

Was Stalin Jewish, & Does it Matter?

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In a 2003 article discussing Stalin's ethnicity, the author R. N. Terrall, concluded: "So what difference does it make to know whether Stalin was a Jew? That question must be left for other historians to answer." [1]

Whether Stalin was Jewish was a question posed by Russian émigrés and the "anti-Semitic" movement they influenced in Germany as refugees from the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution. Further afield, however, the disproportionate number of Jews involved in Bolshevism, and Marxism generally, was so widely recognized among diplomatic political, and intelligence circles, [2] it would seem a strange anomaly indeed if a gentile had managed to crawl to the top of the Bolshevik regime, purge the Jewish influence, and establish an iron rule. Hence Stalin has been regarded, especially among those critical of Jewish influence in politics, economics and culture, as a secret Jew or as a Gentile lackey for a "Jewish troika" continuing to secretly run the USSR after the ousting of transparently Jewish Bolsheviks such as Trotsky, Kamenev and Zinoviev. The suspicion that the USSR had continued under "Jewish rule" was maintained among anti-Semitic circles right up until the implosion of the Soviet Union. [3]

What's in a Name?

Turning to Mr. Tarrell's article as a cogent point of reference, his first contention is that Stalin, born Iosif Vissarionovich Dzugashvili, had been given a name that would have been unthinkable for a non-Jew in Czarist Russia: Iosip (Joseph). [4] The question arises, however, as to why the christening of Gentiles with Old Testament names in Czarist Russian would be "unthinkable," since the Orthodox Russian tradition is also drawn from the Old Testament? Rather, Iosip is a variation of Iosif, which is the Russian, Romanian, and Greek form of Joseph. [5] Another Russian variation is Osip. The "p" in Iosip can be found in various European languages. The Hebrew version is rendered as Yosef. [6]

Iosif is the name of Russian Orthodox eminences such as Saint Iosif Volotsky. [7]

A further contention in regard to names is Stalin's having given his firstborn the name Yakov, which Terrall states would "be a clincher" that Stalin was Jewish. [8] While this can be a Hebrew variant, it is

also Russian and Bulgarian.[9] Father Yakov Netsvetov, for example, was canonised by the Russian Orthodox Church in 1995.[10]

Terrall states of Stalin's given middle name, Vissarionovich, that "there is evidence that the name Vissarion is a Jewish name. For example, Vissarion Bielinsky was a Jewish writer in Russia..."[11] Vissarion is derived from Greek, Bessarion, and means "who he gives new life." His father's name was spelled Besarion.

The primary case for Stalin's alleged Jewish origins is that his name Dzugashvili (variant: Jughashvili) means "son of a Jew" in Georgian, Dzu supposedly meaning "Jew." Terrall states a relatively widely believed claim that "Dzu means Jew." However, according to Montefiore, the name means "son of Juga." Montefiore states that the name is derived either from Ossetian, meaning "herd" or Georgian (djuga) meaning "steel." [12] The latter Georgian meaning would surely account for the adoption of "Stalin," "Man of Steel," by Iosif Vissarionovich.

Stalin's great grandson, Jacob Jugashvili, writes:

There is no word Jew for Jews in the Georgian language. . . . Jew in Georgian is Ebraeli, so the theory of "son of a Jew" (which is very tempting considering our name in light of its English spelling) is simply, wrong.[13]

Of this "Jew" sounding part of the name, Jacob Jugashvili explains that usually the surname is written in Russian as Dzhugashvili because there is no "j" in the Russian alphabet, so Russian uses the letters "d" and "zh." [14]

Stalin's Jewish Wives?

Another of the primary claims regarding Stalin's Jewishness is that he married Jewesses. His second wife Nadezhda Alliluyeva is said to be Jewish because of the patronym Alliluya (Hallelujah in Hebrew).[15] However, Russian peasantry adopted first names as surnames. For legal purposes the first name was often combined with one's profession, or the village where one came from was used.[16] Therefore, trying to identify ethnicity by such means is not reliable.

Much has been said about Stalin supposedly marrying Rosa,[17] sister of one of his leading aides, Lazar Kaganovich, who was Jewish.

Jacob Jugashvili commented on this to Australian researcher Peter Meyer:

Yes you can add my comments on b.s. about J. Stalin and Rosa Kaganovich. . . . I think I should correct your comments that neither Ekaterine Svanidze nor Nadezhda Allilueva were Jews. . . . First of all you should know that Stalin was married twice: his first wife was Ekaterine Svanidze, a Georgian with whom he had a son, Yakov. There is no Jewish blood whatsoever. Second wife was Nadezhda Allilueva, south-Russians with Gypsy blood, with whom he had Svetlana and Vassily.[18]

Khevsure and Ossetian Blood

Stalin's father Vissarion Ivanovich Djugashvili came from the land of the Khevsureti, descended from the fierce warriors of the Great Caucasus Mountains, Georgia. Stalin's mother, Ekaterina Georgievna Geladze, came from the village of Gambareuil. She bore Ossetian blood, her people coming from South Ossetia, the Ossetes being primarily Indo-European and speaking an Indo-European language, from eastern Iran, and ultimately Scytho-Sarmatian origins.[19] "One branch of the Alans took refuge in the Caucasus Mountains where they became known as the Ossetes. Joseph (Stalin) Djugashvili's mother was Osset, so Stalin was half Sarmatian," states a website dedicated to Ossetian identity.[20]

Stalin maintained a Georgian accent all his life.[21] His revolutionary pseudonym prior to Stalin was "Koba," "after the famous Georgian outlaw and the name of a character in the romance Nunu, by the Georgian author Kazbek." [22]

Does it Matter?

Does the ethnicity of Stalin matter in any practical sense? Mr. Tarrell, as noted in the opening paragraph of this essay, poses the same question. He states that a further indication that Stalin as Jewish was that one of his long-time friends recommended he attend a Yiddish theatre, and therefore it is assumed Stalin spoke Yiddish. Mr. Tarrell then states that in 1925 all Holy Bibles were turned in and publicly

burned.[23] The implication is that Stalin, like many other Bolsheviks such as Trotsky, was motivated by Jewish roots. Socio-psychological reasons for that will not be examined here. However by the late 1940s all the Yiddish newspapers had been closed and all the Yiddish theatres. The leading exponent of Yiddish culture, Solomon Mikhoels, was run down by a truck.[24]

Well prior to that however there had been a fundamental break in Bolshevism that decades later culminated in Stalin's proposal to segregate all Soviet Jews, which possibly served as the catalyst for his murder by Beria et al. in 1953.[25] The question of Stalin's animosity towards Jews, that had been of long duration, and was projected onto his arch-enemy Trotsky, is of significance to the manner by which the whole post-war world has developed. The German conservative philosopher-historian Oswald Spengler, while not specifying a Jewish factor, discerned even in 1922 that the Russian soul would probably transcend the alien import of Marxism to the extent that Russia might enter into an alliance with Germany against the plutocratic powers.[26]

The assertion of Russian national-bolshevism under Stalin meant that many of the original Bolshevik policies were reversed on such issues as the family and parenthood.[27] From 1948 "rootless cosmopolitanism," which was often synonymous with Jewish influences in the arts and even in the sciences, was purged in favour of a "Soviet culture" that was based firmly on folk traditions.[28]

The rivalry between two outlooks for the soul of Russia resulted in such an obsessive hatred by Trotskyists and other Marxists for Stalinist Russia that many, including Trotsky's widow, Sedova, became conscious, enthusiastic, and life-long agents or apologists for American imperialism, especially with the founding of the CIA's Congress for Cultural Freedom in 1949,[29] i.e., the year of F. Chernov's launching of the Soviet campaign against rootless cosmopolitanism. This Kulturkampf between the USSR and the USA took on global ramifications that lasted until the implosion of the Soviet Union. As such, the USSR represented a conservative, nationalist bloc vis-à-vis the USA, which sought what is today openly called by the likes of the post-Trotskyite National Endowment for Democracy, a "world democratic revolution" (i.e., global plutocracy). The Spenglerian American philosopher, Francis Parker Yockey explained:

Thus, there are two Russias: the Bolshevik regime, and the true Russia underneath. Bolshevism, with its worship of Western technology, and of a silly foreign theory of class-war, does not express the soul of the true Russia. . . . This spirit is still there, since it is organic, and cannot be killed, but must express itself. This is the spirit of Asiatic Bolshevism, which is at present harnessed to the Bolshevism of the Moscow regime, with its economic-technical obsession.[30]

The dichotomy of the Stalin/Trotsky split symbolised the clash of two world-outlooks. Anti-Stalinism drove the thoughts and actions of many of those who became the formulators of US foreign policy, which continues to dominate US thinking. Had Stalin been Jewish the shape of the post-1945 world would have been fundamentally different, and there would have been no real discord between the USA and the USSR.[31] In short, there would have been no constraint placed upon American global adventurism.

Notes

[1] R. N. Terrall, "Stalin's Ethnic Roots," *The Barnes Review*, May–June 2003, pp. 71–73.

[2] See for example: Winston Churchill, "Zionism versus Bolshevism: a struggle for the soul of the Jewish people," *Illustrated Sunday Herald*, February 8, 1920, p. 5.

[3] For example: King Faisal, "A Grand Conspiracy," *Newsweek*, December 21, 1970. Quoted in "Russia's Trials of Jews a Fraud," *The Thunderbolt*, Issue 133, January 1971, p. 1.

[4] Terrall, p. 72.

[5] "Iosif," *Behind the Name: The Etymology and History of First Names: Russian Names*, <http://www.behindthename.com/names/usage/russian>

[6] <http://www.behindthename.com/name/iosif>

[7] Iosif Volotskii was one of many charismatic monastic leaders who founded new cloisters during a renaissance of monasticism in Muscovite Russia (approximately 1350 to 1550) and were later recognized as saints. Jennifer Spock, "The Monastic Rule of Iosif Volotskii," *Kritika*, Vol. 5, no. 3, Summer 2004, <http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/kri/summary/v005/5.3spock.html>

[8] Terrall, p. 72.

[9] <http://www.behindthename.com/names/usage/russian/2>

[10] "The Life of Father Yakov Netsvetov,"
http://www.alaskool.org/native_ed/curriculum/st_george/stgeorge8.html

[11] Terrall, p. 72.

[12] Simon Sebag Montefiore, *Young Stalin* (New York: Vintage, 2007).

[13] Jacob Jugashvili to K. R. Bolton, personal correspondence, August 27, 2004.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Terrall, p. 72.

[16] "Russian surnames," <http://www.justrussian.com/blog/106/russian-surnames>

[17] Terrall, p. 72.

[18] Peter Meyers and J. Jugashvili, cyberone.com.au/myers.

[19] "South Ossetia – Early History," Global Security,
<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/south-ossetia-7.htm>

[20] "Some Historical Information about Serbs and Croats," Ossetians,
<http://ossetians.com/eng/news.php?newsid=437&f=31>

[21] "Stalin," Ossetians, <http://ossetians.com/eng/news.php?newsid=364>

[22] "Stalin, Joseph," Encyclopaedia of Marxism, <http://www.marxists.org/glossary/people/s/t.htm>

[23] Terrall, p. 73.

[24] Arkady Vaksberg, *Stalin Against the Jews* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994), Chapter 8: "The Murder of Solomon Mikhoels," pp. 159–82.

[25] K. R. Bolton, *Stalin: The Enduring Legacy* (London: Black House Publishing, 2012), chapter 6, "Who Killed Stalin?"

[26] Oswald Spengler, "The Two Faces of Russia and Germany's Eastern Problems," *Politische Schriften*, February 14, 1922.

[27] Bolton, *Stalin: The Enduring Legacy*, chapter 1, "Stalin's Fight Against International Communism: Family Life Restored."

[28] A. Zhdanov, Speech at the discussion on music to the Central Committee of the Communist Party SU (Bolshevik), February 1948; F. Chernov, "Bourgeois Cosmopolitanism and its Reactionary Role," *Bolshevik: Theoretical and Political Magazine of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) ACP(B)*, Issue #5, 15 March 1949, pp. 30–41.

[29] Frances Stonor Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War: The CIA and the World of Arts and Letters* (New York: The New Press, 1999).

[30] F. P. Yockey, *Imperium* (Costa Mesa, Cal.: The Noontide Press, 1969), p. 582.

[31] Bolton, *Stalin: The Enduring Legacy*, chapter 4, "Trotsky, Stalin and the Cold War"; chapter 5, "Origins of the Cold War: How Stalin Foiled a New World Order."