished member of the Polish gentry in Lithuania, a *déclassé* Georgian noble, and a rural Ukrainian Jew all became Bolsheviks. Each was characterized by a different route to radicalism and therefore by a precise elective affinity between class, ethnicity, and the appeal of (Bolshevized) Russian socialism. And each intersection of class and ethnicity entailed specific locational experiences, and so offered a distinctive—though, with the others, ultimately coherent—intersection of opportunity and motive. What follows is an attempt to understand the social locations or coordinates in the imperial matrix (identified in table 2) and those particular groups whose common experiences brought them into Bolshevik radical mobilization. The sections below offer brief reconstructions of the Bolsheviks' biographies to elaborate the processes by which ethnic/imperial identities and experiences were transformed into a class universalist ideology. Class and ethnicity were not parallel experiences, but rather articulated each other in complex ways: in some cases ethnic and class conflict infused each other; in other cases they were competing political alternatives; but in all cases the socialist mobilizations were in important ways defined by their underlying ethnic solidarities, as ethnocultural experiences helped to organize the class-based movement.

The Jewish Bolsheviks

The 14 Jewish Bolsheviks derived from the educated and commercial middle strata of three imperial regions: Lithuania, Ukraine, and the Russian interior. But despite this regional diversity, persistent anti-Semitic policies, political exclusion, difficult local ethnopolitics (and pogroms), and problematic assimilation meant that for all, a socially ascribed Jewishness acutely impinged on their social identities and political radicalism. The ethnically neutral social world on offer in socialist universalism, anti-nationalist and ecumenical, was highly appealing to these assimilating Jews excluded by Russification and anti-Semitism.

They were the best educated of all the Bolsheviks, and most were Russified in the empire's elite *gimnazii*. The Jewish Bolsheviks were the first or second generation to attempt full assimilation based on the social access accorded to their fathers in the midcentury liberalizations (Kaznelson and Günzberg 1912–14, p. 662; Kappeler 1992, pp. 220–24; Löwe 1993, p. 94; Klier 1995, esp. p. 29). Since social mobility was predicated on successful Russification, Jews were drawn in disproportionately high numbers to *gimnazii*, universities, and the free professions (Halevy 1976; Bauer et al. 1991, pp. 93–94, 198, 200, 411–12; Slezkine 2004, chap. 3). Yet by the time the Bolsheviks reached advanced education and employment in the late 1880s, the imperial state was finding its Russian identity, non-Jewish middle classes and professional groups complained of Jewish competition, and general worries about Jews' role in rising social unrest resulted in policies designed to block Jewish mobility: the ethnic closure of the *advokatura* (the legal profession), medicine, and the civil service, and the implementation of ethnic quotas (*numerus clausus*) in *gimnazii* and universities had a humiliating effect (Kucherov 1966; Frankel and Zipperstein 1992; Hausmann 1993; Baberowski 1995; Elyashevich 1999, esp. chap. 4; Pomeranz 1999; Nathans 2002, p. 269). Such exclusions, following previous liberal openings, had a pronounced radicalizing effect on young assimilating Jews, acutely conscious of the discrepancy between their achievements and their social possibilities.

Additionally, ethnopolitical tensions in the Pale of Settlement resulted in pogroms in 1881, 1904, and 1905 (Klier and Lambroza 1992; Suhr 2003). Pogromism affected rural Jewish Bolsheviks, like Sergei Gusev and Lazar Kaganovich, and the urban Jews Osip Piatnitsky and Lev Kameney, who were involved in antipogromist defense squads. Socialist mobilizations, like those of the Bolsheviks, repudiated anti-Semitic violence (because it divided working classes along ethnic lines) and so crucially offered themselves as allies to Jews and Jewish assimilation (Frankel 1981; Haberer 1992).

The Lithuanian Jew Piatnitsky, for instance, was a half-assimilated

skilled artisan from Vilna: he spoke Yiddish, Russian, and German and belonged to both Vilna's Jewish artisanal milieu and the Russified intelligentsia radical parties (Piatnitskii 1933; Piatnitskaia 1993). The north-west Pale was multiethnic with weak middle classes, lots of Jewish capital, and comparatively little anti-Semitism (Iuzhalov 1904, p. 456). Urban multiethnicity here meant multiethnic worker mobilizations, often all-Russian in orientation as a nonethnic alternative to the Jewish Bund (Zalevskii 1912, pp. 211–13; Tobias 1972; Frankel 1981, pp. 144–48; Mishkinsky 1997; Zimmerman 2004).⁸ Piatnitsky was simultaneously active in the Jewish Bund and in Polish, Lithuanian, German, and Russian socialist groups (Piatnitskaia 1993, pp. 16–17). In 1905, he was involved as a Bolshevik in antipogrom defense squads. By his own account, the social world of multiethnic Vilna, his experiences with Jewish violence, and his marriage to the daughter of a Polish Orthodox priest made a Russian-inflected socialism appealing (Piatnitskii 1933, pp. 16–17, 20, 24–28, 49–56, 60–61; Piatnitskaia 1993, p. 6).

In contrast, Ukrainian Jewry had a more urgent assimilationism, reflecting the complexity of Ukrainian ethnopolitics. Kaganovich was a poor, rural Jew who sought acculturation in the Ukrainian middle class, and to whom Ukrainian and Russian cultures were virtually indistinguishable (Kaganovich 1996, pp. 20–23, 26–28, 30–35, 38; Marcucci 1997, p. 21; Khlevniuk et al. 2001; Davies et al. 2003, p. 21). His radicalism and Jewishness were deeply affected by surrounding rural nationalist tensions and his family's experience of pogromism (Marcucci 1997, p. 19). Kaganovich wrote that Ukrainian-Russian tensions played out as pogromism against Jews and that only Russian socialism could resolve this (Kaganovich 1996, pp. 46–47, 83–87). For Kaganovich, socialism offered an antidote to the excesses of ethnonationalist violence and Jews' implication in rural capitalist exploitation.

Jewishness was invoked in a different manner among urban, educated, and wealthy Ukrainian Jews like Lev Trotsky, Grigorii Zinoviev, Mikhail Uritsky, and Adolf Ioffe. Trotsky was famously Russified and radicalized in Nikolaev, Ioffe in Simferopol (Crimea), and Uritsky was radicalized and assimilated into Polish-Russian culture in Kiev (Trotsky [1930] 1970, pp. 5–7; Prokhorov 1969–78, p. 78; *Granat* 1989, pp. 418, 720, 734). Russified European Jews experienced daily humiliations of middle-class and

⁸ Circular 17393, November 18, 1902. Box 206, index 18a, folder 3, HIAPO (Hoover Institution Archives of the Paris Okhrana), Stanford University. The HIAPO archives are a comprehensive repository of the records of the Russian Imperial Police and are therefore a rich source of biographical material on the Bolsheviks and their radicalism. They contain arrest records with information on ethnic origins, family background, in many cases birthplaces and original, non-Russified names, and rare information on the Bolsheviks' memberships in national or other non-Bolshevik radical groups.

official anti-Semitism, as well as ethnic exclusions from gymnaziia, universities, and the *advokatura* (Trotsky 1970, pp. 45–46; Kucherov 1966, p. 222; *Granat* 1989, pp. 418–19, 422, 720, 734; Nodgot 1990, p. 59; Barberowski 1995, pp. 498–99; Ioffe 1997, p. 30; Pomeranz 1999, pp. 251–52). For these Jews, the multiethnic all-Russian socialist parties—and the European socialist parties—provided both political escape from ethnic particularism and social milieux that validated assimilation (*Granat* 1989, pp. 422–23; Ioffe 1997, pp. 31–32).⁹

The Russian Jews were similarly products of the social possibilities that their fathers' Russification had permitted: selective emancipation had allowed certain categories of Jews to leave the Pale for the cities of the Russian interior (Klier 1995; Nathans 2002). Consequently, Grigorii Sokolnikov, Kamenev, Iakov Sverdlov, Isaac Zelensky, and Emilian Yaroslavsky (Gusev is the exception) assimilated into homogeneous Russian social worlds (Prokhorov 1969–78, p. 558; Duval 1971, p. 36; *Granat* 1989, pp. 417, 427, 429–30, 651, 785, 787). But the persistence of Jewishness as a socially ascribed category continued even in the highly assimilated Russian interior (Kaznelson and Günzberg 1912–14, vol. 3, pp. 336–37). Sokolnikov, an economist from a well-off Russified family in Moscow, described subtle and daily anti-Semitic humiliations, the “disturbing glances” and indignities of the Russified Moscow gymnaziia (*Granat* 1989, pp. 681–82; Nathans 2002, p. 269). These humiliations were perhaps more resented in liberal urban milieux than in illiberal rural Ukraine because of the expectation of equality as a reward for Russification. Gusev experienced both popular anti-Semitism and state anti-Semitism: he was beaten in the street as a *zhid* and later excluded from a technological institute because of Jewish quotas (Prokhorov 1969–78, pp. 460–61; *Granat* 1989, pp. 399–400). Gusev wrote that his experience of the “merger of blood and vodka” (a reference to Jews' involvement in the rural liquor trade) was the underlying cause of his “dissatisfaction with the existing order” (*Granat* 1989, p. 399). Russian socialism was especially attractive for Russian Jews because it accorded them something absent in wider society: access and status commensurate with their Russification and educational achievements (Mishkinsky 1992, pp. 62–75; Haberer 1995, chap. 10).

So Russian socialism offered these Jews a radical assimilation option and an ethnically neutral radicalism in social worlds defined by ethnic violence and exclusions. Here, class and ethnicity articulated each other: the Jewish Bolsheviks were radicalized as Jews within the wider intelligentsia. But Jewishness entailed a distinct experience in middle-class and lower-middle-class contexts: ethnic exclusion placed high identity costs on an articulated Jewishness in assimilating, educated social milieux,

⁹ Outgoing dispatch no. 242, 1916. Index cards, HIAPO.

giving radicalism much of its direction and content. So perhaps with the ambiguous exception of the Russian Jews, the Jews were less attracted to socialism because of class alienation than because of ethnocultural exclusion and the need to validate their assimilation. Both “Jewish Jews” and “non-Jewish Jews” were welcomed in a Bolshevik movement generally characterized by philo-Semitism; Bolshevism offered an alternative representation or form of imperial protection—precisely where Tsarism was failing.

The Polish and Lithuanian Bolsheviks

Three important Polish and Lithuanian Bolsheviks—Feliks Dzerzhinsky, Karl Radek, and Vincas Kapsukas—came from different socioethnic niches in Polish Lithuania and in Austrian Galicia. All three were active nationalists before becoming Bolsheviks, but were marginalized by ethnic sectarian politics. Russian socialism was an unpopular political option in the western empire, but in its all-imperial Bolshevik version it offered a radical option to those most marginalized when the regions’ nationalities balkanized around their ethnic cores.

The Polish-Lithuanian and western provinces were characterized by vertically ranked ethnicities, where Jews, Poles, and Lithuanians had multiple cultural and linguistic affiliations (Weeks 1996; Rodkiewicz 1998; Snyder 2003). These provinces of the Jewish Pale constituted a sensitive geopolitical frontier, triggering some of the Russian state’s most repressive and Russificatory policies (Leslie 1963, pp. 99–100, 110–11, 140; Thaden 1984, pp. 123–24, 133–35; Velychenko 1995, p. 205). In particular, the rural Polish landowning classes, especially the petty nobility (*szlachta*), were hit hard by policies that variously excluded them as Catholics, Poles, or landed elites (Leslie 1963, pp. 224–26; Weeks 1996, pp. 98–101; Rodkiewicz 1998, esp. pp. 166–72). These policies were experienced as ethnopolitical dislocation and status decline (Tyszkiewicz 1895, pp. 14–38, 52–53, 58–60, 158). So by the 1880s, sons of rural landed elites—the new urban Polish intelligentsia—were perhaps the most politically repressed group in the empire and produced most of the leadership of Polish radical movements (Snyder 1997, pp. 239–40).

Dzerzhinsky, a key figure among the sons of rural landed elites, was first a Polish nationalist in response to tsarist Russification in gymnaziia (Dzerzhinsky [1902] 1984, pp. 3–6; Blobaum 1984, pp. 18, 22–24, 32, 245; *Granat* 1989, p. 407).¹⁰ He then joined, in sequence, the Polish socialists, the Lithuanian socialists, the Lithuanian-Polish socialists, and the Bol-

¹⁰ HQ Circular 4317, June 26, 1902. Box 162, index 13d(2), processing intelligence, folder 2A, HIAPO.

sheviks—each move prompted by the polarization of the multiethnic provinces into nationalist and nationalizing socialist parties and by the ethnopolitical exclusions created by the region's growing nationalisms. In 1899, he cofounded the Social Democratic Party of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania (SDKPiL) with Rosa Luxemburg (*Granat* 1989, p. 407), which was a leftist group led by Poles, Jews, Russians, and Lithuanians that recognized the legitimacy of imperial borders (Strobel 1974; Blobaum 1984). His multiethnic politics were consistent with his own ethnocultural marginality: neither fully within the urban Polish milieu nor fully within the Vilna milieu, he had a greater affinity with Russified Vilna Jews than with urban ethnic Poles and was therefore influenced by Jewish internationalism (Tobias 1972, pp. 102–3; Strobel 1974, pp. 127–28; Dzerzhinsky [1897] 1977, pp. 16–26; *Granat* 1989, p. 407).¹¹ While nationalisms threatened to disintegrate the multiethnic borderlands, all-Russian groupings promised new political status to those Polish elites marginalized by nationalist politics (see the account in Dzerzhinsky 2002, pp. 40, 77–78, 104, 129, 133, 154, 213, 219, 277). Dzerzhinsky's internationalism was ultimately not cultural but territorial; while in prison, he wrote that the tsarist state would “pay for everything,” that he “detested oppression . . . and national discord” (Dzerzhinsky 2002, pp. 132, 147). Ethnopolitical exclusion had threatened his identity and position, so Bolshevik socialist universalism—with its imperial, territorial boundaries—offered a better version of Tsarism.

The Lithuanian Kapsukas experienced the illiberal nationalisms of Polish domination and Russian rule (Zalevskii 1912; Sabaliunas 1990; Strazas 1996a, 1996b, pp. 65–66; Weeks 2001; Snyder 2003, pp. 32–51; Balkelis 2005). Kapsukas migrated from Lithuanian nationalism—anti-Polish, anti-Russian, and anticlerical—to Polish-Lithuanian socialism, Lithuanian socialism, and finally to a Russified anti-Lithuanian Bolshevism. He was from a propertied family and attended Polonized religious schools, but when denied permission to enroll in Russian universities, and in reaction to Russification, Kapsukas joined the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party (LSDP), a Lithuanian nationalist group with a socialist platform (Sabaliunas 1990, pp. 15–18, 28–29; Strazas 1996b, p. 38). The LSDP elite was highly multiethnic (it included Dzerzhinsky), but as it “nationalized” to reach its ethnic Lithuanian base (Sabaliunas 1990, pp. 122–23), Dzerzhinsky left and Kapsukas rose to prominence. The LSDP leadership then narrowed around its Lithuanian cultural and literary elite, and Kapsukas drifted; not having the necessary cultural capabilities for the Lithuanian literary elite, he was excluded by its ethnopolitics. Kapsukas moved to

¹¹ Dzerzhinsky's friendships with and marriages to Jews were well known; he even studied Yiddish to agitate among Jewish workers.

Russian socialism and became a Bolshevik as a result of marginalization from Lithuanian nationalism.

Like Dzerzhinsky, Radek was a nationalist in Polish nationalism's early cosmopolitan phase. For Dzerzhinsky Polish nationalism had been a reaction to tsarist Russification; for the Jewish Radek, it was a venue for assimilation. His family were middle-class Germanized Austrophilic civil servants, but the Polonization of Galicia after 1867 meant that Radek's cultural capabilities required accommodation with Polish rule (Mendelsohn 1969, 1971; Steffen and Wiemers 1977; *Granat* 1989, p. 593). Galician Jews were caught between Ukrainian anti-Semitic nationalism and a clerical Polish nationalism. So most assimilated (nonnationalist) Jewish radicalism privileged the imperial German and therefore either German or Polish socialism.

Radek was involved in every major socialist party in Europe—the Polish, the German, the Swiss, the Galician, the SDKPiL, and the Russian (*Granat* 1989, pp. 594–95; Radek 2000). As each group chose between nation and class, it consolidated around its ethnic core and moved rightward (cf. Porter 2000). So Radek drifted toward German socialism and the German-dominated International, which by 1910 was full of leftist Polish-Jewish émigrés excluded by an ethnicizing Polish socialism. His multiparty activism reflected political homelessness: the more marginalized he became, the more he gravitated toward multiethnic internationalist parties still open to Jews. Radek was shocked that with the war, German socialism, too, found its national identity, so he gravitated to the Russian (Bolshevik) émigré colonies in Switzerland—the only internationalist socialists left willing to accept Jewish radicals.

Bolshevism's *rossiiskii* (imperial Russian) inclusiveness offered access and political status to aspiring cultural elites like Kapsukas; it offered an ethnically neutral social home to ethnoculturally marginalized Jews like Radek; and for Dzerzhinsky, it offered an improved imperial ideology to protect borderland elites' position and identity. Radek was drawn to Bolshevism's ecumenicalism and internationalism, Dzerzhinsky to its commitment to imperial territorial integrity, and Kapsukas to its antinationalist antichauvinism. Moreover, because of the complex entwining of class and ethnicity, all three experienced particular déclassé dimensions to their ethnopolitical exclusions, making them receptive to the class conflicts within Polish and Lithuanian nationalisms and to the ethnic grievances channeled by the socialist critique.

The Ukrainian Bolsheviks

The Ukrainian Bolsheviks were attracted to Bolshevism's antinationalism and internationalism, particularly in its ideological tolerance of the entire

spectrum of nationalism, national socialism, and internationalism. There were only eight Ukrainians in the Bolshevik elite, an underrepresentation given their 18% share of the imperial population (Bauer et al. 1991, p. 212). Bolshevism had little support in the Ukraine among ethnic Ukrainians—the SRs and the Anarchists were more popular, so it is not surprising that nearly all the Ukrainian Bolsheviks were involved in other parties before becoming Bolsheviks. Yet more Bolsheviks of all ethnicities were radicalized in the Ukrainian provinces than in any other part of the empire, a testament to the region's complicated ethnopolitics and the entwined experiences of Ukrainians and Jews in the Pale (Potichnyj and Aster 1988; Klier and Lambroza 1992; Beauvois 1993; Miller 2003). The Ukrainian provinces had the empire's worst pogrom violence, and they also produced the greatest number of socialist internationalists—two related distinctions. The Ukrainian Bolshevik Party had as many Jews and Russians as it did Ukrainians (Subtelny 1994, pp. 348–49), so its divisions were between internationalists seeking unconditional unity inside the empire in response to Ukrainian, Polish, and Jewish nationalisms (such as Nikolai Krestinskii and Dmitri Manuilsky) and national socialists seeking greater cultural autonomy from St. Petersburg (such as Skrypnyk).

Regional differences also mattered to local ethnopolitics: the ethnically Polish-dominated right bank of the Dnieper produced most of the internationalists (Krestinskii and Manuilsky), while the ethnically Russian-dominated left bank and the southern provinces witnessed greater pogrom violence and nationalist and rightist parties (producing nationalists like Nikolai Skrypnyk); in the industrial south, political identities were more Russified, and so members of radical groupings (Grigorii Petrovskii, Vlas Chubar', and Dmitri Lebed') tended to conflate nationalist and socialist politics. The Bolsheviks came from all three regions and from three social strata: (1) the small middling strata of cultural and intellectual elites in the liberal professions and *zemstva* (provincial administrative assemblies; the Bolsheviks from these strata were Manuilsky, Skrypnyk, Alexandr Tsiurupa, and Krestinskii), (2) imperial bureaucrats and petty (service) nobles in imperial posts or in the imperial army (Alexandra Kollontai), and (3) the urban or rural working classes (Petrovskii, Chubar', Lebed'), either fully Russified and co-opted into imperial posts or having a dual identity (Weber 1989; Subtelny 1994; Hosking 1997, pp. 26–27).

For Tsiurupa, a Russified agronomist and *zemstvo* statistician (Prokhorov 1969–78, pp. 611–12; *Granat* 1989, p. 750), radicalism was part of the more general *zemstvo* liberal reformism (Johnson 1982; Manning 1982; Starr 1992, pp. 304–6), but it is likely that *zemstvo* service, being poorly paid, was a consequence of radical idealism rather than a source of it (Seton-Watson 1967, pp. 471). In contrast, Krestinskii and Manuilsky were committed to radical internationalism in order to counter nationalist

separatism; both were highly Russified and radicalized in complex ethnopolitical relationships with Poles, Jews, and Russians. Krestinskii came from a lower-middle-class family of radicals in provincial Belorussia (Prokhorov 1969–78, pp. 393–94; *Granat* 1989, pp. 462–63). A member of the *advokatura*, he joined Vilna's multiethnic socialist groups. Manuil'sky's father was an Orthodox cleric near the rural Galician border, a region with a sizable urban Jewish presence (Prokhorov 1969–78, p. 340; Suiarko 1979, p. 5; *Granat* 1989, p. 793). Russified and radicalized in *gimnazii*, Manuil'sky embraced his Ukrainian roots (Suiarko 1979, p. 6) and became a Bolshevik in 1904 in extensive collaborations with Jewish socialists abroad. As the Ukrainian groups also began to find their ethnic bases, russified Ukrainians like Manuil'sky and Krestinskii in the all-Russian parties were caught between the non-Russified Ukrainian left and Ukrainian nationalism. They had defined their *rossiiskii* and Russified political identities in opposition to national socialists' peasant and worker appeals as much as in opposition to the nationalists' anti-Russianism. Socialist universalism was especially appealing to those caught in these local tensions.

In contrast, Skrypnyk was Russified, educated, and a product of left-bank ethnopolitics. His father, a typical dual-identity civil servant in the imperial bureaucracy, sent his son to an imperial Russian *Realschule* (technical secondary school) (*Granat* 1989, pp. 668–69).¹² Proud of the fact that his great-great-grandfather was a Zaporozhian Cossack, Skrypnyk wrote of his family's "uneasy and restless" relationship with the ethnic Russian landowning classes around them (*Granat* 1989, p. 668). While in *real-schule*, he was involved with Galician Ukrainian radicals before becoming a Social Democrat (*Granat* 1989, p. 669). His internationalism derived from a soft nationalism that was fearful of Great Russian nationalism (Bilinsky 1978). Unlike Krestinskii's right-bank internationalism (or the politics of Uritsky's Kiev), Skrypnyk's politics sought to contain Russian centralism in a multiethnic socialist framework.

The other Ukrainians in this elite—Petrovskii, Lebed', and Chubar'—typified the Russified, peasant/factory worker of left-bank Ukraine (Prokhorov 1969–78, pp. 239, 488–89; *Granat* 1989, pp. 491–92, 581–82, 759). Before they became Bolsheviks, Lebed' was active in Anarchist and Menshevik groups and Chubar' in the SRs (*Granat* 1989, pp. 491, 759). As laborers in the industrial cities of the South (Kharkov and Ekaterinoslav), their levels of linguistic and cultural assimilation were high: they derived from a small strata of Russified, literate urban Ukrainian workers who gravitated to all-Russian groupings with Russian workers because they

¹² HQ Circular 3918, Warning Lists, June 6, 1902. Box 162, index 13d(2), processing intelligence, folder 24A, HIAPO.

shared places of employment. Radicalism and social acculturation into the Russian industrial milieu were of a piece, because cultural boundaries tended to be between Orthodox Russians or Ukrainians and Jews, not between Ukrainians and Russians. The Russification of Ukrainians was more social than cultural. Here, capital and labor were mostly Russian, so ethnicity was less salient and class conflict more transparent; but there was a sizable Jewish labor presence, and one-third of capital was Jewish (Suhr 2003). The region's religious and ethnic violence was entwined with class conflict. Anti-Semitic pogroms in 1881 and 1905 were perpetrated by Russified Ukrainian and ethnic Russian day laborers, for whom anti-Semitism may have been an ideologically binding force (Wynn 1992, pp. 62–65). In 1905, pogromists destroyed the apartment where Chubar' lived (*Granat* 1989, p. 759), which raises the possibility that he may have been Jewish, but I have not been able to verify this with other sources.

So the appeal of a Russian-inflected socialism for the Ukrainian Bolsheviks was a function of high levels of assimilation and Russification in a context of illiberal and violent ethnopolitics. Antinationalist, ecumenical, and anti-Russian, socialist universalism was most appealing in these social locations where ethnic and religious tensions were especially threatening. Russified Ukrainians conscious of their cultural roots sought either internationalism or Ukrainian autonomy within an imperial framework, but after 1905 those with the strongest ties to the all-Russian groups (Manuilsky, Krestinskii, Lebed', and Petrovskii) found affinity with radicalized non-Ukrainians (Russians, Jews, and Germans). These *rossiiskii* imperialists became the core Bolsheviks in the Ukraine, in a validation of Ukrainian cultural identities and a check on the Russian nationalism that increasingly defined Tsarism. In the competition between class and ethnicity, a multiethnic socialism offered an antidote to the complex meshing of both ethnic and class grievances. High levels of Russification, complex ethnopolitics, and the appeal of Bolshevik socialism's class universalism were of a piece.

The Latvian Bolsheviks

The social worlds of the Latvian Bolsheviks highlight the way in which a Russian-inflected socialism appealed to culturally marginalized borderland elites seeking wider cultural spaces beyond their provinces and a more equitable form of imperial rule; their radicalism also highlights Bolshevism's multiethnic mobilizational effect. Latvians were overrepresented among the Bolsheviks—there were six. The Latvian Social Democrats (SDs) were the largest component of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party (RSDLP) until 1917, with more members than the Russian party itself (Ezergailis 1983, p. 23). The Latvian elite was close-knit and

small, with shared backgrounds and many intermarriages. A rural element was notable and included the propertied rural bourgeoisie (Peteris Stuchka and Ikars Smilga), the rural intelligentsia (Janis Berzins and Karl Danishevskii), and peasant laborers migrating to cities (Janis Rudzutaks and Ivan Lepse). The Latvian Bolsheviks were distinguished by their internationalism and Russophilia, though not, like the Ukrainians, by a Russified assimilation.

Substantial social mobility, urbanization, and increased access to education had created greater class differentiation within Latvian society by the 1880s, adding intra-Latvian class conflict to existing Latvian-German tensions, blunting the appeal of nationalism, and opening the way for Latvian socialism in the countryside (Wittram 1973, pp. 155–61; Plakans 1995, pp. 81–83, 87). There was already an extensive network of rural ethnic institutions because of relatively liberal German rule, so Latvian socialism mobilized around these ethnic networks.

Stuchka's, Danishevskii's, and Berzins's families were products of this rural, propertied, and educated bourgeoisie. Stuchka was from a family of prosperous landowners and attended a German gymnasium (Prokhorov 1969–78, p. 15; *Granat* 1989, p. 708). Fully Germanized, he received a law degree and practiced in Riga's Russified legal circles. Stuchka then joined the *jaunastrava*, a Latvian movement espousing a nonnationalist Marxism (Drizulis 1957; *Granat* 1989, p. 708; Plakans 1995, pp. 102–3). The *jaunastrava*'s politicized socialism became so popular among rural landless and urban workers that it outstripped Latvian nationalism at the very height of Russification. But in 1903 Stuchka founded the Latvian Bolshevik Party, and he brought it into coalition with the RSDLP in 1906. With the 1905 revolutions, urban and educated society found its Latvian identity. The antinationalist socialist left defended the rural landless to counter the nationalism of Latvian landowners. The Latvian (rural) bourgeoisie sought independence while peasants and workers sought autonomy within a federated Russia. So Stuchka's Russianized socialist universalism navigated an antinationalist response to the comparable evils of Latvian nationalism and Russian centralism.

Stuchka was a Germanized older Bolshevik; the young Latvian Bolsheviks' social worlds in the 1880s were defined by Russification (Wittram 1973, pp. 218–19; Hagen 1978; Thaden 1981; Henriksson 1983, pp. 47–48, 50; Von Pistholkors 1992, pp. 398–400). Russification democratized the civil service by replacing Germans with lower-class Russians and Russian-speaking Latvians (Hagen 1978). So rather than responding as nationalists, many Russian-educated Latvians found posts in provincial and imperial bureaucracies (cf. Bauer et al. 1991, pp. 198, 251, 255–56, 277, 446 for figures). For culturally sensitive elites, Russification brought a powerful Russophilic dimension to the socialist critique of Baltic society.

Berzins, Smilga, and Danishevskii epitomized this Russophilic socialism of the rural bourgeoisie. Berzins was from a peasant family of substantial means (Drizulis 1957, p. 42; Prokhorov 1969–78, p. 529). As a public school teacher in the 1890s, he felt the impact of educational Russification but responded in *rossiiskii*, all-imperial terms.¹³ He joined the Latvian Socialist Party in Riga, the St. Petersburg RSDLP, and international *émigré* circles (Drizulis 1957, p. 432; Prokhorov 1969–78, p. 229; Lazitch 1986, p. 27; *Granat* 1989, p. 632).¹⁴ During World War I Latvian refugee camps in the Russian interior became a substantial recruiting ground for radicalism (Gatrell 1999, p. 47; Priedite 2004). Berzins was active among them, espousing an exceedingly popular Bolshevism among Latvian peasants and soldiers in desperate wartime conditions and where regional/ethnic disorder was especially threatening.

Also from rural Latvia, Smilga came from a propertied gentry/intelligentsia family in Livland (Prokhorov 1969–78, pp. 348–49; *Granat* 1989, pp. 675–76). Smilga wrote in his autobiography that the imperial army had executed his father in the reprisals following the 1905 nationalist revolutions, initiating both his hatred of Tsarism and his political radicalism (*Granat* 1989, p. 676). These punitive expeditions had politicized the Latvian intelligentsia in ways that years of Russification had not. After three years of exile he became a Bolshevik and Lenin's close confidant (Haupt and Marie 1969, pp. 213–14). Given that he was already Russified, Bolshevik revolutionary socialism offered Smilga a powerful political response to tsarist illiberalism.

By contrast, Rudzutaks and Lapse were emblematic of working-class Latvian radicalism and of Russian socialism's multiethnic mobilizational effect. They were urban, Russian-literate skilled metalworkers in Riga (Kopanev 1967, pp. 37–38; Prokhorov 1969–78, p. 346; *Granat* 1989, p. 631). The city had the fourth-largest industrial proletariat in the empire; it was also among the most multiethnic and Russified (Henriksson 1986, pp. 180–81; Bauer et al. 1991, pp. 156, 184). Latvian emancipation settlements had not tied peasants to repartitional communes as they had in Russia, so landless peasants migrating to Riga, unlike their Moscow counterparts, were not seasonal workers but rather settled permanently and quickly assimilated into an urban working-class culture (Henriksson 1986, p. 202 n. 76; Bauer et al. 1991, pp. 410–28). And since Riga was one of the empire's most multiethnic cities, with a substantial Jewish population (Corrsin 1982; Bauer et al. 1991, pp. 215, 355, 435), this translated into Russian-oriented, *rossiiskii*, multiethnic class mobilizations of Latvians,

¹³ Circulars 1274, 9/22 10/12 and 858 27/10 06–07/12. Box 210, index 22, folder 1B, HIAPO.

¹⁴ Circular 1186, September 18/October 1, 1912. Box 190, index 16b(2), folder 4, HIAPO.

Russians, Jews, and Lithuanians in Russian, Bundist, SDKPiL, and Lithuanian cooperation. So for Rudzutaks and Lapse a Russianized socialism was appealing because of rapid urban acculturation into a *rossiiskii* working class, multiethnic networks, and high levels of Russian literacy.

In summary, then, the Latvian Bolsheviks were propertied, educated rural elites and Russian-literate urban workers with rural roots, radicalized in multiethnic socialist organizations. Class was experienced—and socialism was organized—around ethnicity in multiethnic, imperial, and Russophilic contexts. In competition with Latvian nationalism, Bolshevik socialism became clearer about its ethnopolitical affinities, deepening its cross-class appeal and infusing its socialist critique with ethnic content. But Bolshevism was a very broad ideological tent: for the Germanized Stuchka it countered both Latvian nationalism and Russian centralism, while for the Russified Berzins and Smilga it offered an antitsarist critique from within a Russified experience, appealing because of its anti-nationalism and good imperial politics.

The South Caucasian Bolsheviks

If the Latvian Bolsheviks' multiethnic-network mobilization was notable, that of the South Caucasian Bolsheviks was determinative. The Caucasian Bolsheviks were attracted to Bolshevism both because of a need for a stable empire that could protect vulnerable minorities along imperial frontiers and because of the desire of ethnopolitically marginalized—but previously powerful—borderland elites to reconstruct the empire with themselves at the center of power. There were four Georgians, four Armenians, and one Azerbaijani Turk in the Bolshevik leadership. Bolshevism was the weakest radical option: most Armenians became nationalist Dashnaks, most Georgians became Mensheviks, and most Azerbaijanis became nationalist Musavatists. So these Bolsheviks were political marginals in their own social worlds. I situate their identities and radicalism against the Russian state's "colonial rule" (Breyfogle 2004) and the region's horizontally segmented ethnopolitics, in contrast to the vertically ranked ethnicities of the western and Baltic provinces (Suny 1972).

Although there was considerable economic competition between Georgians and Armenians and between Armenians and Azerbaijanis, particularly in the organization of capital in the Transcaucasian oil industry (Kazemzadeh 1951, p. 12; Jones 1992, p. 248; Suny 1992, p. 231, 1993), tsarist imperial strategies of co-optation and exclusion ethnicized privileges and added a dimension of social envy to the region's ethnopolitics (Alstadt 1992, p. 43; Breyfogle 2003; Crews 2003). So Armenians dominated the economic estates, while Georgian dependence on the imperial state was greater in the noble/military estates (for figures, see Bauer et

al. 1991, pp. 197–98, 429, 440; Suny 1994, pp. 110–11). To maintain social control and political stability along the southern border, nationality policies served geopolitical objectives: the state allowed Georgian, Armenian, and Azerbaijani elites access to provincial civil posts, with the effect of locally institutionalizing ethnoreligious tensions.

For instance, the Azerbaijani Turk Nariman Narimanov was born in Tiflis into a petty merchant, aristocratic family. His social identity was highly complex: a secular Muslim and a russified Tatar, he was culturally and linguistically Turkish and ethnically Azerbaijani. Part of the first generation of linguistically Russified, secular, and reformist Azerbaijani intelligentsia, Narimanov attended gimnaziia and became a teacher, writer, dramatist, and physician (Akhmedov 1988, p. 7; *Granat* 1989, p. 559). His Russian-language abilities allowed him to enter the Gori Teacher's Seminary as one of only three Muslims (Akhmedov 1988, pp. 8–10; *Granat* 1989, p. 559; Alstadt 1992, pp. 55, 58–62). Linguistic Russification and Russian education situated Narimanov at the margin of Azerbaijani politics (Alstadt 1992, p. 39; Swietochowski 1995, pp. 25–26; Georgeon 1996, p. 101) and distinguished him from most Azerbaijani nationalists: he was attracted to the culturally and religiously ecumenical empire of Peter the Great and concerned with cultural imperialism and Muslim reform (Akhmedov 1988, pp. 15–21). Turkish-language newspapers were banned, in a particularly colonial aspect of tsarist ethnic exclusion, and Narimanov's writings were censored. In response he opened the first Azerbaijani Turkish public library (Prokhorov 1969–78, p. 251; *Granat* 1989, pp. 559–60). Narimanov's most important activism was in the RSDLP-affiliated Himmat (Muslim Social Democracy) Party, where he sought a multiethnic class mobilization against both Azerbaijani nationalism and tsarist colonialism. Narimanov's vision of an ecumenical imperial order was a product of Russification, intelligentsia progressivism, and cultural repression.

Bolshevism was similarly marginal among Georgians, since most became Mensheviks. Josef Stalin (born Dzhugashvili) had an idiosyncratic biography, since his class origins were representative neither of Georgian Bolshevism nor of Georgian socialism. The son of a rural shoe cobbler and itinerant farmer, Stalin attended seminary and received minimal education, while the others (Prokofii Dzhaparidze, a doctor; Ivan Orakhelashvili, a teacher; and Grigorii Ordzhonikidze, a medical assistant) were Russian-educated members of the rural nobility of Kutais *guberniia*—a quintessential Christian imperial border area (Prokhorov 1969–78, pp. 193, 468; Ordzhonikidze 1986, p. 9; *Granat* 1989, pp. 407, 567). These three sons of the déclassé rural Georgian nobility were materially impoverished but nominally retained noble status. More important, they confronted status humiliations as tsarist policies increasingly privileged Ar-

menian commerce over traditional Georgian noble interests. The consequences were similar to those among the Polish *szlachta*: a generalized bitterness toward Tsarism and flight from the rural areas into the urban liberal professions. Not coincidentally, most radical socialists were sons of this *déclassé* rural nobility.

These Georgian Bolsheviks were characterized by relative rural poverty, linguistic Russification, and activism in multiethnic mobilizations: Ordzhonikidze organized Muslim workers in Persia in 1905 as a Bolshevik, and Dzhaparidze was one of the founders of the Muslim *Himmat* to which Narimanov belonged (Prokhorov 1969–78, p. 193; Orzhonikidze 1986, pp. 41–42; Swietochowski 1995, p. 54). But certain dimensions of Stalin's identity and radicalism are worth highlighting, because while his class origins were unique in the Georgian context, his general biography was emblematic of many non-Russian Bolsheviks. Rieber (2001, p. 1652) writes, "Stalin could not escape his ethnic origins. His heavily accented Russian betrayed him as a man of the borderlands." Until age 28, Stalin wrote exclusively in Georgian, and he claimed to be affected by tsarist linguistic Russification, arguing that it had caused a political backlash among young Georgians like himself. In his early Georgian writings he described the evils of linguistic Russification under Tsarism. Though he was of peasant origin (his passport identified him as a peasant until 1917), his self-presentation as a "proletarian served to mediate between his Georgian and Russian identities, firmly linking periphery to core" and bridging ethnicity and class (Rieber 2001, p. 1683; see also pp. 1657–68). Ethnic experiences in the empire's borderlands gave Stalin a geopolitical, territorial understanding of socialist universalism, not an internationalist one (Rieber 2001; Shearer 2004, pp. 841–42). This underscores the conservative imperial dimension of Bolshevism and hints at the eventual triumph of the Russified, territorial socialist (Stalin) over the cosmopolitan socialist internationalist (Trotsky).

Armenian radicalism similarly involved territorial commitments to empire, but it was predicated on violent religious and ethnic sectarianism experienced by Christian Armenians on a Muslim borderland. Armenian socialists sought the good imperial ideal, particularly after interethnic massacres of Kurds and Armenians in Anatolia and Armenians and Azerbaijanis in Transcaucasia (Suny 1993, pp. 24–26). Tsarist indifference to the Hamidian massacres and the Russification of Armenian seminaries had stiffened middle-class radicalism, yet geostrategic imperatives of a vulnerable Christian minority guaranteed political Russophilia, so the nonnationalist Armenian intelligentsia joined the Russian parties (Ter Minassian 1983, pp. 180–81).

This characterized the social worlds of three Armenian Bolsheviks. Stepan Shaumian came from a comparatively wealthy merchant family

in Tiflis. He attended a tuition-based realschule that produced socialists, not nationalists (Prokhorov 1969–78, pp. 299–300; Shaumian 1978, p. 6; *Granat* 1989, p. 762). He went to Riga's Polytechnic Institute and joined Latvian SD student circles before returning to Tiflis to work with Armenian and Georgian socialists. During subsequent study in Berlin he was active in German socialism (Shaumian 1978, p. 7; *Granat* 1989, p. 762). His commitment to multiethnic mobilizations and his antinationism derived from a belief that imperial borders protected Armenians (Karinian 1928, p. 10; Shaumian 1978, pp. 138–64, 160–62). Similarly, Alexandr Miasnikov was born in Erevan guberniia, where Azerbaijanis were the majority and Armenians a small minority. His petty bourgeois family suffered financial reversal after the early death of his father, so he also attended an Armenian parish school (Prokhorov 1969–78, p. 180; *Granat* 1989, p. 558; Alstadt 1992, p. 30). And Anastas Mikoian, who was born into a poor family, attended an Armenian seminary school that produced nationalists, but he also studied Russian, German, Georgian, and Azeri (Mikoyan 1988, pp. 11, 14, 20; *Granat* 1989, p. 543; Ellman 2001). He was active in the liberal Kadets and in the nationalist Dashnaks before joining Russian socialism (*Granat* 1989, p. 543; Alstadt 1992, pp. 123–24 [quoting Narimanov]). Mikoian volunteered twice to fight in the tsarist army during World War I in defense of the empire's borders.

With the exception of Narimanov, these Bolsheviks' attraction to a Russianized socialism reflected geostrategic realities. The South Caucasians produced no internationalists. With few geopolitical options, their commitments to an imperial order were territorial, not cultural or internationalist, like those of the Ukrainians or Jews: they sought a stable and ecumenical empire in the context of severe religious, ethnic, and geopolitical tensions. As class, ethnic, and geopolitical grievances infused each other in complex ways, these borderland elites sought to redefine their position and identity at the new imperial center of power.

The Russian Bolsheviks

Just 42% ($n = 39$) of the Bolshevik elite was ethnically Russian (although, as noted earlier, this is an overestimate). Most (23) were peasant-workers, and there were a small number of educated middle-class individuals (6) and service noble or distinguished citizens (4). Half came from the empire's borderlands, again underscoring Bolshevism's borderland roots. The scholarly literature on Russia's workers and intelligentsia is enormous, and my analysis does not challenge the basic premises of the classic interpretations: most were radicalized and drawn to Bolshevism's class politics as a result of class conflict, exclusion, or police repression (see, e.g., Koenker 1981; Bonnell 1983; Smith 1983; McDaniel 1988).

However, the ethnic Russian Bolsheviks did bring a distinctive imperial culture to Bolshevism. Lower-class Russians suffered imperial exclusions: historically the Russian peasantry paid most of the economic costs of maintaining the empire in dues, taxes, and conscription, and they were repressed as urban workers (see table 2 above). Until recently, a less analyzed aspect of their social worlds has been the extent to which *ruskii* (ethnic Russian) and *rossiiskii* (imperial Russian) identities intersected with peasant, worker, intelligentsia, and noble identities. Class alienation was clearer and ethnic exclusions almost nonexistent, but the Russian Bolsheviks were characterized by social worlds of *rossiiskii*, imperial inclusiveness—in contrast to the Russianization that characterized Tsarism. The ethnic Russian Bolsheviks' social experiences complemented those of the ethnic minorities and mirrored the latter's commitments to a universalist political vision. The ethnic tolerance they brought into Bolshevism was absolutely critical in defining Bolshevism's universalist inclusiveness.

Three aspects of the ethnic/imperial dimensions of the Russian Bolsheviks' experiences deserve highlighting. First is their weak sense of ethnic Russianness, at every socioeconomic level. The Russian Bolsheviks' biographies contain little to suggest any sense of *ruskii* self-ascription. In part, this derives from the more general social weakness of Russian nationalism itself and the significant cultural gap between elites and peasantry (Lieven 2000, pp. 253–54, 384–86). For the Bolsheviks of peasant origin, weak *ruskii* identities are explained by the fact that there had been no nationalizing project to “make peasants into Russians”; they were not educated that way in rural schools (see Seregny 1999). Most identified with the monarchy, which did have a hold on the popular imagination (Lieven 1998, p. 256; Wortman 2000, 2003), but Russian nationalism was fractured and incomplete, impeded by the fact that Russia was, first and foremost, an empire, which contributed to a weakened sense of the Russian core (Rogger 1962; Hosking 1997; Szporluk 1997, pp. 65–66; Lieven 1999, 2000, p. 254; Miller 2004).

For these Bolsheviks, Russianness was either embedded in an imperial identity or it was very local and particularistic. The scholarly consensus has been that Russian peasants (including those, like the Bolsheviks, who were peasants turned workers) were too rooted in particularistic interests, values, and local identities to have a sense of national identity (Haimson 1988, pp. 15–19; Moon 1996). Although recent work is revisiting this consensus (Von Hagen 1998; Sanborn 2000*a*, 2000*b*, 2005; Seregny 2000*a*, 2000*b*; Smith 2000), particularly in terms of wartime patriotic mobilizations, and although much turns on definitions of patriotism, citizenship, and nationalism (all variously used), my interpretation of the Bolsheviks' autobiographical accounts suggests (*a*) that they conceived of patriotic Russia in *rossiiskii* terms (especially those in the imperial army) and (*b*)

that they proudly embraced self-ascribed peasant identities. In contrast to the non-Russian Bolsheviks, many of the Russians did not write their autobiographies (in the 1920s) with a view to erasing peasant backgrounds. Indeed they did quite the reverse. One need only compare the Russians' accounts embracing their peasant origins, even over proletarian credentials, such as those of Saprnov, Kalinin, or Kirov (*Granat* 1989, pp. 424, 440, 649), with the ferocity with which the Jewish peasant Kaganovich (1996, pp. 26, 41, 61; Davies et al. 2003, pp. 22, 34, 36) and the Georgian peasant Stalin defensively asserted their proletarian credentials to discredit their own peasant origins (Rieber 2001). In Bolshevik socialist morality, being a Russian peasant implied something different than being a Jewish or Georgian peasant. This underscores the greater sensitivity of ethnic over class identifications for the minorities—and the reverse for the Russians.

It also suggests that *ruskii* identities were compensated with stronger peasant and *rossiiskii* ascriptions. Popular culture in late imperial society positively portrayed the multiethnicity of the empire (Wortman 2000, pp. 29–35); Russian popular literature was tolerant, cosmopolitan, and non-xenophobic (Brooks 1985; McReynolds 1993); in prerevolutionary fiction the empire was portrayed as interesting and diverse to appeal to lower-class readers' greater geographic mobility. Lubok stories (Russian folktales), newspaper serials, and women's novels were not "about becoming Russian, but about what it means to be Great Russian among the various peoples of the empire" (Brooks 1985, p. 216; see esp. chap. 6). Not coincidentally, the Bolsheviks' autobiographical accounts contain explicit references to ethnic cooperation, a denunciation of Russian nationalism, pro-Jewish antipogrom defense, and sensitivity to "their" empire.¹⁵ The Bolshevik peasant-workers had *rossiiskii*, not *ruskii*, identities and cultural frameworks, and they carried these into socialist mobilization, with an important effect on the movements' ethnic tolerance.

Second, several of the Russian Bolsheviks from the intelligentsia (Lenin, Nikolai Bukharin, Valerian Osinskii, Georgii Lomov) were of service gentry origin and carried moral codes that were neither anti-Semitic nor nationalist (cf. Kreindler [1977] on Lenin). This stood in contrast to the xenophobic, conservative Russian nationalism of the landowning gentry that had aligned itself with Tsarism. Lenin's Judeophilia was commonly accepted—as was the rumor of his Jewish background. These Bolsheviks' cultural frames were benignly imperialist: paternalism toward the non-Russians, an aversion to Great Russian chauvinism, an atheistic rejection of Orthodoxy, weak *ruskii* identities, and an identification with the hu-

¹⁵ See also the accounts in *Granat* (1989) by Voroshilov (p. 393), Tomskii (p. 717), Kutuzov (p. 473), Andreev (p. 349; see also Iuzhalov 1904, p. 16), and Kalinin (p. 424).

manism of Russian literature. Particularistic identity ascriptions were more common: describing themselves as Muscovites, not as Russians, Bukharin and Osinskii, for example, had an especially close friendship because of shared social experiences in Moscow (*Granat* 1989, pp. 372–73, 569). These qualities also gave Bolshevism an especially ethnically tolerant culture, since it had more members of (déclassé) noble/aristocratic origin than other groups.

Third, there were high intermarriage rates between Russians and others (notably Jews) within the revolutionary movement as a whole, and particularly among the Bolshevik leadership (Rubenstein and Naumov 2001, p. 282; Slezkine 2004, pp. 179–80).¹⁶ Although sources are incomplete, at least one in five Bolsheviks married someone of another ethnicity or religion—a figure far higher than that across the empire as a whole. Conversion to Orthodoxy and intermarriage were traditionally measures of integration and assimilation (Lieven 1989, pp. 33–34), and this commonly occurred among nobilities, but not at lower social strata. So high intermarriage rates in the Russian socialist groupings also offered a form of assimilation otherwise absent among the lower and middling classes of imperial society.

Thus, the ethnic Russian Bolsheviks brought to Bolshevism particular social worlds and experiences that were ethnically neutral and tolerant, markedly distinguishing it from Tsarism. At every socioeconomic level for these Bolsheviks, Russianness had a tentative and fragile quality, something that in turn helped to define Bolshevism's ecumenical, political universalism. But their socialist universalism contained a certain tension: it was conservative in its desire to preserve the empire, but radical in its class attack on tsarist autocracy, in part derived from its purer class exclusions.

THE BOLSHEVIKS IN COMPARATIVE CONTEXT

Many of the empirical findings regarding the Bolsheviks, as well as elements of the analytical framing offered here, might be true, with qualifications, of other radical groups such as the Mensheviks, the SRs, or the Kadets. Table 3 compares features of the Bolsheviks' socioethnic composition with those of other key political parties in the last decades of the Russian Empire, from the most radical, the SRs, to the most conservative, the rightist Union of the Russian People (URP) or Black Hundreds. While

¹⁶ I found reliable evidence of intermarriage for A. Andreev, Bukharin, Dzerzhinsky, Mikhail Kalinin, Sergei Kirov, Kollontai, Kosarev, Viacheslav Molotov, Giorgii Piatkov, Piatnitsky, Alexi Rykov, Alexandr Shliapnikov, Sverdlov, Trotsky, Kliment Voroshilov, and Zinoviev.

TABLE 3
 SOCIOETHNIC COMPOSITION OF THE MAIN POLITICAL PARTIES NEAR THE END OF THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE

Party	Leadership	Base
Socialist Revolutionaries	Middle class, lower intelligentsia; multiethnic, some Jews; students in Moscow, teachers in villages	Russian peasants distrustful of (Russian) landowners; rural immigrants to cities, uprooted peasants
Bolsheviks	Middle-class nationalities, lower urban, rural intelligentsia; young; Russian working class; more Russian and gentry than Mensheviks; many Jews	Urban workers, rural immigrants to cities, uprooted peasants; popular among Latvian lower classes; popular in border cities and provincial villages in Russia
Mensheviks	Middle-class nationalities, urban lower, middle intelligentsia; more minorities than Bolsheviks; highly multiethnic, notable Jewish presence	Urban workers, rural immigrants, uprooted peasants; more middle class than Bolsheviks; popular in borderlands cities esp. among Georgians and Jews
Kadets	Middle class, middle intelligentsia, and professionals; more cultural intelligentsia than parties further left; intellectuals, academics, and lawyers; notable Jewish presence	Successful in Petersburg, Moscow; Jewish, Polish, Armenian, Muslim support in borderlands to counter rightist nationalism; lots of middle-class membership
Octobrists	Ethnic Russians, Baltic and Volga Germans; rural gentry; new, rising urban wealthy; Moscow merchant intelligentsia; propertied; older	Popular in borderlands among Russians; nationalist elites in old provincial capitals; Russian bankers, industrialists, landowners, large capitalists
Black Hundreds (URP)	Aristocrats, monarchists; older; nationalists and anti-Semites	Appealed to peasants and workers in southern provinces carrying out pogroms

there is no systematic comparative study of the composition of the political movements in late imperial Russia, certain features of the leadership elites and of their bases of appeal can be assembled from various works (Martov, Maslov, and Potresov 1912; Spiridovich 1918; Fischer 1958; Levin 1973; Birth 1974; Pinchuk 1974; Rosenberg 1974; Lane 1975; Zaionchkovskii 1976; Hildermeier 1978; Pipes 1990; Haberer 1995).¹⁷

Two observations can be offered in terms of the groupings' comparative compositions. First, the leaderships were distinguished by age, status/class, social mobility, inclusion or exclusion into the imperial state, and, less tangibly, temperament. For instance, most of the Octobrists and Black Hundreds in the fourth Duma were between 36 and 55 years old, while most SDs were between 30 and 40; socialists had a *déclassé* dimension to their social experience, while liberal Kadets on the whole did not; the Black Hundreds and Octobrists (and also elements of the Kadets) tended to draw from establishment elements of the middle and upper intelligentsia more firmly integrated into imperial professional and state bureaucracies, while the SRs and SDs had more ambiguous status definitions; and non-Russian socialists tended to be more assimilated than non-Russian liberals. Among the leftist groupings, the Bolsheviks were younger, with more *déclassé* gentry and more working-class Russians than the Mensheviks, but they had more assimilated non-Russians from across the empire than the Mensheviks or Kadets.

And second, if the various leaderships drew from different segments of the intelligentsia and upper strata, bringing with them different sets of social resources, they also had different relationships to the imperial state. The leadership profiles are consistent with the empire's patterns of inclusion and exclusion, schematized in table 2 above. Those socioethnic groups inside imperial professional and state bureaucracies tended to support rightist parties or those parties loyal to the monarchy whose members were propertied and sought to hold the empire together through a conservative nationalism in fear of social revolution. And those socioethnic groups excluded, repressed, or subjected to russification joined the center or left parties, united in antistatist opposition, albeit still committed to the integrity of the empire. Importantly, no significant political party sought to break up the empire.

In other words, the ethnic Russian lower classes in the empire's core and the middling/upper classes of the empire's capitals and borderlands appear in the center-left parties in disproportionate numbers. Conversely, the ethnic Russian middling/upper classes and the peasants and workers

¹⁷ These data sets are not strictly comparable, nor could they be even in a single synthetic work, given the unevenness of the historical material available for the different groupings.

of the national minorities typically joined rightist nationalist parties, in the case of the former (especially in the borderlands), or had not been politicized by state exclusions or Russification and so were available for later nationalist mobilizations (e.g., non-Russian peasants). There were obviously significant exceptions—Jews and some lower-middle-class Russians in provincial capitals—but on the whole the socioethnic composition and imperial geography of the main political groupings is consistent with the argument offered here for the Bolsheviks: lower-class Russians and upper-middle- and middle-class national minorities disproportionately sustained the burdens of empire in the decades before the revolution, so their presence was disproportionately reflected in antistate, leftist groupings. The empirical evidence suggests that conservatism coalesced around Russian ethnicity, while a convergence of interest brought ethnic minorities (and their nationalisms) into alignment with the multiethnic, supra-national socialist parties (see also Suny 2000, p. 491).

DISCUSSION

In a now-famous article, the historian Yuri Slezkine pointed out that scholars have tended not to notice the “chronic ethnophilia” of the early Soviet regime—that the “dictatorship of the proletariat was a Tower of Babel” (Slezkine 1994, pp. 414–15, 420, 439). An ethnic particularism conspicuously underlay the unity of class universalism. Arguably some of this is traceable to the way in which the early Soviet elite was a product of—and indeed responded to—a Russianizing multiethnic empire. The biographical sections presented above illustrate how Bolshevik radicalism appealed most to those who valued a secular, universalist, ecumenical, or ethnically neutral imperial politics, particularly in those social locations across the empire where ethnic violence, religious sectarianism, and Russification or geopolitics were most threatening; Bolshevism’s class universalist ideology had its roots in ethnically particular or imperial social and political conditions. The Bolsheviks responded to ancien régime social and political exclusions by mobilizing ethnocultural identities and experiences into a universalist, class-based ideology. Imagined class communities were often experienced through—and constructed around—ethnic solidarities. But as political repression suppressed ethnic divisions and reinforced class-based mobilizational identities, it firmly embedded ethnocultural marginality into the class movement’s core identity.

Therefore, I offer four analytic conclusions. First, while most sociological scholarship has paid almost exclusive attention to class identities in Russia’s revolutionary movements, in prerevolutionary imperial society, ethnocultural identities were often more salient dimensions to many social

experiences—and therefore to identities and politics—than was class. Writing on the relationship between nation and class in nationalist mobilizations, Gellner (1996) argued that it was the conflation of class with cultural difference that gave rise to revolutionary potential: while national movements were effective if they were sustained by class rivalry, class conflict by itself could not engender revolution. Neither class nor nation/ethnicity could, Gellner (1996, p. 143) wrote, mobilize on their own to revolutionary levels, but they could become most politically consequential when they converged. In his work on ethnic cleansing, one of Mann's (2005, p. 5) key claims is that "ethnonationalism is strongest where it can capture other senses of exploitation"—where ethnic groups believe that they are being materially exploited and class and ethnicity capture or channel one another. And Suny (1993, pp. 29, 77) argued that social conflict in the empire's peripheries was made all the more turbulent by the fact that social cleavages and inequalities were marked by cultural differences. In other words, most politically consequential movements occur when social conflict is articulated through cultural differences, or when cultural differences are reinforced by social inequality, because a political movement that addresses these confluences can more effectively articulate more than one dimension of identity and more than one dimension of exclusion or alienation.

This is broadly applicable to the Bolsheviks. But the crucial issue is that of apportioning, to the extent possible, the relative weight to be given to class versus ethnicity in their social experiences, or, put differently, of determining how much class and ethnicity were intersecting, overlapping, or diverging dimensions of experience. The brief biographical accounts offered here provide an empirical basis for claiming that identities and radicalism were indeed shaped by socioeconomic factors, classical blocked social mobility, or some form of class decline or alienation. This dimension of radicalization was particularly important for the ethnic Russians and for some of the Ukrainian peasant-workers. Traditional class-based sources of identity and radicalism mattered.

But overall, social class was a dimension of only varying significance for this leadership elite, and my findings indicate that it was not the most experientially important one. At least two compelling reasons for this are suggested by the biographical reconstructions of the Bolsheviks' social worlds. The first flows from the emerging consensus that revolutionary actors are mobilized or "recruited through preexisting networks of residence, occupation, community, and friendship" (Goldstone 2001, p. 153). My general findings support Gould's (1995, esp. chap. 6) findings on the 1870s radical mobilizations in France, where class identities were rooted in preexisting urban communities, neighborhoods, and networks. In the Russian Empire, these identities were ethnically constituted. The Bol-

sheviks' biographies suggest that to the extent that class or socioeconomic position was felt or experienced, it was generally mediated through rural cultural networks, ethnic neighborhoods, Russified schools, and ethnic occupational networks. Of course socioeconomic dimensions were purer for the ethnic Russians, given their comparatively more homogeneous contexts, but these were defined in imperial *rossiiskii* terms, not in ethnic *russkii* terms. In short, in revolutionary Russia social class was mostly experienced through ethnocultural imperial locations.

Second, for most, ethnopolitical exclusions were perhaps the most salient dimension of their social experiences because of the way in which social identities were affected by imperial strategies or, more precisely, the experiential intersection of identity formation and political exclusion or marginality. Generally, ethnic exclusions are experienced most acutely at the middle and top of the social ladder, where social identities are most strongly in need of articulation and protection. It was here that the imperial state adopted a variety of policies, both conciliatory and exclusionary, targeting specific socioethnic niches across the empire's nationalities, Russian and non-Russian, urban and rural.

But, for instance, whether an ethnic quota restricting middle-class Jewish access to universities or to the *advokatura* is categorized as class repressive, ethnic exclusionary, or some combination of both is, in important respects, irrelevant in terms of understanding its social effect: the aspiring and assimilating Jewish youth *experiences* it at the level of identity most intimately and most directly as a Jew, and only vaguely as a member of the *intelligentsia*, because it differentially affects that dimension of social identity that he experiences most personally. Jewishness is ascriptively forced upon him, and he is acutely conscious that he would not have been distinguished had he not been Jewish. When social inequality has an ethnic marker, that marker is experienced most personally. In middle-class contexts that were becoming increasingly multiethnic, and in which status ambiguities were most pronounced, ethnic exclusions were typically experienced most intimately in ethnocultural terms and only secondarily as generalized illiberalisms or class-inflected alienations. When social mobility was predicated on an assimilated (Russified) belonging in the middling classes—which in late imperial society were increasingly characterized by expectations of meritocracy—even minor ethnic indignities and distinguishing discriminations meant shame and humiliation, giving radicalism much of its potency. In these contexts, an ideology problematizing class ascriptions shifted attention away from these personal ethnic humiliations.

A second conclusion considers the effect of Russification, or cultural assimilation, combined with illiberal imperial policies. The Bolsheviks were in large measure an organization of assimilated cultural outsiders,

with the borderland element most notable. Most were first- or second-generation ethnics seeking a Russified assimilation, so most were only quasi-assimilated and straddled ethnocultural boundaries. But cultural assimilation itself created blurred ethnic and social boundaries, while redrawing new status markers. Russification meant higher education levels, literacy rates, and increased social mobility, which paradoxically meant not integration into Russian society but rather increased cultural difference from the surrounding populations (Nathans 1996). In multi-ethnic contexts, Russification or assimilation actually increased social marginality, as quasi-assimilated individuals were culturally suspended between groups. Against this, the ethnic Russian Bolsheviks' imperial identities significantly shaped the ethnic tolerance of the movement as a whole, most influentially in the figure of Lenin. For all its moral collectivism, Bolshevism actually provided crucial neutral social space—absent in wider imperial society—within which problematic ethnocultural identities could be cultivated and ambiguous assimilation could be validated with few identity costs. So if the marginality of an elite can be critical to the social power of its “transformative” ideology (Goldstone 1991, pp. 424–25; Skocpol 1994, pp. 14–15), Russified ethnocultural marginality had become embedded in this revolutionary movement's core identity. The Bolsheviks' socialist morality problematized class ascriptions, not ethnonational identities, and in doing so corrected a key source of political exclusion, marginality, and social conflict in Russian imperial society.

The third conclusion focuses more narrowly on Bolshevism's multi-ethnic mobilizational effect. In part because of their numerical marginality vis-à-vis other socialist parties, the Bolsheviks accepted anyone, of any social origin, ethnicity, religion, or level of assimilation, regardless of previous involvement in nationalist groupings. Indeed, my biographical reconstructions show that many of the Bolsheviks came to the movement after activism in cultural, religious, and nationalist groupings—bringing with them a great deal of ideological and political diversity. But as the Russian Bolshevik Molotov claimed, in 1917 the new revolutionary elite desperately needed educated and articulate men: “[Lenin] knew how to make use of everyone—Bolsheviks, half-Bolsheviks, and quarter-Bolsheviks alike, but only literate ones” (in Chuev 1991, p. 178). It is tempting to read the Russianness of Bolshevism from 1917 back into the preceding revolutionary decades. But in fact Bolshevism organizationally relied on—and indeed exploited—ethnic diversity and political marginality.

Consequently, its substantial socioethnic and ideological heterogeneity gave the movement a socially wide and diverse mobilizational base under revolutionary conditions. Part of Bolshevism's organizational strength derived from its ability to culturally homogenize both vertically (in cross-class coalitions) and horizontally (in ethnocultural networks) within a

single movement.¹⁸ Although nominally a socialist (two-class) horizontal mobilization, it could organizationally compete with vertical (multiclass) nationalist movements because its multiethnic and dual-identity leadership could effectively pull in a diversity of cross-class ethnic networks and resources, urban and rural. This was especially evident for the Caucasian and Ukrainian Bolsheviks. Part of Bolshevism's organizational strength did classically derive from its centralized, disciplined, and ideologically cohesive elite. But equally important was its ability to culturally homogenize the resources of a socioethnically complex elite into what functionally resembled a nationalist mobilization. Bolshevism created a homogeneous, Russian-inflected universalist revolutionary elite out of ethnically diverse segments of the empire's minority middling classes and lower-class Russians in a key state-building moment. This functional requirement of the revolutionary mobilization would also be a functional requirement of nation-state-building out of a disintegrating multiethnic empire.

The fourth key finding concerns the elective affinity between the Bolsheviks' interests and the socialist ideology they espoused. If revolutionary ideologies are effective when they strike roots in certain cultural frameworks (Goldstone 2001, p. 155), then at least four closely related dimensions of Bolshevism were entwined with the ethnocultural biographies of its social carriers. Most immediately, we know that, in general, a protest group gains commitment by manifesting the same qualities that are expected from the state (cf. Goldstone 2001, p. 154). As evident in a number of the biographies, Bolshevism represented a better version of the good imperial ideal where Tsarism was losing ground.¹⁹ An imperialist intelligentsia emerged committed to a political vision of a secular, nonnationalist, ecumenical, multiethnic state, partly as an ideological antidote to a morally faltering and intolerant Russianizing Tsarism.

Yet if Bolshevism was a "better" version of Tsarism, as such it was a less radical ideology than it may first appear. This leads to a second dimension of the elective affinity between the ideology and its social carriers. Russian Bolshevism offered certain marginalized yet assimilating elites in the empire's multiethnic borderlands an ideology that would sustain certain imperial structures and protect identity and position. Paradoxically a modernization ideology of the left, when considered together with the social composition of its ideological carriers, the functionally conservative tensions within it become clear: it provided its social carriers with an ideological underwriting of the sociopolitical organization of the empire that was being threatened not only by rapid social change, but

¹⁸ The same could be said for the Mensheviks and the SRs.

¹⁹ I thank Michael Mann for this observation.

also by a nationalizing Russian state and by empire-subverting, exclusionary nationalisms. Referring to an altogether different kind of historical transition, Gellner (1988, p. 92) nicely wrote that in moments of profound social transformation, “to a considerable extent the social base and need for some communal religion remains effective: hence a form of ritual which underwrites and reinforces social organization, rather than one which replaces it and consoles for its absence, also continues to be in demand.” Bolshevism served precisely this conservative, imperial function.

Third, and relatedly, this underscores what Rieber (2000) has called the “borderland factor” in the emergence of an ideology and its social carriers (Gerasimov et al. 2005; Brown 2004; Rieber 2004; Hirsch 2005, chap. 4). A particular kind of leadership can emerge from the debris of empire—one that is intensely suspicious of nationalism, because in illiberal or imperial contexts nationalism was nearly always conceived in ethnically exclusionary terms. Borderland and regional ethnic elites in empires have often sought to reconstruct new social orders, placing themselves at the political (and geographic) center of power (Rieber 2001, pp. 1645–55). Bolshevism’s borderland factor was crucial to its antinationalist appeal and to its Russified, universalist class politics.

Fourth and finally, the Bolsheviks’ identities and marginalizations suggest routes to radicalism in revolutionary Russia more generally. The Russian higher classes, alienated after 1861, closed ranks after the 1905 revolutions in nationalist defense of a Russified autocracy. Conservative, anti-Semitic Russian nationalism was most popular among Russian settlers in the borderlands and among propertied elites inside the imperial state as a way to quell social revolution and maintain imperial unity against minority unrest, which explains these groups’ notable presence in rightist conservative movements. Most of the lower classes (especially the peasantries) of the empire’s ethnic minorities had largely been ignored by the Russian state. Non-Russified and nonpoliticized until World War I, they were subsequently courted in later nationalist mobilizations. But lower-class Russians and upper-middle- and middle-class national minorities were the two social categories that disproportionately sustained the heaviest costs of the multiethnic Russian Empire in the half century before the revolution: ethnic minority elites paid most of the political costs of imperial rule, while Russian peasants in the empire’s core paid the economic burdens in dues, taxes, and conscription. These two socioethnic groups show up in disproportionate numbers not only in Bolshevism, but also in all the other center-left radical movements in revolutionary Russia, and almost in the same proportions.

As Bolshevism’s embodiment of the good imperial ideal, its antinationalism, its opposition to ethnic and religious sectarianism, and its universalist political vision responded to those affected by the dilemmas of

imperial exclusions, it effectively mapped the revolutionary transition from a multinational empire problematized by ethnicity to a multiethnic Soviet state problematized by class. If universalist ideologies emerge from specific social and political conditions, then Bolshevism's socialist universalism was rooted in ethnic particularism and embodied the ethno-political marginality that defined Bolshevik radicalism. Socialist class universalism was as much a product of ethnic particularism as it was constituted by it.

APPENDIX A

In addition to autobiographies, biographies, and memoir accounts pertaining to individual Bolsheviks, the following general sources have been used to compile the biographical data contained in this appendix: Izdatel'stvo Tsentral'nogo Komiteta KPSS (1989*a*, 1989*b*, 1990), Prokhorov (1969–78), *Granat* (1989), Kaznelson and Günzberg (1912–14), Kopanev (1967), Zaionchkovskii (1976), HIAPO, the Boris I. Nicolaevsky Collection at the Hoover Institution of Stanford University (this collection contains materials on revolutionary Russia, including internal records of membership and organization of the various radical political parties), Drizulis (1957), Vilenskii-Sibiriakov and Kon ([1927–33] 1997).

TABLE A1
SOCIAL ORIGINS (Father's Class or Estate) OF THE BOLSHEVIKS, BY
NATIONALITY/ETHNICITY

	Pol/						Total
	Rus.	Jew.	Ukr.	Lith.	Lat.	Cauc.	
Class:							
Peasant	14	2	1		2		19
Worker:							
Skilled ^b	4					1 ^c	6
Unskilled	4		1	2	2		10
Artisan/small manufacturer	1	3	1				5
Professional/educated bourgeoisie: ^d							
Low level	4	1 ^e	2				8
Professional	2	2	1				5
Commercial bourgeoisie: ^f							
Petty merchant ^g		2				2	4
Middling merchant		2				2	4
Haute bourgeoisie ^h		1		1	1		3
Military	1		1				4
Clergy	2		1				3
Noble/gentry: ⁱ							
Landed noble				1	1	3 ^j	5
Service/personal	4		1				5

Ethnic Roots of Class Universalism

TABLE A1 (Continued)

	Pol./							Total
	Rus.	Jew.	Ukr.	Lith.	Lat.	Cauc.	Other ^a	
Estate:								
No recognized estate	1	1	1					3
Hereditary noble	3			1		3		7
Personal noble	2		1					3
Clergy	2		1					3
Distinguished citizen	1	2	2 ^k				2	7
Merchant		3	1			2		6
Meshchanstvo	13	5		2	2	2	1	25
Peasant	14	2	1	1 ^l	4 ^m	2 ⁿ	2	26
Cossack								
Inorodtsy								

NOTE.—N = 81 for classes, 80 for estates, omitting unreliable data that was either Sovietized, uncorroborated, or conflicting. Empty rows are included in order to preserve the full list of classes and official tsarist categories from the imperial census.

^a Includes Kazakhs, Germans, and others.

^b Workers in middling to large manufacturers or factories.

^c Mikoyan's father's skill level is unclear.

^d *Bildungsbürgertum*, low level (petty bureaucrats/civil servants, elementary teachers, clerks, etc.) or professionals (doctors, barristers, engineers, agronomists, university/gimnaziia professors). A number of these positions were in the employ of the local or imperial government.

^e Iaroslavskii's father was a furrier, but his mother, a schoolteacher, is not counted here; Kuibyshev's (Russian) schoolteacher mother is also not counted. Radek is included here.

^f Includes middling commerciants/merchants and capitalists, as well as landowners and commercial property elites and small property owners of nonnoble status.

^g "Merchant" could refer both to wealthy commercial entrepreneurs and to petty traders, usually very poor.

^h Includes wealthy merchants and capitalists, well-off landowners of nonnoble status only.

ⁱ These groups may overlap. Each can include hereditary nobles.

^j Dzharparidze's family were landowners, but their noble status is unclear; Ordzhonikidze's family were nobles, but their landowning status is uncertain.

^k Skrypnyk's and Tsiurupa's fathers, a petty railroad official and a municipal civil servant, were both at the lower end of the distinguished citizens estate.

^l Kapsukas's family were prosperous landowners but still considered in the small Lithuanian rural bourgeoisie to be in the peasant estate because they held no noble titles.

^m Smilga's and Stuchka's families were prosperous nonnoble landowners, and like Kapsukas's were at the higher end of the peasant estate.

ⁿ Dzharparidze's family were wealthy landowners at the higher end; Ryskulov's father was a nomadic stock raiser whose wealth is unclear.

TABLE A2

OCCUPATION (Class or Estate) OF THE BOLSHEVIKS, BY NATIONALITY/ETHNICITY

	Pol./							Total
	Rus.	Jew.	Ukr.	Lith.	Lat.	Cauc.	Other	
Class:								
Peasant								
Worker:								
Skilled	5	1		3	1		2	12
Unskilled	16	1	3		1			21
Artisan/small manufacturer	1	2						3

TABLE A2 (Continued)

	Rus.	Jew.	Ukr.	Pol./ Lith.	Lat.	Cauc.	Other	Total
Professional/educated bourgeoisie:								
Low level	3	2	2		1	3	1	12
Professional	6	5	3		1	4	1	20
Commercial bourgeoisie:								
Petty merchant								
Middling merchant								
Haute bourgeoisie								
Military								
Clergy								
Noble/gentry:								
Landed noble								
Service/personal								
Professional revolutionary ^a	6	4		1	2	1	2	16
Estate:								
No recognized estate ^b	7	7 ^c	4		1	7		26
Hereditary noble								
Personal noble								
Clergy								
Distinguished citizen	2		1		1		1	5
Merchant								
Meshchanstvo	7 ^d	4	3	3			3	20
Peasant	15 ^d				2			17
Cossack								
Inorodtsy								

NOTE.—*N* = 84 for classes, 68 for estates, omitting unreliable data that was either Sovietized, uncorroborated, or conflicting. Empty rows are included to facilitate comparison with table A1.

^a Professional revolutionary was the only occupation of these Bolsheviks; they had no other practicing occupation or qualification.

^b This category included humanists/writers, lawyers, economists, teachers, draftsmen, doctors, pharmacists, (nonradical) journalists, agronomists, statisticians, and chemists.

^c Sokolnikov was both a trained economist and a lawyer.

^d These categories blend into one another for the Russians.

APPENDIX B

Merging Class and Estate

The *clerical estate* comprised mostly Russian Orthodox clergy, with significant numbers of Georgians and Armenians, but almost entirely excluded Jewish, (Catholic) Polish, and (Buddhist) Kalymuk clergy.

The *noble estates* included the hereditary nobility, the personal nobility, the urban and rural gentry, and the aristocracy, in practice comprising a diverse set of social positions and occupations, both urban and rural, including the following: the 150 aristocratic families that ruled Russia, landowning and nonlandowning nobility, higher bureaucratic officials

(armed forces and civil bureaucracy), a considerable portion of the free professions and service elite (overlapping with the intelligentsia and *raznochintsy* [people of various ranks]), higher government service, and certain educated careerists. With the promotion of commoners, the sons of landed elites and déclassé nobilities became part of the new urban upper middle classes. Georgian, Polish, Lithuanian, Tatar, and German nobilities were, in proportional terms, more significant than the Russian nobility.

The *merchant* and *distinguished citizen* estates blurred into the noble estate. They were primarily nonofficial urban upper and middle classes, comprising nonnoble, nonofficial elites, both urban and rural, elements of the educated bourgeoisie, and the “great” bourgeoisie or wealthy merchants. Occupationally, these estates included professionals and rentiers, bureaucrats and civil servants, a segment of the business elite in banking and commerce, and some of the free professions. The merchant estate, or much of the commercial bourgeoisie, could include some of the above, the middling-level business and banking classes, as well as members of the *gildii* (guilds), incorporated artisans with rules for apprenticeship (*tsekhi*), and small agricultural entrepreneurs. The presence of ethnic minorities in these estates was hugely significant. Significantly, the intelligentsia and *raznochintsy* (mostly composed of professionals employed by the state, provincial municipalities, *zemstva*, courts, and universities) and those associated with the *zemstva* fell between official classifications. They drew from the cultural and intellectual elites, but also from the commercial bourgeoisie, bureaucrats, careerists, and segments of the petty bourgeoisie. Subject to upward and downward mobility, they were usually defined by exclusion—nonnoble, nonpeasant, nonmerchant, nonregistered urbanites. The largest ethnic intelligentsias were Russian, Polish, Jewish, and Armenian.

The *meshchanstvo estate* (small burghers and townsmen) was roughly equivalent to the petty bourgeoisie and skilled and unskilled workers, comprising mostly urban, noncorporative, nonregistered guild artisans, small shopkeepers, white-collar employees, owners of small family businesses, petty capitalists, and a large floating population of the urban poor. Jews were the most prominent ethnic group in this estate; just over 94% of the empire’s Jews were classified as townsmen or urban and rural petty capitalists. Together the *meshchanstvo* and the distinguished citizens included a very heterogeneous educated bourgeoisie of government officials in local administrations, judicial officials, the gendarmerie and the police, army officers, professionals (teachers, journalists, writers, intellectuals, doctors, etc.), and *zemstvo* officials/clerks (some quite well-off and others very poorly paid). The lower strata of the *meshchanstvo* and large portions of the peasant estate covered the whole of the working classes, especially those in factories, mining, and transport and the unskilled and unem-

ployed urban poor. As late as 1895, the imperial state regarded workers as a subgroup of the peasantry.

The *peasant estate* in practice blurred with the *meschanstvo*, comprising rural peasants without property or land, the largest proportion of the urban unskilled working class and manual labor, an unskilled, (un)employed urban poor, and a small rural bourgeoisie, or prosperous farmers.

The *inorodtsy* designated alien ethnic minorities, including Jews and unassimilable ethnics. The remaining estates were the *Cossack* and *military* estates.

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