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Pedro Ramet

Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies, University of Washington

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HYPOTHESES ON THE NATIONALITIES FACTOR IN SOVIET RELIGIOUS POLICY

by Pedro Ramet

Pedro Ramet, a native of London, England, has lived almost half of his life in Europe—chiefly in England, Austria, Germany, and Yugoslavia. He received his A.B. in philosophy from Stanford University, his M.A. in international relations from the University of Arkansas, and his Ph.D. in political science, in 1981, from UCLA. He is currently an Assistant Professor in the Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies, University of Washington. He is the author of Sadat and the Kremlin (1980) and Nationalism and Federalism in Yugoslavia, 1963-1983 (1984), and editor of Religion and Nationalism in Soviet and East European Politics (in press). This essay was written for a conference on religion in the USSR sponsored by Religion in Communist Dominated Areas (RCDA) and will be appearing in a forthcoming issue of that journal.

One of the differences between the Soviet outlook and the Western, which confronts us the moment we undertake to examine Soviet political behavior, is that whereas Westerners tend to view 'policy' nebulous, viewing it usually as a continuing process of establishing fixed procedures and expectations in a given realm, in Soviet terms 'policy' is more often seen as a program designed to eradicate a problem, to solve it absolutely. As such, the eradication of the problem is expected also to end the need for a policy—which reveals that the Soviet interpretation of 'policy' is distinctly utopian. Policy has no other raison d'être than the solution of problems, for the Soviets, and both problems and policies are assigned fixed values, i.e. they are defined ideologically. This concept of policy is underpinned by the now strictly honorific doctrine of the withering away of the state, which holds that once certain problems have been solved, there would be no further need for policy and hence the state apparatus could disappear. In approaching "policy" matters, the Soviet approach is to proceed from a definition of policy, which embraces a definition of the problem. These definitions, in turn, yield a set of prerequisites for the solution of the problem, and this set of prerequisites itself implies some concept of the instruments and targets of policy.
Soviet religious policy is seen as a component in the broader project of eradicating attachment to pre-communist culture (in Soviet parlance, "building the New Soviet Man") and of creating a unified, "Soviet" culture. Private views, as alternative ideologies, are obstacles to the success of this project. Within this framework, religion is seen as private prejudice having roots in pre-bourgeois and bourgeois society. Viewed in this context, the oft-touted Soviet guarantee that religion is the private affair of the individual is seen to have a useful corollary, viz. that, by virtue of being a "private" affair, it is not public and hence, religious institutions enjoy no public rights or prerogatives, have no function in public life, and are best restricted to purely liturgical functions. And, insofar as this private affair is, in fact, a private affliction, it becomes the right and duty of communists to take concerted measures to eradicate "pre-scientific consciousness." Or, as a communist judge in Czechoslovakia once put it, "In our socialist society all the conditions have been established so that all the citizens can get rid of their prejudices, including their religious beliefs."

Moreover, once religion is defined as a "vestige" of pre-bourgeois and bourgeois society, its elimination, in conditions of "the building of communism," becomes a matter of definition, which is to say, beyond question. Accordingly, "under developed socialism the sphere of religion is increasingly narrowing," as increasing numbers of people are "liberated" from religiosity.

The three chief components in the Soviet understanding of religion identify the prerequisite factors for the elimination of religion. As a private affair, it is to be dislodged from the public sphere, regulated, registered, and controlled. The Soviets appreciate the organically political character of religion and the consequences of depoliticizing religion, as Zachary Irwin has pointed out: "Religion becomes politics when it seeks to externalize intrinsic obligation through the fact of a regime, and politics becomes religion in the apotheosis of a popular ethos. Religion atrophies without relevance to social facts, whether or not they are independent of a regime." As a prejudice, it is to be combatted by systematic atheist propaganda. As a vestige of pre-
bourgeois and bourgeois society, its links with national sentiment must be shattered, and national identity founded on a new basis—for the Soviets, differences in language. The disappearance of religion has traditionally been associated with the achievement of "full communism"—an association which would postpone the disappearance of religion to the indefinite future. Yet a recent article in Komsomolskaya pravda called for "a more determined struggle" against religion, on the argument that "religion must disappear of itself in about twelve years."7

Soviet religious policy has been tactically inconsistent (with periods of relaxation and periods of intensified struggle), but strategically consistent.8 Differences across time (e.g. pre- and post-1928) and across denominations are tactical inconsistencies directed toward the same ends, but reflecting contextual differences and differences in opportunity. The Russian Orthodox Church, for example, is far more susceptible to manipulation, infiltration, and subversion than is the Catholic Church in Lithuania; hence, an entire range of policy instruments becomes available in the former case, which are not available in the latter.

As noted before, policy in a specific sphere is seen by the Soviets as but an aspect of their larger utopian project. Hence, religious policy is not an autonomous realm. Its goals and values do not arise within any autonomous framework but only within the broader context of "the building of communism." The Soviets conceive of policy as a seamless web, a united "front," so that the relation of religious policy to nationalities policy can only be, in Leninist terms, a mutually supportive one.9 Soviet nationalities policy, which defines nationality as the consciousness associated with a shared language, culture, territory, and economic life,10 has sought to erode ethnic differences by promoting the spread of Russian language and culture, fostering ethnic intermarriage, assailing traditional customs and ceremonies, and stimulating (even forcibly) interregional migration.11 Hence, while permitting the Moscow patriarchate to continue to publish Russian-language materials, the Soviet state banned publication of the Ukrainian-language monthly, Pravoslavnyj visnyk in the 1960s, and except in western Ukraine, Russian is the language of the sermons in Orthodox
churches throughout Ukraine as well as the language of Ukrainian ecclesiastical administration. Religious policy, in this way, is attuned to the needs of nationalities policy.

Seen in this light, the disjunction of religion and nationalism assumes critical importance not only from the standpoint of the atheist desire to weaken collective attachment to the 'folk' religion, but also from the standpoint of the assimilatory drive to enervate national identity and to reduce it to mere differences in crafts, costumes, and dances. Soviet dissident Valentyn Moroz saw this quite clearly when he wrote that

the most convenient way of destroying [the] foundations of a nation is to employ the pretext of fighting against the Church. The Church has grown into cultural life so deeply that it is impossible to touch it without damaging the spiritual structure of the nation. It is impossible to imagine traditional values without the Church... [Hence,] the struggle against the Church means a struggle against the culture. 

The purpose of this paper is to set forth hypotheses on the nationalities factor in Soviet religious policy and, in the process, to relate religion and nationalism analytically, providing the conceptual basis for empirical linkages. Given the number of hypotheses being outlined, it will not be possible to provide conclusive arguments, only suggestive ones. The hypotheses are aggregated into three broad groups. Hypotheses 1-3 are concerned with the orientations of religious groups and nationalists toward each other. Hypotheses 4-5 are concerned with processes associated with modernization in the Soviet Union. Hypotheses 6-11 are concerned with Soviet religious policy per se.

Hypothesis 1: Nationally linked religions of larger nationalities are more threatening than those of smaller nationalities.

While additional factors have to be added into the calculation in order to capture the complexity of the situation accurately, it appears that, where the religion/nationalism symbiosis is concerned, the Soviets have been most troubled by Ukrainian Catholicism and Central Asian Islam. Neither the nationally intense Catholicism of the Lithuanians nor the Islam of the smaller peoples of the USSR produces fulminations as feverish as those inspired by Ukrainian Uniates and underground Islam in Central Asia. In the case of the latter, the Soviets have often sought
to blame heightened Islamic consciousness on the influence and activities of foreign groups—as in the case of an article by A. Ortigov in the February 15, 1983 issue of Soviet Uzbekistan and in the case of an article by A. Doev in the February 1984 issue of the Kirghiz edition of Kommunist. Moreover, while the Soviets banned the Ukrainian Unitiates, the Lithuanian Catholic Church has been allowed to continue legal operation.

Hypothesis 2: In the case of nationalities with more than one 'national religion,' the regime will tend to view one 'national religion' as more dangerous than the other.

At least four nations in the communist world have more than one 'national religion,' i.e. more than one religious organization claims to be the protector and traditional cultural organization of the group: Hungary (Catholicism and Calvinism), Romania (Orthodoxy and Greek-Rite Catholicism), Ukraine (Greek-Rite [Uniate] Catholicism and Orthodoxy), and the Ossetians (Orthodoxy and Islam). In two of these cases, one of the competing religions has been banned outright (Greek-Rite Catholicism in Romania and Ukraine). In Hungary, the Calvinist Church accommodated itself to communism much sooner, just as Orthodoxy did where the Ossetians are concerned. The religious group seen as "more threatening" is so identified, in each case, on the basis of its greater resistance to cooptation and, in the Ukrainian case, also on the basis of its linkage with centrifugal ideology. In Ukraine, the Ukrainian Orthodox have also been blunted, by being united organizationally into the Russian Orthodox Church.

Hypothesis 3: Nationalists tend to identify a single religion with their particular nationality group and are therefore antagonistic toward proselytization by splinter sects; the splinter sects are often antagonistic or indifferent toward national feeling.

Among Lithuanian nationalists, for instance, the editors of Ausrelé insist that all Lithuanians should be Catholic and argue that "the [Lithuanian] nation will remain alive only as long as the Catholic Church remains alive." Whatever erodes the strength of the Catholic Church in Lithuania—whether atheization or proselytization by other
groups—is ipso facto inimical to the nation as a collective entity. The identification of nationality with religion is so strong among the Muslims of Central Asia as to render the concept of religionless nationality anomalous and incomprehensible, and Christian churches are rightly viewed as indifferent toward the national feeling of Central Asians. Among Ukrainians, Protestant sects such as Jehovah's Witnesses have no interest in Ukrainian nationalism and therefore often function as de facto agents of Russification. And for Russian nationalists, the Russian Orthodox Church has often been viewed as the most authentically Russian institution. Indeed,

in a multi-national setting even non-believing Russians will often call themselves Orthodox to clearly mark off their national identity from that of Soviet citizens of non-Russian origin. This same close bond between Orthodox religion and Russian nationality was also forged by the short-lived, politically oppositional Berdyaev Circle which wanted to carry this connection to the extreme by founding a new political order on the Church. Baptism in the Orthodox Church...is regarded by many as a national custom. Rather than symbolising a strictly religious commitment, baptism is often approached as an act of affirming a national tradition.

Corollary 3a: Assaults on the primary religious organization of non-Russian peoples tend to be viewed as attempts to de-nationalize them as a preparation for eventual Russification.

This follows directly from the foregoing evidence and indicates that not only the regime but the people as well appreciate the extent to which atheism is designed to serve considerations of nationalities policy and, even more, fear the implications of atheism for the preservation of their national identities. Assaults on the Russian Orthodox Church are viewed, similarly, by Russian Slavophiles, as attempts to denationalize the Russian people and cut them off from their non-Soviet past.

Hypothesis 4: Interregional migratory dispersion weakens ethnic consciousness and attenuates the reinforcement which religion provides to nationality.

To take one example of this, Ukrainians and Belorussians who are
moved to Central Asian cities find Russian-language schools, films, and periodicals readily available, but find little in their own languages. The Ukrainian and Belorussian Orthodox Church organizations have both been suppressed, and hence Orthodox Slavs in Central Asia have only the Russian Orthodox Church available. Moreover, Ukrainians and Belorussians are viewed by the Central Asians as simply "Russians," much in the way that Austrians are often viewed by Slavs as "Germans." Similarly, a transplanted Lithuanian, cut off from his/her homeland, is under great pressure to assimilate, and likewise may find that the available Catholic churches are not Lithuanian in culture. The transplantation of the Crimean Tatars seems to have had the opposite effect, undoubtedly because rather than being dispersed they were moved as an entire community and have continued to exist as a compact community. Interregional migration is most effective in dissolving ethnic consciousness when the community itself is terminated through dispersion.

Hypothesis 6: Tactical changes in religious policy and in nationalities policy tend to coincide, since they are parts of a seamless web of interrelated policies.

The 'NEP' period was a period of relaxation in both the ethnic sphere and the religious sphere. This was reversed between 1928 and 1929 with the passage of a new law on religion, the dispatch of new cadres to administer the non-Russian areas, a re-Russification of Ukraine and Belorussia, and new pressure on religious organizations. The wartime rehabilitation of Russian nationalism coincided with a partial rehabilitation of the Russian Orthodox Church, just as Khrushchev's subsequent anti-religious drive of 1959-1964 coincided with the launching of a campaign to intensify linguistic Russification, with the 22nd CPSU Congress in 1961 officially proclaiming a drive to merge the nations of the USSR. Under Brezhnev, resolutions taken by the CPSU Central Committee in 1979 specifically signalled a toughening in both atheist and internationalist propaganda, and the drive to assail Muslim practices coincided with renewed party concern about shifting demographics in Central Asia.

It is not to be supposed, of course, that every change of policy in
one of these spheres necessarily entails change in the other. But since
the two policy realms are united by broad overlapping objectives
(Sovietization, secularization, social homogenization) and by certain
common instruments (ideology, intermarriage, urbanization, Russifi-
cation), it is natural that change in one sphere of policy should suggest
change also in the other, or—to put it another way—change in either
sphere is apt to reflect change in the approach to certain objectives
and instruments common to both policy spheres.

Corollary 6a: Anti-religious campaigns can be expected to coincide with
increased vigilance against divisive nationalism, and vice versa.

Corollary 6b: Foreign policy pressures and perturbations which excite
clampdowns or relaxations in either the religious or the nationalities
sphere are apt to excite complementary activity in the other sphere as
well.

Evidence for both corollaries may be found in the Czechoslovak
of Czechoslovak politics in 1968 excited a wave of expression of
nationalist discontent in the Ukraine and also stimulated the revival of
open activity on the part of the banned Uniate Church. In response, the
regime organized a number of elaborate anti-religious seminars in 1968
and 1969, especially in the Transcarpathian oblast. In the wake of
Polish disturbances 1980-1981, there were anti-Russian demonstrations in
several Baltic cities and Latvian Party Secretary A.E. Voss openly
fretted, in January 1981, over the spread of "bourgeois nationalism" in
the Soviet West. Once again, anti-Russian nationalism was linked with
the churches, and once again, anti-religious seminars and meetings were
organized in the Soviet West.

Hypothesis 7: Regional variations in nationalities policy have impact on
regional expressions of religious policy.

The targeting of Ukrainians and Belorussians for faster rates of
assimilation is reflected in the disappearance of their autonomous
religious organizations. The greater resistance of Lithuania to
Russification—both demographically and linguistically—when compared
with the other Baltic republics has its parallel in the greater strength of the Catholic Church in Lithuania. The Georgians have in many spheres been comparatively better able than most other Soviet nationalities to resist Russian encroachment; the nationalist currents present in the Georgian Orthodox Church are the result of grass roots pressure.

Laxity in one sphere may also be accompanied by laxity in the other. In Central Asia, for example, the quiet reassertion of 'nationalist' attitudes is paralleled in a pronouncedly lax attitude toward religion—lax, at least, by Soviet standards. Complaints continue to surface, therefore, of "permissive" attitudes on the part of local officials toward religion and a certain raikom secretary was specifically upbraided for having urged that "religion does not do any harm."28

Comparing Lithuania and Kazakhstan, one might note that the more aggressive posture of Soviet cultural policy in the latter is also replicated in the religious sphere, for although both republics give prominent play to atheist ideas in the schools, atheist agitators are active outside the schools only in the latter, not in the former.29

Hypothesis 8: There is a difference in regime orientation toward nationalists who are believers and toward those who are not.

Atheist nationalists are, in a sense, more primevally threatening because they challenge the concept of the seamless web and discriminate between those parts of the package which they accept and those which they do not. From the Soviet viewpoint, the erosion of religion is supposed to promote the erosion of "bourgeois nationalism." To the extent that it does not, "bourgeois nationalism" will have shown itself to have additional (or perhaps, alternative) ideological resources.

Hypothesis 9: The creation or suppression of ethnic identities is impeded by ethnically linked religious affiliation, and hence the manipulation of ethnic identity requires the cooptation or manipulation of the religious elites.

The policy of dividing larger groups into a number of smaller groups, known as razmezhevanie,30 divided Chechen from Ingush, North Ossetian from South Ossetian, Moldavian from Romanian, and splintered the Muslim nation of Turkestan into a host of smaller groups, including
Kazakhs, Kirghiz, and Karakalpaks. In all these cases, new identities were manufactured and presented as the "authentic" expression of self-determination. In Central Asia, this policy targeted the traditional Muslim identity. Two recent Soviet authors conceded as much, when they noted that Islam continues to unite believers and nonbelievers within one nation and to create a feeling of community between practicing Muslims and those who had professed Islam (or whose forebears had done so) in the past. But, they quickly added, religious-based consciousness has nothing in common with the community among Soviet peoples as a whole. All the same, Central Asians often observe Islamic religious rites as assertions of their ethnicity—which tends to undermine the new republic-based national identities they have been assigned by the CPSU and to set them apart from the rest of the population. Through manipulation of the coopted ulema ("official Islam") the Soviets have endeavored to erode traditional Islamic customs either by attributing them to pagan derivation or by simply ignoring them as "backward," and to replace them with new "international," "Soviet" customs. Underground clerics ("unofficial Islam") are threatening in part because they continue to use the traditional customs and rites and defy the efforts at Sovietization of rituals.

Hypothesis 10: As certain groups assimilate new "socialist" traditions and ceremonies and lose acquaintance with their traditional ceremonies and customs, they become less threatening to the regime, or, to put it another way, secularization converts "bourgeois nationalism" into "socialist patriotism," by weakening tokens of particularity.

In Armenia, as in other parts, the performance of hallowed religious traditions, including in this case pilgrimages to the Cathedral of Etchmiadzin, the sanctuary of Tcharchabahan at Armash, and other historic religious sites, has the character not merely of pious observance but also of ethnic loyalty. This 'extra-religious' dimension to ritual is perhaps as troubling to the authorities as the ethical-doctrinal dimension. "Internationalization" finds in religion a clear obstacle, and thus secularization serves the interests of both religious policy and nationalities policy.

Soviet writer I.M. Dzhabbarov explicitly linked secularization and
internationalization:

A further development of the Soviet way of life and the reorganization of the everyday life of the Soviet people on a communist basis serves as an active factor in promoting an intensification of the secularization of the entire mode of life and of family and domestic relations. Even such stable elements of everyday life as housing, clothing, food, family and marriage relations and rites and rituals, when they become subjected to the influence of the process of internationalization and of the Soviet way of life, gradually become free of religious survivals. As a result of the internationalization of social life and of culture and everyday life there occurs a substantial weakening of the connections and then a complete break between the religious and the national moments.

The result is the reinforcement of tendencies toward Sovietization in the sense of the dilution of specific ethnic culture.

At the present time, thanks to the final formation of an Uzbek socialist nation, with the Uzbeks, as with other nations, local characteristics in the material forms of everyday life have not only greatly disappeared or been leveled out, but have been replaced predominantly by national [sic] elements. This is witnessed by the appearance in the vocabulary of the Uzbek language of many new everyday terms which have been borrowed from the Russian and from other languages of the peoples of the USSR.

Similarly, the creation of new socialist rituals goes hand in hand with the suppression of traditional Islamic customs in providing Soviet citizens with a new sense of "national" identity.

Hypothesis 11: By targeting traditional religio-national heroes for expurgation and suppression, Soviet nationalities policy converts atheism into a weapon of denationalization and tightens the connection between religious consciousness and national consciousness.

Soviet historiography celebrates Czarism's expansion of the empire's frontiers and thus is at odds with the folk history of the borderlands, many of whose political heroes acquired that renown through their resistance to Russia. Where religious leaders are involved, as is the case especially in Central Asia, but also in Lithuania and elsewhere, the suppression reinforces awareness of the national role of religious figures. In the North Caucasus, for instance, Sheik Shamil, a
Muridic imam, led guerrilla forces in a 25-year war of resistance against the Russian army, 1834-1859. A major revolt in the Andizhan Valley in Kazakhstan in 1898, against Russian rule, was led by Dukchi Ishan, who sought to create a regime organized on Sufi principles. There were also religious overtones—embodied in the catalytic role of the ulema—to the widespread Central Asian revolt of 1916, and to anti-Russian resistance throughout that area in the 1800s. In Ukraine, the Russian army was sent against the insurgents in the anti-Polish Kolii rebellion in 1768; the leader of the rebels was Maxim Zalizniak, a product of Ukrainian monastic life. In Armenia, nationalist self-defense groups began to organize themselves in Erzerum in the 1880s, with the knowledge and tacit approval of Khrimian, the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople, and religious models from medieval Armenian Christianity and also from Islam later provided inspiration for the Armenian Dashnak guerrillas. And though nineteenth-century Lithuanian Bishop Motiejus Valencius did not believe an independent Lithuania was politically possible, he is credited with having done more than any other individual to nurture Lithuanian national consciousness in that century. 38

Soviet policy tended to be counterproductive in the short run, by inflaming anti-Russian and anti-regime sentiments; whether the combination of demographic mixing, secularization, and Sovietization can effect the degree of social homogenization generally that has already been achieved to a large degree in Belorussia and eastern Ukraine is the challenge upon which the success or failure of Soviet policy in the long run will be measured.

Conclusion. If there is a thematic current underlying these distinct hypotheses, it is that the Soviets do not view either religious policy or nationalities policy in isolation, but view both as dimensions of a broader program of communization ("the building of communism"). Soviet sociology of religion is viewed instrumentally, as a means to develop the most effective policy of atheization. 39 As I.D. Pantskhava put it, in a 1969 essay, "religious prejudices can be overcome only if we know the concrete forms in which religion exists today, the [present] state of religious consciousness, and the tendencies toward change in it." 40 Similiarly, Soviet "ethnosociologists" are entrusted with promoting the
rapprochement of nations and the evolution of the New Soviet Man.\footnote{Pravda (March 30, 1979); and Pravda (October 21, 1981). A Soviet handbook for atheism defines religion as "belief in a nonexistent, supernatural world, supposedly inhabited by gods, spirits, angels, saints, the souls of the dead or other supernatural beings."--Sputnik ateista, 2nd ed. (Moscow, 1961), p. 13, as quoted in David E. Powell, Antireligious Propaganda in the Soviet Union (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1975), pp. 9-10.} The Soviet regime sees itself as fashioning a new "Soviet culture,"\footnote{I have elaborated on this in "The Interplay of Religious Policy and Nationalities Policy in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe," in Pedro Ramet (ed.), Religion and Nationalism in Soviet and East European Politics (forthcoming from Duke University Press).} which is atheist, bilingual (with Russian as the lingua franca), and ethnically convergent, giving rise to a new historical category, the "Soviet people."

Inter-ethnic problems afflict countries of all political and religious persuasions—as the examples of Quebecoise separatism in Canada, Sikh violence in India, South Tyrolean discontent in Italy, Albanian irredentism in Yugoslavia, and north-south problems in Chad and Sudan make clear. But while the Soviet system cannot be said to have created its difficulties in this realm, nor has it made much headway toward solving them, whether in the sense in which the Soviets themselves speak of solutions or in the sense in which Westerners might do so. Moreover, the combined effect of Leninist hostility to both national diversity and religio-nationalist symbiotic bonds and to encourage both believers and non-believers to view assaults on their traditional religions as assaults on their respective national heritages.

\textbf{FOOTNOTES}

\footnote{Pravda (March 30, 1979); and Pravda (October 21, 1981). A Soviet handbook for atheism defines religion as "belief in a nonexistent, supernatural world, supposedly inhabited by gods, spirits, angels, saints, the souls of the dead or other supernatural beings."--Sputnik ateista, 2nd ed. (Moscow, 1961), p. 13, as quoted in David E. Powell, Antireligious Propaganda in the Soviet Union (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1975), pp. 9-10.}

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\footnote{Slovo lektora, no. 5 (May 1982), p. 39.}


7 Komsomolskaya pravda (March 15, 1982), translated into Croatian in Aktualnosti Kršćanske Sadašnjosti Informativni bilten (AKSA), March 26, 1982.


10 In a 1966 article for Voprosy istorii, two Soviet writers offered the following definition (a variation on Stalin's definition of 1913): "The nation is a historically arisen community of people, which is characterized by a stable, shared economic life (with the existence of a working class), a common territory, common language (especially a common literary language), a consciousness of ethnic identity as well as particularities of psyche and of traditions of life style, of culture as well as a [common] liberation struggle."—D.M. Rogachev and M.A. Sverdlin, "O ponjatii 'nacija'", in Voprosy istorii, No. 1 (1966), as quoted in Boris Meissner, "Nationalitättenfrage und Sowjetideologie," in Europäische Rundschau, Vol. 7, No. 4 (Fall 1979), p. 81.


21 In theory the situation is no different in Ukraine and Belorussia, but in practice, many so-called Russian Orthodox churches in the western Ukraine have sermons in Ukrainian, and preserve certain Uniate traditions.

23 The Pokutnyky are a breakaway sect from the Catholic Church in Ukraine, dating from 1954. See Bociurkiw, "Religion and Nationality," pp. 86-87.


30 Re. razmezhevanie, see Teresa Rakowska-Harmstone, Russia and Nationalism in Central Asia (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1970), pp. 26-27.


34 Problemy nauchnogo atiezma (1973), No. 14, p. 25.

35 Ibid.


37 E.g. a Central Asian daily wrote, in September 1982: "Despite the complete[ly] reactionary nature of czarism's colonization policy, union with Russia played a progressive role under the historical conditions which had taken shape where the danger of complete enslavement and systematic destruction and plundering by the feudal despots, who surrounded Turkmenia and behind whose backs stood imperialist England, threatened the Turkmen people."--Turkmenskaya iskra (September 1, 1982), translated in JPRS, USSR Report (October 27, 1982).


40 Quoted in Powell, Antireligious Propaganda, p. 17.
