

# MARXISM and the NATIONAL QUESTION

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J.V. Stalin



Marxism and the National Question was written by Joseph Stalin in January 1913 while living in Vienna. It was regarded as a seminal contribution to Marxist analysis of the nature of nationality and helped to establish his reputation as an expert on the topic.

With his thesis reduced to a single line, Stalin concluded, "A nation is a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture.

Thus defined, Stalin took aim at the notion of "national-cultural autonomy," charging that the formulation was but a cloaked form of nationalism in socialist garb. Stalin argued that such an approach would lead to the cultural and economic isolation of primitive nationalities and that the path forward should be the unification of various nations and nationalities into a unified stream of higher culture.



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