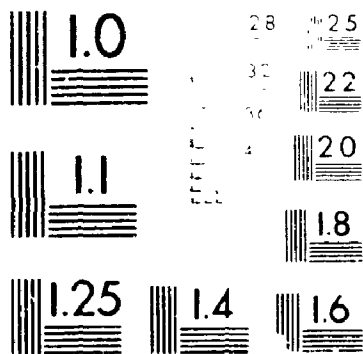


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**LENIN FOR SALE:
THE RISE AND FALL OF THE PERSONALITY CULT OF
V.I. LENIN IN SOVIET RUSSIA**

TREVOR J. SMITH

A thesis submitted to
the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

Department of History
Carleton University
Ottawa, Ontario
August, 1995

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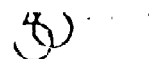
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"LENIN FOR SALE: THE RISE AND FALL OF THE
PERSONALITY CULT OF V.I. LENIN IN SOVIET RUSSIA"

submitted by

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in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts

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14 September 1995

"Lenin for Sale: The Rise and Fall of the Personality Cult of V.I. Lenin in Soviet Russia". Based largely on original research done in the former Soviet Union, this study attempts to disprove the claims of some historians that the cult of Lenin was of minor importance for most of the twentieth century. In this thesis, it is argued that the Lenin cult served a vital political and social function in Soviet society until the final collapse of the USSR. The importance of the Lenin cult is illustrated by focusing on the manner in which Lenin's heirs manipulated the cult, the role of the media in propagating Lenin's cult myths, and the aggressive indoctrination of primary school children with the cult. The eventual collapse of the cult is shown to be inextricably linked to the decline of the Soviet state in the Gorbachev era.

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INTRODUCTION

The death of V.I. Lenin in January 1924 was a terrible blow to the beleaguered people of communist Russia. Having just emerged from a decade of constant war and civil strife the loss of Lenin, their visionary leader, was almost too much to bear. So great was their loss that death was not allowed to claim Lenin: his mortal body was preserved against the ravages of nature, his image reproduced en masse, and his every word and deed sanctified. With the preserved body of Lenin on display in Red Square like some holy artifact and his spirit haunting virtually every corner of the Soviet Union, for decades there seemed to be justification to the claim of the poet Maiakovskii that:

Lenin -
 lived.
Lenin -
 lives.
Lenin -
 will live.

Today, seventy-one years after his physical death, Lenin has finally been laid to rest in the former Soviet Union. With amazing speed, the personality cult that seemingly ensured his immortality has collapsed. In a few short years his monuments have been torn down, his museums have been closed, and his name and writings, glorified for seventy years, have been subjected to endless slander and ridicule. The once deified leader has been relegated to the dustbin of history. This rapid change in the fortunes of the Lenin cult demands explanation. Why, after

weathering successfully the storms which battered and bent its shape and form for more than half a century, did the cult of Lenin sink so quickly in recent years?

Just how far Lenin has fallen can be attested by anyone who has visited the former Soviet Union in the last few years. The endless line to Lenin's mausoleum, that once snaked from the Alexander Garden, through Red Square and into the bowels of the golden calf itself, has vanished. Lenin's ever-present image - his portrait staring down expectantly at children in the kindergarten class or his colossal statue standing in some public square, pointing the way to the glorious future of communism - has been purged from mainstream culture. The holy icons of the Lenin cult - the busts, books, posters and banners - are no longer worth the cost of their materials and can be picked up by curious foreign tourists for a pittance from Lenin's former disciples, who hawk their wares on street corners, eager to dissociate themselves from the fallen hero. In a very literal sense, Lenin is for sale on the streets of Moscow. (See illustrations 1 & 2)

The personality cult of Lenin was a major component of Soviet life for decades. Oddly enough, the cult has received very little attention from historians. Whereas the cult of Stalin has merited considerable analysis owing to its tragic consequences,¹ the Lenin cult has been the subject of only one

1. The cult of Stalin has been discussed at length for more than forty years. Studies which discuss the role of the cult include: Isaac Deutscher, Stalin: A Political Portrait (New

major work by a Western scholar, Lenin Lives! The Lenin Cult in Soviet Russia by Nina Tumarkin.² Tumarkin's book provides an excellent account of the birth and growth of the cult in the decade after Lenin's death, but does not explore the important role of the cult after 1935. A more recent survey, Burying Lenin by political-psychologist Steven Kull, traces the gradual abandonment of Leninist ideology in Soviet foreign policy during the Gorbachev years, but fails to account for the decline of Lenin's popularity within the Soviet Union.¹ The most useful new source is David Remnick's Pulitzer-Prize winning book Lenin's Tomb.⁴ In this study Remnick chronicles the last days of the Soviet empire and examines the process which he calls "the return of history", a process which is indirectly responsible for the decline of the Lenin cult. Despite the titles of the books by Kull and Remnick, neither one deals directly with the reasons for or the stages in the dismantling of the Lenin cult. Objective Soviet/Russian scholarship on the Lenin cult is hard to come by. Although there is an abundance of Soviet material on the evolution of

York, 1974), pp. 265-317, 317, 609-614; Robert Tucker, Stalin as a Revolutionary (New York, 1973), pp. 33-40; Dmitri Volkogonov, Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy (New York, 1991).

2. Nina Tumarkin, Lenin Lives! The Personality Cult of V.I. Lenin in Soviet Russia (Cambridge, Mass., 1983)

3. Steven Kull, Burying Lenin: The Revolution in Soviet Ideology and Foreign Policy (Boulder, 1992)

4. David Remnick, Lenin's Tomb: The Last Day's of the Soviet Empire (New York, 1993)

the cult, there is very little material on the decline of the cult, and what exists is invariably tainted with the subjective flavour of Soviet scholarly writing.⁵

In light of the conspicuous lack of material on the changing nature of the Lenin cult after 1935, "Lenin for Sale" is intended to fill a void in the literature. I will examine the evolution of the cult and attempt to disprove the claim of Nina Tumarkin that "the cult of Lenin did not survive the tenth anniversary of his death".⁶ Although it is true that the fervent intensity that characterized the cult in the years immediately following Lenin's death waned, the cult continued to evolve and to play a major role in Soviet life. Over the course of seven decades Lenin was inextricably woven into the fabric of twentieth-century Russia and his cult ran like a red thread through the history of the Soviet period. It was only in the final years of the Soviet Union that the cult began to unravel.

The simultaneous collapse of the USSR and the cult of Lenin merit close scrutiny for it was not merely a coincidence that the two came crashing down together. As will be argued in the following pages, the collapse of either institution, the

5. Throughout the Soviet period, Lenin's infallibility was unquestionable within the USSR. The notion of his infallibility was propagated by a body of literature that was "uniformly eulogistic, singing the praises of his genius and greatness". Dmitri Volkogonov, Lenin: Life and Legacy (London, 1994), p. xxxiii

6. Tumarkin, p. 252

state or the cult, was bound to undermine the foundations of the other and to pave the road for the other's destruction. The cult of Lenin and the authoritarian Soviet state were co-dependant and could not survive alone. They needed one another. Since the infancy of the Soviet Union the personality cult of Lenin and the communist state had bolstered one another. When the mutual support system which linked the two began to erode in the late 1980s, mutual decline was unavoidable.

The above hypothesis requires considerable justification. It contradicts the claims of other historians, Tumarkin included, that the cult of Lenin was of secondary importance for the last sixty years.⁷ In order to build a case that demonstrates the continued importance of the Lenin cult and that supports the theory of interdependence of cult and state, it is necessary to examine briefly the general nature of the totalitarian state and the cult of the leader. By doing this it is possible to establish that, contrary to the claim of Tumarkin, the cult of Lenin was not "peculiarly Russian". While it is true that Russian culture and history did leave their marks on the cult, they alone did not determine the form which the cult assumed. The cult of Lenin was a direct product of the "totalitarian" system which Lenin introduced in 1917.

7. Tumarkin devotes only one chapter (pp. 252-268) to the fate of the Lenin cult after 1935. She acknowledges that the cult remained a highly visible part of Soviet society after 1935, but fails to recognize that it continued to function as a cornerstone of the Soviet system.

Accordingly, it is not sufficient to restrict a study of the Lenin cult to the borders of Russia. One must look at the Lenin cult in a broader context and see it as part of an international phenomenon: totalitarian systems breed strong cults of personality.

The theory of totalitarianism, once widely accepted, now has few defenders. Almost two decades ago, social historians began to challenge the model of totalitarianism and argued that it was too vague and too unwieldy to be applied to different types of authoritarian systems. Totalitarianism, however, still has a place in historical discussions. As described by George Enteen of Penn State University, "if the designation of an actual society as a totalitarian system is deemed too airy an abstraction, the term totalitarianism as a modifier can, nevertheless, inform us about the aspirations and practices of various governments".⁸ Robert V. Daniels supports this statement. He insists that "totalitarianism" is not meant to be a defining statement of any political system, but merely "a standard for assessing and comparing a variety of cases".⁹ It is in this manner, as a model of comparison, that totalitarianism will be employed in the following pages.

8. George Enteen, "Robert V. Daniels's Interpretation of Soviet History", in The Russian Review, 1995, vol 54, No. 3, p. 316

9. Robert V. Daniels, "Thought and Action under Soviet Totalitarianism", Ibid., p. 342

In the most simple terms, a totalitarian state is one which seeks to gain control over the totality of its people's existence. Within a totalitarian system the state maintains tight, centralized political control over all society and attempts to dominate all aspects of national and personal life. A more detailed definition of totalitarianism reads as follows:

Totalitarian states and regimes are characterized by their control of all legal organizations and their use of discretionary powers not limited by law; also characteristic of such states and regimes are the suppression of democratic organizations, the abolition of constitutional rights and freedoms, the militarization of society and the repression of progressive forces and different viewpoints. Fascist Germany and Italy were totalitarian states.¹⁰

While the above description is accurate and resembles other definitions of totalitarianism, its Soviet authors failed to acknowledge that the USSR not only fits this model but was actually the inventor of modern totalitarianism. The only real difference between Soviet totalitarianism and the German, Chinese or Italian strains, was the precise dogma that was espoused and the extent to which control was enforced. Differences were often only a matter of degree.¹¹ For example, Mussolini's Italy was a one-dimensional totalitarian

10. Great Soviet Encyclopedia 32 vols. (New York, 1973-1983), vol. 26, p.254

11. As acknowledged by R.V. Daniels, there is a very fine line between totalitarian systems and authoritarian ones. "There can be no sharp line" between the two Daniels believes, "but only a continuum along which diverse dichotomies range". The Russian Review, 1995, vol 54, No. 3, p. 342

regime as the ruling party monopolized politics, but allowed a considerable degree of intellectual and economic freedom. Soviet Russia on the other hand was a three-dimensional totalitarian state, as the ruling party sought to maintain control over politics, its peoples' "philosophy of life", and the economy.¹²

In all manifestations of the totalitarian state a single, hierarchical party holds the reigns of power in its own hands: there is no alternative to the ruling party or ideology. The clear monopolization of authority by one party inevitably provokes the ire of the populace and can lead to conflicts with the state. To prevent such conflicts, the state relies on several methods:

1. Persuasion - Through systematic indoctrination and propaganda, particularly through the education of the young, the Party imposes its ideology on the nation.
2. The suppression and distortion of facts to solidify the position of the Party and the leader.
3. The creation of artificial conflicts.
4. As a last resort, those who do not conform are threatened with imprisonment, exile, etc. so as not to allow an alternative ideology to challenge that of the ruling Party.¹³

Two of the most important tools at the disposal of the totalitarian ruler or party are the twin forces of nationalism

12. Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi, The Totalitarian State Against Man (London, 1938), p. 104.

13. V. Chalupa, Rise and Development of a Totalitarian State (Leiden, Holland, 1959), pp.11-12. The close relationship between the above methods and the cult of Lenin will be expanded in the following chapters.

and patriotism. Nationalism and patriotism can be wielded by the totalitarian party to convince citizens that they are the chosen people. It is emphatically stated that the society has embarked upon a "historic mission" and that the state has reached a critical "pivot of world history".¹⁴ Crucial to this concept of mission is the identification of the populace with a strong leader, a messiah or prophet, who has the ability to lead his people out of the desert and into the promised land. The state needs the masses to place all of their faith in this earthly leader, to believe in his cause. The populace must be prepared to sacrifice anything and everything if the leader or the Party which acts in his name should demand it. So important is the faith of the masses in the leader to the survival of the totalitarian state that nothing is left to chance: a cult of personality is created and the leader is immortalized.

The personality cult of the leader has been a central feature of nearly all totalitarian states, for it allows an undemocratic, dictatorial state to legitimize and stabilize itself.¹⁵ In a society where the average individual has no ability to influence the composition of the ruling government,

14. Hans Buchheim, Totalitarian Rule: Its Nature and Characteristics (Middletown, 1968), p. 17

15. Dmitri Volkogonov acknowledges the role of the leader cult in his recent biography of Lenin. He states that the deification of Lenin which followed the attempt on his life in 1918 represented the "first perceptible wave of the [personality] cult without which a totalitarian society cannot survive". Volkogonov, p. 222

it is necessary for the state to instill trust in the Party and to convince the masses that the leader is not only the best man for the job, but that he is actually infallible. The manner in which a cult was constructed and infallibility imparted was remarkably similar in all twentieth-century totalitarian societies, right down to the language and images used. As will be illustrated below, Adolf Hitler, Benito Mussolini, Ho Chi Minh, and Mao Zedong all were the subjects of personality cults that resembled Lenin's in very many ways. The living, historical leader was gradually replaced by a mythologised version. The leader became the "great strategist", "father", "ingenious thinker and theoretician" and the "respected and beloved leader".¹⁶ When the leader's cult was firmly established he became eligible for the greatest honour of all: he was awarded his own "ism" and joined the other great contributors to the states philosophy.¹⁷

The importance of the leader who is the focus of a personality cult, whether he be living or dead, is summed up nicely in the following quotation. Though written about Kim Il Sung of North Korea it applies to any totalitarian cult of personality, including that of Lenin:

16. Lenin, Stalin, Mao Zedong and Ho Chi Minh were all recipients of these accolades.

17. Due to the brevity of Lenin's reign, "Leninism" did not become a widely coined phrase until after his death, although it was used sparingly beginning in 1923. Stalinism, Maoism and Kimilsungism were all in place during the active reigns of their respective namesakes.

Ensuring the unique leadership of the leader in the revolution and construction [of socialism] is of decisive importance in heightening the consciousness of the masses, helping them to move towards organizing themselves and raising their role The leader is the sole embodiment of the organizational will of the Party, the working class and the masses He is the centre and heart of the unity and cohesion, and the supreme brain in the struggle for the revolution and construction.¹⁸

One of the most important functions of the leader cult is that the personal infallibility of the leader is applied to the Party he represents. This was especially true of Lenin, as his cult was sorely needed by Stalin and the other Communist Party leaders after his death to legitimize their actions. Though Lenin died in 1924, he continued to live within the Party for almost seven decades. His immortal shade was recurrently pressed into service by his heirs, who reminded the masses of Lenin's continued presence with slogans such as, "We say Lenin and we imply the Party - We say Party and we imply Lenin".¹⁹

The correspondence between different cults of the leader in modern totalitarian states was, of course, not exact. Each cult assumed unique features due to the cultural heritage,

18. Comrade Kim Il Sung: An Ingenious Thinker and Theoretician (Pyongyang, 1975), p. 61

19. From a political poster of 1940 in N.I Baburina, Rossia - XX vek: Istoriia strany v plakate (Moscow, 1993), p. 105; Slogans equating the leader with the Party, ideology or nation he ruled were common in totalitarian states. For example, in Nazi Germany it was said that "Hitler is Germany and Germany is Hitler" (Buchheim, p. 19) while in Italy it was suggested that "Mussolini is Fascism". Herman Finer, Mussolini's Italy (London, 1935), p. 11

history and doctrines of the particular nation. The strain of totalitarianism, whether it was right or left, also influenced the appearance of the cult.²⁰ In the final analysis, however, it is possible to state that all cults of personality that developed in modern totalitarian states bore striking resemblance to one another.

* * *

The foregoing analysis of totalitarianism and the personality cults it breeds points to the fact that the cult of Lenin was not unique. It belonged to an entire genre of personality cults that emerged in totalitarian states in Europe, Asia and Africa. That said, the purpose of this thesis is not to undertake an in-depth analysis of the exact correlation between the different cults. The focus of this study is the Lenin cult and its impact on Soviet Russia. The international nature of Lenin's personality cult is important, however, and will be a prominent theme in the following chapters.

A second theme that will surface repeatedly throughout this paper is the role of propaganda and the changing nature of the Soviet media. Although the role of the media has been ignored in the past, it played a paramount role in building and sustaining the cult of Lenin. Accordingly, emphasis will be

20. Even in two states as ideologically different as Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia, the personality cults that emerged were very similar "since both primarily demanded faith, obedience and efficiency". Igor Golomshtok, Totalitarnoe Iskusstvo (Moscow, 1994), p. 35

placed on the importance of the state's strict control of the media and the monopolization of all means of mass communication by the Party. It will also be argued that once the state began to relinquish its monopoly over information in the late 1980s, the cult of Lenin was probably doomed to collapse.

The following analysis of the evolution and decline of the cult of Lenin falls into five chapters. In Chapter One, the birth and growth of the Lenin cult will be addressed. Emphasis will be placed on the roots of the cult as well as Lenin's role in the creation of his personality cult. The early use of cult propaganda, the development of "Leniniana", and the religious nature of the cult will also be discussed.

The changing role and complexion of the Lenin cult in the period from 1935 to 1985 will be the subject of chapter two. Contrary to earlier claims that the cult of Lenin was not a major player in Soviet politics in this period, it will be argued that Lenin was the principal ideological weapon of each successive General Secretary. Stalin, Khrushchev and Brezhnev all relied heavily on the cult of Lenin, using it as the foundation on which to build their own cults of personality. In their quests to establish their political mastery and even to immortalize themselves, each followed a similar "leader cycle", modifying and exploiting the cult of Lenin to fit his individual needs.

The impact of the cult of Lenin on Soviet education and primary level students, an area not previously examined, will

be the subject of chapter three. As in all totalitarian regimes, indoctrination of youth was of vital importance in Soviet Russia. It was easier for the state to mould innocent children than to reshape adults, and thus the Soviet Union carried on an aggressive educational campaign that was designed to build loyal citizens from the ground up. Lenin was a major ingredient in the Soviet indoctrinational recipe and he served as the exemplar for generations of Russian children.

Following the ascension of Mikhail Gorbachev in 1985 and the subsequent adoption of perestroika and glasnost, the once unshakable foundations of the Lenin cult began to erode. The decline in the cult was the direct result of the state's loss of totalitarian control. When mass communications and history ceased to be the sole property of the Communist Party, the Lenin cult was fated to collapse. In chapter four, the death throes of the Lenin cult will be chronicled and explained.

The cult of Lenin has been destroyed, but by no means has it been wiped from the face of Soviet Russia. Lenin remains, and will remain, a highly visible part of Russian society. In chapter five, the current status of Lenin and his future role in post-Soviet Russia will be elucidated.

It is hoped that the following pages will shed new light on the fascinating and important role of the Lenin cult in Soviet Russia. No attempt will be made to reevaluate the role of Lenin as a politician and statesman - this task is left to

others.²¹ The "image" of Lenin, the "myth" of Lenin, and the "immortal" Lenin are more important than the "living" Lenin when discussing his personality cult. Another area which will not be explored is the role of the cult outside of Soviet Russia. While the Lenin cult was a prominent feature of society throughout the USSR, and even abroad, it is beyond the scope of this paper to provide a detailed analysis of the cult's entirety. It is sufficient to state that as Soviet Russia was the heartland of the cult, the form the cult assumed in Russia usually determined the outlook of the cult elsewhere.

The majority of material used in the preparation of this thesis was harvested during a seven month graduate exchange with Moscow State University. Undoubtedly, Soviet newspapers and journals were the most important sources consulted. Newspapers and journals of the period 1935 to 1985, particularly those issues dealing with major anniversaries of Lenin, such as his birth or death, provided a clear and ever-changing record of the role of the Lenin cult in society. In the period 1985-1995, these publications chronicled the decline and fall of the cult. The Novosti collection at Carleton University was a valuable tool for discerning how the Lenin cult was presented internationally by the Soviet state. Russian biographies of Lenin and "official" histories of the Communist

21. Two recent biographies of Lenin have contributed considerably to a better understanding of the living Lenin: Dmitri Volkogonov's Lenin and Robert Service's Lenin: A Political Life, 3 vols. (Bloomington, 1985, 1991 & 1995)

Party and the Soviet Union also shed light on the changing role of the Lenin cult. Russian educational material provided the backbone for the chapter on the Lenin cult for children. Dozens of primary school readers, known as Azbuky and Bukvary, were consulted, as were relevant teachers' manuals. Personal interviews with Russian teachers, schoolchildren, officials, dissidents and average citizens helped to fill in many of the blank spots and contributed to a better understanding of the important and often misunderstood role of the cult of Lenin in Soviet Russia.

Chapter One

The Origins and Infancy of the Cult of Lenin

False Gods must be repudiated, but that is not all: the reasons for their existence must be sought beneath their masks.

Alexander Herzen

None of us knew Lenin. He always stood before us in an immortal golden mask. This Lenin never was.

Dmitri Volkogonov

Before one can begin an evaluation of the metamorphosis of the cult of Lenin, it is necessary to explain how and why the cult originated and assumed the forms that it did. This task is made easy thanks to Nina Tumarkin's excellent study on the Lenin cult, Lenin Lives!. Since Tumarkin comprehensively chronicled the genesis of the cult there is no need to repeat her findings at length here. Tumarkin, however, failed to acknowledge a number of important factors that helped to create and shape the cult of Lenin. As has already been mentioned, the fundamental nature of the Lenin cult was determined by the totalitarian system of the USSR. Russian history and culture also influenced the cult's genesis. One such contributing factor was the cult or myth of the tsar.¹ Referred to as "naive monarchism" by Soviet historians, the tsarist myth promoted the peasant belief that the tsar, their

1. Some tsarist cults were quite extensive. Robert Massie explains that Peter the Great was the subject of almost religious worship by many, and that he was immortalized in countless paintings, busts and statues. Robert Massie, Peter the Great: His Life and World (New York, 1980), pp. 877-880

batiushka (little father), was a benevolent ruler with divine connections. The tsar was considered to be the paternal protector of the people and the masses placed great stock in his commitment to them.² When the state acted in a manner that the masses disapproved of, blame was placed not on the tsar but on his advisors, as was the case following the emancipation Proclamation of 1861.³

It was the belief in the fundamental goodness of the tsar which led Father Gapon and the workers of St. Petersburg to march on the Winter Palace and to present Nicholas II with a petition of grievances on January 9/22, 1905. Unfortunately, their faith was misplaced; the forces of the tsar dispersed the unarmed demonstrators with brutal force. "Bloody Sunday", as the massacre came to be known, played an important role in preparing the Russian soil for the seeds of the Lenin cult for the myth of the tsar died on Palace Square that day, along with about 300 demonstrators. For the first time in centuries there was no batiushka to look out for the people. Ultimately, a significant portion of the populace began a

2. Daniel Field, Rebels in the Name of the Tsar (Boston, 1976), pp. 3-30; Much as was the case with the later cult of Lenin, not all worship of the tsar was genuine. Field suggests that many peasants simply used the myth of the tsar to promote their own interests.

3. A similar belief in Lenin's goodness and commitment to the people developed in Soviet Russia. Even after the devastation of the civil war, many "found no fault with Lenin and laid the blame for the ruin of the country on those around him and to circumstances he could not control". New York Times January 23, 1924; See also Adam Ulam, The Bolsheviks (New York, 1965), p. 463

search for an alternative figure in whom to place their trust, a person who would become the new protector of Russia. For years the void remained. The monarchy floundered and failed, and still no new batiushka emerged. Finally, in 1917, a candidate for the vacant position was announced. When Lenin stepped forward in 1917 and seized the reigns of power, he began to fill a void that had been left in many hearts in 1905.⁴

There were other roots of the Lenin cult in Russia's past, but more significant than these were the roots that Lenin and his Party planted themselves. The fundamental nature and structure of the pre-revolutionary Bolshevik Party created by Lenin fostered a cult of the leader. Drawing from the revolutionary doctrines of Babeuf, P. Buonnorati, S. Nechaev and Narodnaia Volia, Lenin constructed a hierarchical Party that demanded strict devotion to the centre. Lenin was opposed to freedom of criticism within the Party and he believed that within any revolutionary organization the place of honour and importance belonged to the elite vanguard, or as he termed it, to the "dozen".⁵ As for "broad democracy" in the Party, Lenin believed "this is nothing more than a useless

4. As the civil war demonstrated, not all Russians saw Lenin as their saviour and protector. However, Lenin did attract a devout following; By the time of his death he was referred to as an "idol" like the "little father". New York Times, January 23, 1924. See also Service, Lenin, vol 3, p. 135

5. Leonard Schapiro, The Communist Party of the Soviet Union, 2nd ed. (Norfolk, 1970), p. 40

and harmful tool".⁶ These beliefs of Lenin, expressed in his 1902 pamphlet What is to be Done?, illustrate that long before Lenin became the master of Soviet Russia he had laid the foundations for a Party whose members were to obey their leaders without question.

It was also many years before the Russian Revolution that a cult of personality, "that mandatory and most stable concept of all totalitarianism", began to surround Lenin.⁷ There are several explanations for this. Some argue it was because Lenin was the "charismatic" leader of the Bolsheviks, a leader-centred movement. Robert Tucker suggested that it was Lenin's charisma, which stemmed from the intensity of his revolutionary faith, that led to the development of a cult, and he argued that "to be a Bolshevik in the early years was not so much to accept a particular set of beliefs as it was to gravitate into the orbit of Lenin as a political mentor".⁸ Tumarkin agreed with Tucker's analysis and expanded upon it, showing that by 1904 some Bolsheviks, including P. Lepeshinsky, had surrounded Lenin with an "atmosphere of worship" and adored him "almost like sentimental schoolgirls who 'worship' some of their teachers".⁹ While leading

6. Robert Payne, The Life and Death of Lenin (New York, 1964), p. 152

7. Golomshtok, p. 8

8. Tucker, p. 35

9. Tumarkin, p. 44

Bolsheviks, such as Zinoviev and Kamenev, most certainly did not regard Lenin in these terms, it appears that Lenin had a very strong appeal for certain lesser members of his Party at this time.

Lenin's charisma was not the only factor which contributed to the growth of his personality cult in pre-revolutionary Russia; the ideology he preached was also important. The Bolshevik creed, Marxism, demanded that its disciples direct all of their faith and energy toward the successful construction of socialism. God had to be renounced, religion forsaken, and fidelity sworn to the Marxist doctrine. However,

The Marxist-Leninist demand that man subject himself to an abstract doctrine is basically repugnant to human nature; rather, man's naive orientation to his life shows a tendency away from the objective toward the personal. It corresponds to human nature that man prefers to submit himself to another person rather than to any object or abstraction. At least he strives to see the objective and the abstract personified in someone.¹⁰

Lenin became the personification of the abstract principles of Marxism. To a select few before 1917, to the swelling masses during the revolution, and to the nation after his death, Lenin became the little father and the prophet who would lead his people to the promised land.

What did Lenin think of the cult that materialized around him? In accordance with his widely publicized humility and

10. Buchheim, p. 109

simplicity, Lenin denounced his own glorification and stated that all personality cults were irreconcilable with Marxism.¹¹ As early as 1909, Lenin had criticized the movement within his own Party that was known as bogostroitel'stvo (God-building). Proponents of god-building, including the first commissar of Enlightenment, Anatoli Lunacharsky, and writer Maxim Gorky, placed their faith in future man and sought "to create a new religion, with a new god who was human, who was all future humanity".¹² Lenin heatedly denounced god-building and criticized Gorky for suggesting that some new god would be different from other deities, insisting that belief in any and all gods was "necrophilia".¹³ Lenin repeated this notion in his 1917 treatise The State and Revolution. On the very first page of this work, Lenin condemned the practice of venerating dead revolutionary heroes. He pointed out that after the death of prominent revolutionaries "attempts are made to convert them into harmless icons, to canonize them, so to say, and to surround their names with a certain halo for the consolation of the oppressed class, while at the same time emasculating the

11. Lenin's occasional denunciation of the worship accorded him actually accelerated the process of glorification, for it implied humility. It is impossible to conclude whether or not Lenin's protestations were calculated to increase his cult or not, but it is certain that Stalin intentionally employed the same technique to build his own cult of personality.

12. Tumarkin, p.22

13. V.I. Lenin, Polnoe sobranie sochinenii 55 vols., 5th ed. (Moscow, 1958-1965) vol. 48, p. 228

essence of their revolutionary teaching".¹⁴

Lenin's verbal tirades against god-building and glorification of revolutionary leaders was not supported by his actions. If Lenin was so passionately against the veneration of the individual, then why did he personally launch a cult of dead revolutionary heroes less than five months after completing State and Revolution? The cult of dead heroes was fostered in two ways. First of all, there was the "Decree on Monuments of the Republic". This decree was directed against "monuments honouring the tsars and their servants" and called for the removal of tsarist monuments that "have neither historic nor artistic value". It also announced the formation of a special committee that was to "mobilize artistic forces" and commission monuments "to commemorate the great days of the Russian Socialist Revolution".¹⁵ This decree, signed on April 12, 1918, came at a time when the fledgling Soviet state was fighting for survival; enemies of the Bolsheviks were mustering on all fronts and the fate of the world's first proletarian dictatorship was by no means certain. That Lenin considered the matter of monuments important was implied both by the strange timing of the decree as well as by the fact that

14. V.I. Lenin, The State and Revolution (Peking, 1973), p.3

15. Velikii Oktiabr' (Moscow, 1988), p. 134; It is interesting to note that following the rise of Hitler and the Nazis in 1933, the first construction project of the new German government was a monument to the fallen heroes of the Nazi movement. Golomshtok, p. 210

he was the first to sign it.¹⁶ Clearly, Lenin recognized the power of symbols.

An outgrowth of the decree on monuments was Lenin's "Plan of Monumental Propaganda". This plan, launched in the summer of 1918, witnessed the erection of 25 different monuments to deceased revolutionary heroes in Moscow before the year was out.¹⁷ Lenin devoted considerable attention to this plan of monumental propaganda; his involvement ranged from presiding over the dedication of the first monument to Karl Marx in Moscow to personally pulling down a statue to Grand Duke Sergei Aleksandrovich that stood in the Kremlin.¹⁸

That Lenin helped to create a cult of dead revolutionary heroes is generally accepted. That he helped to build his own cult is not. It appears, however, that Lenin deserves more of the credit, or perhaps the blame, for institutionalizing his personality cult than he has formerly been given. This is not to say that Lenin enjoyed the glorification; there is no reason to cast doubt on the claim that Lenin was a relatively modest man who was embarrassed by the iconization of his image.¹⁹ He

16. Golomshtok, p. 43

17. Monuments were erected to Karl Marx (3), F. Engels, M. Bakunin, Robespierre, Danton and Jaures. The Bolsheviks launched a similar propaganda plan in Petrograd, and 17 monuments were erected between 1918-1920. Velikii Oktiabr', p. 198

18. Edvard Radzinsky, The Last Tsar: The Life and Death of Nicholas II (New York, 1992), p. 331

19. Tucker, p. 59; Ulam, p. 416; Tumarkin, p. 104

was no doubt honestly annoyed when he wrote to fellow Bolshevik Vladimir Bonch-Bruевич in 1918 and complained that "it is with the greatest dissatisfaction that I have noticed that they are beginning to praise my personality".²⁰ Nevertheless, Lenin rarely made his dissatisfaction public and never actively attempted to arrest the deification process.

Only Lenin could tell us for certain precisely how he felt about his cult of personality and the reasons why he did not campaign more heartily against it. It is entirely possible, however, that Lenin's personal aversion to the cult was forced to take a back seat to the realities of ruling a totalitarian state. During his first year in power Lenin had repeatedly demonstrated his willingness to make colossal sacrifices to preserve the Soviet state and his personal power - the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk testified to this. Therefore, when his image was needed to lend legitimacy to the state and to strengthen his Party's position, Lenin could not refuse. In an authoritarian state the leader is needed "not as an individual, but as a function, and without this function the movement cannot manage".²¹ Lenin had to become more than just the leader of the Party and its ideology. He had to become the Party and the ideology. He thus accepted, and even fostered, the expanded version of himself. In a speech of 1920, he

20. S. Grechiko, Lenin: chelovek, myslitel', revoliutsioner (Moscow, 1990), p. 24

21. Golomshtok, p. 208

identified himself with the Communist Party and equated the Party with his person,²² preempting by twenty years the slogan "we say Lenin we imply the Party - we say Party and we imply Lenin".²³ Lenin also associated himself with the doctrines of Marxism. He "stood unperturbed" in Red Square on May Day, 1918, while his giant portrait hung next to that of Marx, and was even known to have given an admirer who asked for his photo a picture of Marx instead.²⁴

Lenin's acquiescence in his cult's construction was proven by his acceptance of the cult's icons. In October, 1917, a poem in his honour was published in Pravda.²⁵ In January 1918, he sat for his first official portrait; that summer a monument to Lenin was erected on Sofiiskaia Square in Kiev.²⁶ In November 1918 Lenin posed for a sculptor who produced a "standardized" statue. At around the same time, when the decision was made to erect a monument to him at the Lenin factory in Moscow, the former Michelson factory where the attempt on his life was made that August, Lenin did not object. In 1919, a number of political posters with Lenin's larger-

22. Tumarkin, p. 103

23. Baburina, p. 105

24. Tumarkin, p. 105. Just as Lenin identified himself with Marx to enhance his reputation, so too did Stalin later identify himself with Lenin. During the heyday of Stalinism, it was often said that "Stalin is the Lenin of today".

25. Pravda, October 29, 1917

26. Velikii Oktiabr', p. 30

than-life image appeared.²⁷ In 1920, two official biographies of Lenin were published, in which Lenin was portrayed as "a prophet, a concerned ruler, and an example to be emulated".²⁸ In November 1921, he "gladly" agreed to sit for yet another portrait, this one by the well-known artist Krillovich.²⁹ By 1922, there were public monuments to Lenin in Zhitomir and Yaroslavl.³⁰

Lenin was very concerned about his reputation, as proven by the fact that often when he issued written orders that condoned cruelty or brutality he did so anonymously, as "he did not want to stain [his reputation] with the notoriety of a hangman".³¹ Surely if he had been so opposed to the growth of a personality cult and the deification of his person he could have, and would have, prevented public monuments and stylized biographies from ever seeing the light of day. Lenin recognized their usefulness and social function and thus

27. A. Novikov, Leniniana v plakate (Moscow, 1970), p. 5

28. These biographies, clearly intended to promote a myth of the leader, were published by the Agitprop (Department of Agitation and Propaganda) in massive editions, one of 200 000 copies. Tumarkin, pp. 100-102.

29. A. Shefov, Leniniana v sovetskom izobrazitel'nom iskusstvo (Leningrad, 1986), p. 66; Shefov documents the history of Leniniana and shows that it was well established before 1921.

30. Dmitri Volkogonov, Lenin: politicheskii portret, 2 vols. (Moscow, 1994), p. 38

31. Volkogonov, Lenin (English ed.), p. 202; When Lenin sent orders to the Ural Regional Party Committee in 1918 confirming the directive to execute the tsar, he not only retrieved the original copy of the telegram, but the telegraph ribbon as well. Radzinsky, p. 345.

tolerated their existence.

Once again, Lenin's acceptance of his personality cult did not mean that he wanted it. But he needed it. The state needed it. Therefore, Lenin accepted his cult "not so much as an act of personal glorification and exaltation of his person as a method for the assertion of the Bolshevik idea".³² Had Lenin lived beyond 1924, he likely would not have allowed his cult to reach the ridiculous heights that the cults of Stalin, Mao and others were to attain. Whereas these later cults advanced the notion that the leaders were the masters of all trades, Lenin wanted recognition as master of only one thing - politics. He wanted the people of Soviet Russia, recently robbed of their gods by Marxism, to place their faith in the new religion of communism. If that meant that he must become the high-priest and don the mantles of infallibility and immortality, then so be it.

Lenin began to achieve immortality following the attempt on his life in 1918. In the wake of the assassination attempt, allegedly by Fanya Kaplan, divine characteristics began to be attributed to Lenin. Deification of Lenin was officially encouraged and promoted by the Party apparatus. Grigori Zinoviev, who had denounced Lenin in 1917 for his insistence on forcing a military insurrection, described Lenin as "the chosen one of millions ...the leader by the grace of God(!)" and "the authentic figure of a leader such as is born once in 500 years

32. Ibid., p. 39

in the life of mankind".³³ Lenin's April Theses became known as "the Gospel of the worker's movement" and Lenin himself was said to be immortal: "Lenin cannot be killed" claimed the Party, "because Lenin is the rising up of the oppressed".³⁴ With assertions such as these, the Party modified the Holy Trinity of Christian theology to fit the visage of Lenin: Vladimir Ilich was the mortal man who would die, just as Christ had died on the cross; Lenin was the immortal leader, the Holy Spirit of communism, who would continue to live within the hearts and souls of his people long after his death. The Lenin cult also copied religious icons in its efforts to deify the vozhd, as evidenced by the emergence of "Lenin corners" in 1923. Obvious imitations of the traditional religious corners that were found in many homes, the Lenin corners substituted a portrait of Lenin for the religious icon. The portrait of Lenin was illuminated by a lamp which served as a "secular counterpart to the votive candles that burned before icons in Russian homes".³⁵

Religious imagery was not unique to the cult of Lenin; it characterized most totalitarian leader cults. As stated earlier, one of the principal functions of the personality cult was to elevate the totalitarian leader above the ranks of mere mortals. By imitating and exploiting familiar religious images

33. Tumarkin, p. 82

34. Ibid., p. 84

35. Tumarkin, p. 222

and rituals, the personality cult inspired popular faith in the ability of the leader to deliver the salvation he promised. Accordingly in totalitarian societies, whether the ruling party denounced religion and attempted to liquidate the Church, as in Soviet Russia, or grudgingly tolerated the Church's existence, as in Mussolini's Italy, the totalitarian leader cult relied on religious imagery. In fascist Italy, Mussolini was elevated to god-like status and, as described by one observer in the 1930s, "*Imitatio Mussolini* has cast out *Imitatio Christi*".³⁶ In Nazi Germany, prayers to Hitler replaced the "Our Father" and a copy of Mein Kampf took the place of the bible on church altars.³⁷ In North Korea today, a popular song insists that it is the love of Kim Jong IL, the "benevolent father", that "brings the dead back to life and leads the living to eternity".³⁸

As Lenin was forced from the centre stage of Soviet politics by illness, the official state propagation of his cult intensified. Busts and portraits of Lenin began to circulate and the Lenin Institute was founded in 1923 to honour the life of Ilich and to study his works. Like Roman emperors of old, Lenin was hailed as "citizen #1", and became a higher authority to whom all others could turn for guidance. Indeed, Lenin "personified a new, higher type of political leader, chief and

36. Finer, p. 436. Emphasis in the original.

37. Burton Wolfe, Hitler and the Nazis (New York, 1970), pp. 131-132

38. The Toronto Star November 28, 1993.

teacher of the labouring masses".³⁹

By the beginning of 1924, the cult of Lenin had sunk deep roots in the Soviet Union. The immortal Lenin was well established and ready to replace the weakened Ilich. It remained only for Lenin the man to die. This he did on January 21, 1924.

The Immortal Lenin

Immediately following the death of Lenin, his cult of personality skyrocketed. Much of the cult's hype was deliberately sponsored by the Party through the vehicle of the Committee for the Immortalization of the Memory of V.I. Lenin, but a great deal of support for the cult arose spontaneously, as evidenced by the renaming of Petrograd and the religious reverence accorded Lenin during the mourning week which followed his death.⁴⁰ There is no need to discuss the genesis of the cult immediately after Lenin's death as this subject received excellent treatment by Tumarkin. Nor is it necessary to analyze the decision of the Party to preserve the body of Lenin. It is sufficient to say that the state needed a symbol of legitimacy and of continuing mission. By refusing to commit

39. B. Ponomarev, Istoriia kommunisticheskoi partii sovetskogo soiuz (Moscow. 1971), p. 338

40. The spontaneity of Lenin worship was alluded to by Walter Durranty, a correspondent for the New York Times, who attended Lenin's funeral. Durranty explained that "while the bolsheviks can organize much, it is not their propaganda which draws these hundreds of thousands to Lenin's feet". New York Times, January 27, 1924.

and bore the tablet summoning to duty...⁴³

Far from smashing the golden calf, Lenin became it. His collected writings were equated with "the Koran for fundamentalists in the Muslim world",⁴⁴ his mummified body became an object of worship, and his tomb became "the Holy place" of the Russian people,⁴⁵ like "Mecca and Jerusalem".⁴⁶ The mausoleum on Red Square, fashioned in the shape of a cube, the symbol of eternity, was "a symbol of [Lenin's] eternal life and of his immortal teachings".⁴⁷ The mausoleum served its function well throughout the Soviet era. Whenever leaders climbed atop the tribune of the tomb, they demonstrated their intimate connection with Lenin and his sacred ideology. In essence, the Lenin mausoleum served as "a font for the ideologization of the state".⁴⁸

Although it is ironic that Lenin, a devout atheist who attempted to liquidate the church and the clergy in Soviet Russia, was identified so often with religious images, it was consistent with the Bolshevik campaign to destroy religion and to step into the spiritual void that would be created. It was

43. Gregory Zlobin, ed., Lenin in Profile: World Writers and Artists on Lenin (Moscow, 1975), p. 72

44. Volkogonov, Lenin, vol. 1, p. 11. Russian edition.

45. Pravda, January 21, 1936

46. Aleksei Abramov, U kremlevskoi steny (Moscow, 1983), p. 9

47. Ibid., pp. 13-19

48. Novoe Vremia, 1991, No. 41, p. 10

necessary for the Communist Party to target religion in the USSR, for communism allowed no alternative interpretations of life, duty and destiny and it could not tolerate "competing claims on the consciences or energies of the people".⁴⁹ As a result, the Bolsheviks not only attempted to cast out the Gods and to replace them with Lenin, they proceeded to convert places of religious worship into churches of communism. Dozens of Orthodox churches were converted into planetariums. The planetariums, like the cult of Lenin, were intended to provide a "counterweight" to religion.⁵⁰

The cult of Lenin was not only a powerful tool for the state, it was also an invaluable ally for individuals. During his life Lenin had often been criticized by his comrades, but in death he became unchallengeable. The unassailability of Lenin, the rock on which the state was built, was a crucial element in the succession crisis that followed Lenin's death. Whoever could best utilize and manipulate the words and theories of Lenin would inherit the state. As a result, Lenin became a commodity after his death. His heirs waged a bitter battle amongst one another to determine who was the dead man's best and most faithful disciple. N. Bukharin, Lev Kamenev, G. Zinoviev, Trotsky, Stalin and others all fought for supremacy

49. Jeane Kirkpatrick, *The Withering Away of the Totalitarian State* (Washington, 1990), p. 46

50. Through science the "Bolsheviks wanted to prove to the masses that there was no God, that there were no angels, and that the planets revolved according to scientific laws". *Moscow Times*, February 2, 1995

in a war in which Lenin was not only the spoils but the main weapon as well.⁵¹ Though several combatants showed exceptional skill at wielding the words and image of Lenin, none proved more capable than Stalin.

Stalin recognized very early on the power of the Lenin cult and was quick to announce his candidacy for the positions of high-priest of the Lenin cult and successor to Lenin. Though it has generally been accepted that Stalin began his campaign on January 26, 1924, the eve of Lenin's funeral, when he delivered a dramatic, religious-style oath in which he vowed to obey the "commandments of Lenin",⁵² in actuality his quest for mastery of Lenin began more than a year before his death. As described by Yuri Buranov, Director of Research and Publication at the former Central Party Archives in Moscow, Stalin, with the aid of his allies, secretly "doctored" a number of documents written by Lenin between December 1922 and March 1923, in order "to strengthen his position in the Party".⁵³ Among the documents that fell victim to Stalin's editing was Lenin's "Letter to the [Twelfth Party] Congress", commonly referred to as Lenin's will or testament. In the first section of this letter, dictated by Lenin on December 23, 1922, Lenin decisively expressed his support for Trotsky on the

51. The succession crisis after Lenin's death and the use of Lenin as a political weapon is detailed in Schapiro, pp. 282-308, and Volkogonov (Lenin, English ed.) pp. 262-314.

52. Tumarkin, pp. 152-153

53. Ibid., p. 22

question of reorganizing the State Planning Commission (Gosplan). When Stalin read a copy of this letter later that same day, he realized that Lenin's support for Trotsky posed a threat to his position. His response was to "improve" the original version of Lenin's text by inserting a qualification for Lenin's support of Trotsky.⁵⁴ Stalin also imposed secret sanctions on the texts of Lenin's daily dictations and, with the aid of Bukharin, Zinoviev and Kamenev, was able to keep the original, unedited documents of Lenin out of the hands of Trotsky, his chief rival.⁵⁵ Stalin realized the irreparable damage that criticism from Lenin could inflict on his career. A man denounced by Lenin as "too rude" and who Lenin recommended be removed from the post of General Secretary would not be accepted as Lenin's disciple and the heir to his legacy.⁵⁶

Lenin's death in 1924 assured Stalin that no fresh attacks from the infallible vozhd would be forthcoming, but it did not put an end to the threat that Lenin posed to Stalin. Through his "immortal" writings, Lenin could reach from beyond the

54. Ibid., p. 25

55. Ibid., pp. 34-41; Bukharin was Stalin's main assistant in suppressing Lenin's papers, many of which contained damning criticisms of him. For example, Bukharin, who was editor of Pravda at the time, refused to publish the original version of Lenin's article, "How We Should Reorganize the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection" (January 1923) as it contained an "explicit attack" against Stalin.

56. Lenin's testament was read to the delegates at the Thirteenth Party Congress in March 1924. It was not, however, made public at this time.

grave and bring Stalin down. Accordingly, while publicly professing his grief and swearing fidelity to the dead man, Stalin intensified his efforts to bring Lenin under his control. By the summer of 1924, Stalin had managed to collect everything that Lenin had dictated between late 1922 and early 1923 and made it "secret and inaccessible" to the rank and file Party member.⁵⁷ Stalin was not content; he realized that perhaps there were other Lenin documents out there which could reveal the true nature of his relationship with Lenin and thus challenge his mandate to rule. Accordingly, under the auspices of the Lenin Institute, Stalin launched a massive search for Lenin documents.⁵⁸ The success of Stalin's campaign was absolute: he retrieved Lenin documents which condemned his comrades and his rivals; he seized others that supported his policies and his person; and he buried so deep those documents that could have destroyed him that historians are still trying to exhume them today.

Between 1924-1935, Stalin became the unchallenged master of both the Soviet Union and the Lenin cult. From the outset, Stalin used his mastery of the latter to accomplish the former. He armed himself with Lenin and reminded the nation that "there

57. Ibid., p. 100

58. Volkogonov, pp. 262, 273-274; The Lenin Institute was created in April, 1923, and its first director was L. Kamenev, Stalin's ally. In September 1923, the Lenin Institute was placed under the jurisdiction of the Central Committee of the CPSU and Stalin was named to the council which oversaw its affairs.

is no sphere of work about which Ilich has not thought, about which he did not leave clear and comprehensive words and behests".⁵⁹ The exact manner in which Stalin used the Lenin cult to subdue the USSR was summed up in a political cartoon that appeared in the Russian journal Novoe Vremia in 1993. The crude but brilliant cartoon depicted Lenin's corpse walking down the steps of his mausoleum while Stalin stood above him, shovel in hand, ready to bury him. Lenin turned to Stalin during his descent and cautioned his heir, "I'm afraid old chap, that the masses are not behind you". Stalin smiled and replied "Well, whoever is not behind me will follow behind you".⁶⁰

Many of Lenin's comrades were to be sent to their political and physical graves by the cult of Lenin. Stalin used the cult to unseat his rivals, one after the other. Like a preacher quoting from the bible, Stalin sought to support every personal contention of his with a quote from Lenin. This was not difficult to do. The works of Lenin, spanning more than three decades, were full of contradictions, and thus Stalin could selectively pick Lenin's interpretation of a given policy or individual that best fit his needs. Furthermore, as shown above, Stalin distorted and falsified the writings of Lenin to conform to his program. For example, when debating

59. Tumarkin, p.214

60. Novoe Vremia, 1993, No. 42, p. 18; Stalin's response has an obvious double meaning.

the possibility of socialism in one country, Stalin "cast about in Lenin's collected writings for some substantiation of the notion that Russian socialism did not need foreign support. He found one passage, which, when taken out of context, could be read to that effect".⁶¹ Thus was the cult of Lenin a powerful tool for whomever gained mastery over it.

In the decade after Lenin's death his cult assumed one of its most notable characteristics: it became the source for a cult of the living General Secretary. Though the cult of Lenin was a powerful force and a source of great faith, it alone was not enough to ensure the continued obedience, discipline and sacrifice that the state demanded of its people. The nation had to believe unfailingly that the living leader who controlled their fates, Lenin's prodigy, knew exactly what Lenin would have done. As a result, a cult of Stalin grew up on the back of the Lenin cult.

Propaganda And Agitation

The development of the Lenin cult, and those cults which followed it, were not left to chance; they were nurtured by aggressive propaganda campaigns. This was neither surprising nor unusual. Propaganda and control of information are two basic components of any totalitarian state. A totalitarian state cannot survive unless it has a monopoly over the media

61. R.V. Daniels, "Stalin's Rise to Dictatorship", in Alexander Dallin, ed. Russian and Soviet History: 1500-1991 (New York, 1992), p. 20

and controls the dissemination of information. Control of information is ensured by the establishment of a department or ministry of propaganda that has control over all media and artistic forums.⁶² Such control permits the state to carry out a successful propaganda campaign that aims at "manipulation", not "information".⁶³ Manipulation is a crucial element when building a cult of personality.

Lenin recognized long before taking power in 1917 the need to monopolize information and to generate propaganda. In his 1905 article "Party Organization and Party Literature", Lenin insisted that all "literature must be Party literature" and that newspapers, publishing houses and writers must be affiliated with and answerable to the Party. When the Bolsheviks toppled the Provisional Government in October 1917, they immediately began to establish the totalitarian controls suggested by Lenin, thus creating an apparatus that could effectively propagate a cult of personality.⁶⁴

62. In the USSR, the department of Agitation and Propaganda (Agitprop) was formed in 1920. Both Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy had close equivalents to Agitprop. Hitler formed the Ministry for the Enlightenment of the People and Propaganda, while Mussolini relied on the Ministry of Popular Culture (Minculpop)

63. Baruch Hazan, Soviet Impregnational Propaganda (Ann Arbor, 1982), p. 12

64. Harold Swayze, Political Control of Literature in the USSR (Cambridge, 1962), p. 8; One of the first acts of the Bolsheviks after seizing power in 1917 was to close down rival newspapers. Similar suppression occurred in other totalitarian states and contributed to the propagation of the leader's personality cult. In Italy, for example, Mussolini's "Exceptional Decrees" of November 1926 led to the closure of

The cinema was also targeted by Lenin as a powerful propaganda tool. In a country plagued by illiteracy, Lenin and the Bolsheviks relied heavily on the cinema as an indoctrinational weapon.⁶⁵ Lenin considered the cinema "the most important of arts" and he personally oversaw the nationalization of the film industry in August 1919.⁶⁶ In the years and decades that followed, the cinema helped to build and sustain the cult of Lenin. Dozens of films on Lenin were produced and circulated widely. These films, though based on historical events, were often more fiction than documentary, and helped to disguise the real Lenin behind an "immortal golden mask".

Art was also enlisted to fight on behalf of the Lenin cult. Fine arts, particularly painting and sculpture, formed the heart of Leniniana, the art form characterized by works about Lenin. Over the years, the artistic image of Lenin evolved considerably. Some images of Lenin, however, never changed, such as the often reproduced statue of Lenin striding forward with his arm extended, pointing the way to the glorious

hostile presses (Elizabeth Wiskemann, Fascism in Italy: Its Development and Influence (Toronto, 1969), p.19), while in Germany Hitler closed all rival presses and placed all newspapers under the dominion of Goebbel's Propaganda Ministry. W. Shirer, The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich (New York, 1960), pp. 244-246

65. As late as 1926, 42% of European Russians were illiterate, a statistic which underscores the importance of the cinema in spreading the Lenin cult. Nigel Grant, Soviet Education, 4th ed., (Suffolk, 1979), p. 21

66. Hazan, p. 57

future.⁶⁷ Monuments to Lenin such as these were designed to serve as a constant reminder of Lenin's immortality and the mission he willed the nation before his death.

While images of Lenin, such as his striding statue, spanned the entire Soviet period, other images were more transient. Under Stalin, Khrushchev and Brezhnev, Lenin's image, like his writings, was manipulated to legitimize or strengthen a given political policy. A striking example of this is a political poster of 1930 in which the huge, ethereal head of Lenin fills the Soviet sky.⁶⁸ Below him, collectivization and industrialization are being accomplished in his name. His face is lit up by a smile; clearly, Lenin is pleased. Like the God of the Old Testament surveying the new world he has created, the god of Bolshevism looks on what he has created ... and he sees that it is good.

67. The striding statue of Lenin appeared in slightly modified forms; sometimes, Lenin was cast wearing a cap, "the symbol of his democratism", while in other versions he wore an overcoat with flying coattails "to stress his strong revolutionary personality". Quoted from "Onward to Lenin" (Moscow, 1988). Novosti Collection, file # 21.1.3, Special Collections, Carleton University Library, Ottawa

68. R. Abolina, Lenin v sovetskom iskusstvo (Moscow, 1987) , p. 61

Chapter Two

Lenin's Heirs and the Cult of Personality, 1935-1985

Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and
thou set thy nest among the stars, I shall
bring thee down, saith the Lord.

Obadiah 1:4

Izmailovskii Park in the north-east corner of Moscow is a good place to begin this chapter on the role of the Lenin cult in Soviet society after 1935. It is January 21, 1995. An artist at this post-communist tourist mecca stamps his feet and swills his vodka in a vain attempt to ward off the day's bone-numbing cold. It is the seventy-first anniversary of the death of V.I. Lenin and the artist's work, like the bitter cold, remind of that distant day. One of the artist's paintings, a work on Lenin, draws the attention of passers by. Clearly inspired by the tradition of Soviet propaganda art, such as the 1930 poster in which Lenin's ghost looms over the land, this painting too features Lenin's immortal spectre haunting Russia. However, this painting's similarities with works that have gone before ends there. Instead of the benevolent, god-like Lenin of Soviet days, the shade of Lenin on this canvas is demonic. The work is entitled "At Satan's Ball" and it depicts Lenin's translucent head - horned, red and sinister - hovering over his mausoleum. Lenin's mouth is agape, split by a wicked laugh, and in his twisted, hairy hands are a number of strings, at the bottom of which dangle and dance Lenin's heirs. Stalin, Molotov, Khrushchev, Brezhnev and others kick up their heels and dance to the tune sung by Lenin.

The image of Lenin as an immortal puppeteer is an interesting one. In the period 1935-1985, the Party promoted this image and proclaimed incessantly that it was guided by the hand of Lenin and that it was following the political course set by Lenin. In actuality, Lenin was not so much the puppeteer as the puppet. In the hands of his successors, first Stalin then Khrushchev and Brezhnev, Lenin and his cult became a source of justification for political action and the primary tool used in the construction and maintenance of a personality cult of the living General Secretary. The manner in which the different General Secretaries went about this process was remarkably similar. This process, hereafter referred to as the leader cycle, can be broken down into three stages. In the first stage, the cult of Lenin was used to confer legitimacy on the current General Secretary. The General Secretary placed himself at the head of the Lenin cult in order to demonstrate his status as Lenin's most faithful disciple and to discredit his opponents. A policy of historical erasure accompanied phase one of the leader cycle as the current party leader sought to embellish his own reputation at the expense of his opponents and predecessors.

In stage two of the leader cycle the General Secretary intensified the propagation of his own cult. Characteristics of the Lenin cult, such as the official state celebration of the leader's anniversaries and birthday, were adopted by the

General Secretary's cult.¹ During demonstrations of state pageantry, such as May Day and the anniversary of the October Revolution, the living leader began to occupy the place of honour, reducing the visibility of the Lenin cult.

In stage three, the personality cult of the General Secretary reached its apex. The current leader earned comparison with Lenin and was transformed from a disciple of Lenin into an updater of his works. The cult of Lenin became less dominant as the living leader either shared the spotlight with Lenin or took sole possession of centre stage.

Josef Stalin

The leader cycle outlined above was first followed by Stalin. As shown in chapter one, Stalin identified himself as Lenin's successor and used Lenin's words to help eliminate his rivals. In this respect, Stalin used the Lenin cult slightly differently than would his successors. Whereas Khrushchev and Brezhnev used the cult of Lenin to destroy the cults of their predecessors, Stalin used Lenin to help liquidate his living opposition. First Trotsky, then Zinoviev and Kamenev, and finally Bukharin were purged by Stalin with the assistance of Lenin. The death of these old-Bolsheviks demonstrated the power of the Lenin cult: any flagrant transgression against Lenin was severely punishable. It also demonstrated how

1. During the heyday of Nazism in Germany and Fascism in Italy, the birthdays of Hitler and Mussolini became national holidays in their respective countries. Golomshtok, p. 220

manipulatable were the image and words of Lenin.

Stalin's war with his political enemies was a lengthy affair and thus the second stage of the leader cycle overlapped with this element of phase one. The first real manifestations of the accelerated phase two Stalin cult occurred on December 21, 1929, Stalin's fiftieth birthday. On this occasion, Stalin was praised by Party functionaries and by the public on a scale that had previously been reserved for Lenin alone.²

The escalation of the cult of Stalin after 1929 was accompanied by a decline in the Lenin cult. This decline was natural since there was only room for one leader at the top of the USSR's totalitarian pyramid. As long as Lenin remained the ultimate authority on socialism, Stalin would remain only a disciple. More seriously, the cult of Lenin actually posed a threat to Stalin's authority. Many regarded Stalin's brutal collectivization and industrialization campaigns as the work of "idiot rulers" and recalled with fondness the methods employed by his "exemplary" predecessor.³ Such nostalgia for Lenin, encouraged by his cult, was of no use to Stalin by the early 1930s. Accordingly, between 1929-1934 Stalin began to reel in the cult of Lenin while at the same time he shamelessly promoted his own glorification. Anniversaries and celebrations that had once been devoted entirely to Lenin, such as the anniversary of Lenin's death, began to be invaded by the cult

2. See Pravda and Izvestiia, December 1929

3. Tumarkin, p. 251

of Stalin. This allowed Stalin to propagate the myth of his friendship with Lenin. Just as Lenin had associated himself with Marx and was equated with the Party, Stalin's identification with Lenin allowed him to become "the Lenin of today".⁴

The confirmation that Stalin had reached the lofty heights of his predecessor came in February 1934 at the XVII Party Congress. At this "Congress of Victors" Stalin was hailed as "a leader of genius" and was inducted into the communist hall of fame, joining Marx, Engels and Lenin. He became the new prophet and an "updater" of Leninism.⁵ "Stalinism" became a higher stage of Marxist-Leninist development and its founder was recognized as infallible; "everything said or formulated by Stalin was immutable, true and in no need of proof".⁶

In accordance with Stalin's ascension to the heights of Lenin, his writings joined those of Lenin as the Gospel of communism; if Lenin's words were the Old Testament, then Stalin's were the New Testament. In the first years after Lenin's death Stalin had encouraged the mass publication of selected material on Lenin, fuelling the notion that "Lenin lives". By the early 1930s Stalin began to strangle the living Lenin. As has already been mentioned, the cult of Lenin had

4. Izvestiia January 21, 1937: This accolade was showered on Stalin repeatedly in the press between 1934 and 1953.

5. Volkogonov, Stalin, p. 199

6. Ibid., p. 192

begun to inspire nostalgia, an emotion that was detrimental to Stalin's personality cult. Stalin put a halt to this by scaling back the Lenin cult. In 1931 he merged the Institute of Lenin with the Institute of Marx-Engels. Stalin also began to merge the writings of Lenin with his own; the publication of works by Lenin was replaced by the publication of works by Lenin and Stalin.⁷ Stalin was hailed as the updater of Leninism and it became necessary to read the works of Stalin in conjunction with those of Lenin.⁸ In 1938 Stalin issued orders that effectively terminated research on Lenin. The result was that by 1946 works by Stalin accounted for 74.46 percent of "Marxist-Leninist classics".⁹

By January 21, 1935, the eleventh anniversary of Lenin's death, Stalin had completely usurped Lenin's position as messiah. Both Izvestiia and Pravda devoted almost as much coverage to the living Stalin as to the dead Lenin. For the first time, Lenin's photo on page one of both newspapers was matched by an equal sized picture of Stalin, an important indicator that the current leader was in no way inferior to his predecessor. Indeed, it was stressed that not only had Stalin

7. Between 1932-1945, 261 works entitled Lenin and Stalin were published with a total tirazh of 11 723 000 copies. Boris Korsch, The Brezhnev Cult of Personality (Jerusalem, 1987), p. 26

8. That Stalin's works be read alongside those of Lenin was first suggested in 1926 (Korsch, p. 5), and repeated in the preface of the second edition of Lenin's Sochineniia.

9. Korsch, p. 6

fulfilled his oath to obey the commandments of Lenin, he had realized goals left unfinished by Lenin. This theme was raised again on April 22, 1935, Lenin's sixty-fifth birthday. On that day, the headline of Izvestiia was "The Party of Lenin and Stalin", and the lead article was devoted to Stalin, not to the birthday boy.¹⁰ By January 1936, there was no doubt that Stalin was the only master of the Soviet ship. As explained on the twelfth anniversary of Lenin's death, "the rudder is in the firm hands of comrade Stalin, who has taken the ideas of [Marx and Lenin] and is *developing them*".¹¹

Even at this time, when his own cult of personality was flourishing, Stalin never tried to dissociate or to distance himself from Lenin. Stalin realized that his authority stemmed from Lenin and he took pains to demonstrate his continued reverence for the father of the state. A typical display of Stalin's loyalty to Lenin was offered at Stalin's sixtieth birthday celebration. As described by a subordinate:

Stalin entered the revolution with the image of Lenin in his mind and heart. He thinks of Lenin all the time. Even when his thoughts are immersed in problems requiring his decision, his hand will mechanically, automatically doodle the words "Lenin ... teacher ...friend". How often after a day's work have we taken away pages completely covered with these words".¹²

The above quotation is interesting primarily because it is

10. Izvestiia, April 22, 1935

11. Izvestiia, January 21, 1936 (Emphasis in the original)

12. Volkogonov, Stalin p. 269

not true. In the mountains of paper left behind by Stalin, researchers have never come across a single sheet of paper with such markings.¹³ The statement is not surprising though. Stalin and his allies had begun to falsify the history of his relationship with Lenin in the early 1920s and they would continue the process until his own death in 1953.

Stalin's war with history was two dimensional: he invented and he erased. The former came in handy when addressing his relationship with Lenin in the early years of the Bolshevik movement. Unlike Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev, who had spent considerable time with Lenin in exile, Stalin, who largely remained in Russia until the Revolution, had not been close with Lenin. Once Lenin was dead, Stalin began to improve his historical record, first by suggesting that he had met Lenin four years earlier than he actually had,¹⁴ and then by insisting that his trips abroad in 1906, 1907, 1912 and 1913 had been to meet with Lenin personally, not to attend Party meetings.¹⁵

Stalin's fictitious account of his intimate ties with Lenin was made even more effective once he began to erase Lenin's other comrades from the picture. Stalin's role in the revolution had been secondary, but with the help of the Soviet

13. Ibid., p. 270

14. Bertram Wolfe, Three Who Made A Revolution (New York, 1962), pp. 424-427

15. Volkogonov, Stalin, p. 12

propaganda machine that was at his disposal, he assumed a role no less important than that of Lenin.¹⁶ Even before the publication of The Short Course in 1938 Stalin was recognized as Lenin's equal, and even superior, in the revolution and as co-founder of the Soviet state.¹⁷

At the expense of the Lenin cult, the visual arts confirmed that Stalin was the true soul of steel of the revolution. In the early years of the Lenin cult, Lenin was portrayed as a fiery revolutionary and as a dynamic living leader.¹⁸ However, the intensification of the Stalin cult after 1930 witnessed the emasculation of Lenin and his transformation into a "harmless icon". In contrast to pre-1931 paintings of Lenin, art of the period from 1931 to 1941 was characterized by a passive, grandfatherly figure.¹⁹ Photography presented a similar portrait of Lenin. A series of previously unpublished photographs, taken at Gorki in 1922 when Lenin was convalescing, appeared in the press in the early

16. In his history of the revolution, N. Sukhanov, a participant in the events of 1917, dismissed Stalin as "some sort of grey blur". N. Sukhanov, The Russian Revolution (Toronto, 1955), p. 230

17. In the 1937 film Lenin in October, the role of Stalin in the Revolution looms larger than Lenin's.

18. Artistic examples of Lenin as a heroic and dynamic leader included "Lenin on the Tribune" (1930) by A. Gerasimov (Golomshtok, plate #2) and G. Klutsin's 1930 poster "NEP Russia". Baburina, p. 83

19. Portraits of Lenin in this decade tended to show him at rest, often sitting at his desk or listening to others. Depictions such as this were designed to "transform the man into a symbol". Golomshtok, p. 177

1930s. These photos showed a tired and frail Lenin and were intended to encourage the grandfather image of Lenin (Illustration 8).²⁰

Though Lenin was emasculated in the 1930s, the artistic theme of Lenin as a revolutionary did not totally disappear: it was simply altered to include Stalin. Much as Lenin's works were published in conjunction with those of Stalin, so too were paintings of Lenin expanded to include his heir. Indeed, in many paintings of the period, such as K. Iuona's "Comrade Stalin at a speech of Lenin at Smolny" (1939), Lenin became a secondary figure, his importance derived only from his physical proximity to Stalin. In Iuona's work Lenin was in the foreground, but the title of the painting and the artist's focus on Stalin, made it clear that the event was significant only because Stalin was there.²¹ The same message came across in a painting by I. Grabar of a meeting between Lenin and peasant delegates. While Lenin sat quietly at the table, his hands folded and a friendly smile on his face, Stalin towered over him, clearly in command of the situation.²²

Not all works of art were designed to show that Lenin was subordinate to Stalin; others were intended to remind that

20. Pravda, January 21, 1933

21. Golomshtok, p. 215

22. Historical Museum, Moscow. Hall # 18: That the artistic image of Lenin was manipulated and belittled by Stalin was confirmed by the editors of Leniniana v Plakate. This study of Lenin in Soviet poster art did not contain a single example from the period 1931-1941.

Lenin was dead. Such was the message conveyed by a 1935 political poster of a military parade through Red Square (See illustration 3).²³ As tanks and soldiers filed past Lenin's tiny mausoleum, the gargantuan figures of Stalin and Voroshilov towered over the proceedings.²⁴ The sheer discrepancy in size and Stalin's domineering position above the tomb left no doubt that Lenin was dead but Stalin lived.

That Lenin was no longer a living figure was hammered home in the press between 1935 and 1941. Although it was still maintained that "Lenin is with us", it was only in the sense that "Stalin is the Lenin of today".²⁵ "Lenin has died, Lenin is no more - but Stalin continues his work" was a common refrain.²⁶

The steady decline of the Lenin cult was abruptly halted in June 1941 when Hitler's forces invaded the Soviet Union. Stalin and his state were completely unprepared for the attack, which allowed the German war machine to advance virtually unimpeded into the Soviet heartland. The terrified citizenry turned to Stalin, their "mountain eagle" and "leader of genius", expecting immediate deliverance; but in 1941 salvation

23. Baburina, p. 120.

24. Marshall K. Voroshilov, known as the "first red officer", was the subject of his own cult of personality, which was intended to foster faith in the Red Army. Jerrold Schecter, Khrushchev Remembers: The Glasnost Tapes (Toronto, 1990), p. 15

25. Izvestiia, January 21, 1941

26. Pravda, April 22, 1940

was not forthcoming. Stalin was powerless to stop the invasion. He had personally crippled the armed forces in the 1930s, when he purged the military of more than 35 000 officers.²⁷ Despite the military handicap in 1941, Stalin still had two of the most powerful weapons in the Soviet arsenal at his disposal: patriotism and Lenin.

Patriotism was a major ally of Stalin in World War II. Since the revolution in 1917, the Soviet state had infused its populace with patriotism and love of the motherland. For 24 years the Party had developed a "permanent war psychosis" in the country and had prepared the populace to defend the nation against invasion.²⁸ When the attack finally came in 1941, Stalin capitalized on more than two decades of political indoctrination. He labelled the conflict "The Great Patriotic War" and resurrected Lenin, infusing new life into the cult he had aggressively quashed. Stalin needed the cult of Lenin at this time since his own popular support was weakened. His inability to expel promptly the German invaders seriously undermined the notion propagated by his cult builders that he was infallible. Lenin, on the other hand, remained indomitable. In the revolution and during the civil war, Lenin led his people to victory after victory against seemingly insurmountable odds. Stalin dredged up these memories and placed the immortal Lenin at the head of the Soviet war effort.

27. Schapiro, p. 424

28. Coudenhove-Kalergi, p. 93

Stalin called Lenin into service on July 3, 1941, in his first post-invasion speech.²⁹ This speech contrasted sharply with the messages that had flooded the media between June 21 and July 2. In the first two weeks of the war, Stalin was hailed as the nation's saviour. "Stalin is our banner", "Stalin is our symbol of victory",³⁰ and "with the name of Stalin - forward to the battle against our enemies" echoed throughout the vastness of the USSR.³¹ On July 3, in his speech to the nation, Stalin raised a different banner. He turned to "great Lenin", the "[sole] founder of our state" and quoted Lenin at length on the importance of defending the motherland.³² It was "under the banner of Lenin", not the banner of Lenin-Stalin, that Stalin pledged to fight and win the war.

Stalin's July 3rd speech triggered an intense revival of the cult of Lenin in the media. Documents that showed Lenin's commitment to transform the Soviet state into a "unified military camp" were published,³³ a new edition of Lenin's collected works, the fourth, was begun, and a slew of new Lenin

29. For almost two weeks after the invasion Stalin withdrew from the public eye. Devastated by his failure to anticipate the attack, Stalin complained: "Lenin left us a great inheritance and we, his heirs, have fucked it all up". Volkogonov, Stalin, p. 410

30. Pravda, June 21, 1941

31. Ibid., June 22, 1941

32. Pravda July 3, 1941

33. Pravda, July 5, 1941

monuments and memorials sprang up.³⁴

Lenin was a powerful visual symbol in World War II and his image graced many posters and paintings of the period. In the artistic sphere Lenin regained much of his former dynamism, slipping out of the role of grandfather and assuming once again the guise of the fighter and leader. A. Vasil'ev's 1944 poster "Under the Banner of Leninism" demonstrated this (See illustration 4). Harkening back to the pre-1930 image, Vasil'ev portrayed the immortal shade of Lenin accompanying his troops into battle. As the army advanced below him, the "living" Lenin filled the blood-red sky and glared confidently into the future: victory was assured.³⁵ Images of the reinvigorated Lenin, designed to remind of Lenin's intimate connection with his people, became "a symbol in the battle with the enemies".³⁶ Although it is impossible to verify the claim of Soviet authors that citizens "often risked their lives to save artistic works that were dedicated to the vozhd",³⁷ there is no reason to question that during the war years "the image of Lenin lived in the hearts of the people".³⁸

34. Service, vol. 1, p. 2

35. Baburina 131. See illustration 4.

36. Shefov, 161: Other artwork that emphasized Lenin's role as a leader and his ties to the people included "V.I. Lenin in Gorki talking with Peasants" (1943) and "V.I. Lenin in the Days of October Talking with the Red Guards" (1944).

37. Ibid., p. 161

38. Novikov, p. 17

Stalin and his colleagues were not the only ones to understand that the Soviet people rallied around Lenin; Hitler also sensed it. In October 1941, the fuhrer personally issued orders that Lenin's brain, stored at Moscow's Institute of Brain, was to be seized and sent to Berlin as soon as the Soviet capital was in German hands.³⁹ Hitler valued Lenin's brain for two reasons. First, as Hitler himself was a firm believer in the power of science, he wanted access to Lenin's powerful genetic material. Secondly, he realized that since Lenin's brain had immense emotional and psychological value to the Soviets, it would be a valuable ideological trophy. The fuhrer believed that the seizure of Lenin's brain would strike a serious blow at the heart and psyche of Russia.⁴⁰

Proof of the symbolic importance of Lenin in the war was verified by the evacuation of his body from Moscow in the summer of 1941. Contrary to the claim of Professor Tumarkin, the body of Lenin was not evacuated to Kuibyshev, provisional home of the Soviet government during the war, but to Tyumen, a

39. Following Lenin's death his brain was removed and sent to the Institute of Brain. It was dissected into 30 963 pieces (Volkogonov, Lenin, (English ed.) p. 447) so that his genius could be studied at the cellular level. It was thought that a study of Lenin's grey matter would reveal the cellular structure of the perfect communist mind and allow scientists to "manipulate" genes in the future to help "achieve the glorious class goals". Novoe Vremia, 1994, No. 38, pp. 37-39.

40. Ibid., p. 38: In a similar vein, the body of Hitler became a trophy after World War II. When the Red Army entered Berlin on April 30, 1945, the commander had orders to retrieve the body of Hitler so as to prevent the corpse of the fuhrer from becoming the focus of a personality cult.

city 800 miles further east.⁴¹ The mummy and its entourage of scientists and honour-guards travelled to Tyumen on a train specially outfitted with shock absorbers and the "the optimal microclimate" for the preservation of the corpse. The move was carried out under a veil of "strictest secrecy" for Lenin would have lost much of his power as a rallying symbol if it was learned that his mummy had abandoned the capital in its time of greatest need. Once arrived at their Siberian destination, the distinguished visitors took up residence in a large, pre-revolutionary school and Lenin was installed in a third-floor classroom. His honour guard maintained their 24-hour vigil over his body, and the ceremonial hourly changing of the guard at "Post #1 beyond the Urals" was observed. However, the pageantry surrounding Lenin's body was witnessed by an elite few as the guard was stationed outside the door of Lenin's room on the third floor. The population of Tyumen never guessed that the father of their state "lived" amongst them for three and a half years.⁴²

By the spring of 1945, Lavrentii Beria, head of Stalin's notorious NKVD and the man entrusted with Lenin's well-being, decided that it was safe to return Lenin to Moscow. The Nazi threat to the capital had passed and Lenin would be in no danger of capture or desecration. On Beria's orders, Lenin's mummy was shipped back to Moscow in the summer and installed in

41. Tumarkin, p. 255; Izvestiia, April 19, 1988

42. Izvestiia, April 19, 1988

a new sarcophagus. At 1 PM on September 16, the mausoleum was officially reopened. Neither the 10 000 people who saw Lenin that day, nor the millions who followed in years to come, guessed that Lenin had not spent the war years in his mausoleum.

Lenin served Stalin and the state well during the war. When the war came to an end, however, so too did Stalin's need for the cult of Lenin. His cult receded, pushed back by the swelling tide of the Stalin cult. This process began even before the war had ended. Once the initial wave of the German invasion had crashed onto the rocks of the Soviet defenders and the tide of battle turned in favour of the Red Army, Stalin began to reelevate himself to the level of Lenin. As early as the summer of 1942 he altered the slogan "Under the Banner of Lenin" to include his name. The new motto was "Under the Banner of Lenin and Under the Leadership of Stalin - Forward to Victory!". By the summer of 1945 Lenin had been reduced once more to a harmless icon. He became "Grandpa Ilich" again, the man who listened attentively to Stalin's advice, and it was reminded that "the Great October Socialist Revolution was accomplished under the leadership of Lenin and Stalin".⁴³

The Great Patriotic War turned Stalin into a god. He was praised for having saved the Soviet Union and was credited with having masterminded even the most minute military operations. Stalin's new status as an "immortal" allowed him to dominate

43. Izvestiia, April 22, 1945

all aspects of Soviet political life, including Lenin anniversaries.⁴⁴ Big brother was everywhere. In 1948, the twenty-fourth anniversary of Lenin's death was a celebration of Stalin's life. The General Secretary was praised for his unflinching devotion to Lenin and for his commitment to the "Leninist path".⁴⁵ Other Lenin anniversaries, such as his seventy-seventh birthday in April 1947, passed with barely a mention. The reason - birthdays honour the living. As shown above, Stalin preferred the dead Lenin.

Even when at the pinnacle of his power Stalin carefully maintained links with Lenin. Stalin had built his political career on the foundations of the Lenin cult, and Lenin continued to provide Stalin with a mandate to rule until his death. This was emphasized at Stalin's seventieth birthday celebrations, a 6.5 million ruble extravaganza, in the official congratulatory letter from the Central Committee. In this brief greeting from the political elite, Stalin was hailed as "the great architect of communism" and as the "great coryphaeus of science", but Lenin ran through the greeting like a red thread, his name being mentioned twenty-four times.⁴⁶ Stalin was no longer subjected to the term disciple of Lenin, but it

44. Stalin's immortality was the subject of many literary works, including K. Kiuliabkov's "bessmertnoe imia", in Sto stikhotvorenii o staline (Moscow, 1993), p. 94

45. Izvestiia, January 22, 1948

46. "Official Glorification Of Stalin on his Seventieth Birthday" in Basil Dmytryshyn, USSR: A Concise History, 3rd edition, (New York, 1978), pp. 476-480

was implied in the laudatory greeting that Stalin's friendship and close political association with Lenin entitled him to "raise aloft the glorious banner of Lenin" when "death cut short the life of the great Lenin".⁴⁷

When death claimed Stalin in March 1953, his funeral provided a final indicator of how similar, yet how much more intense, was his cult compared to that of Lenin. During the week of mourning that followed Lenin's death in 1924, more than 3000 people who braved the cold to pay their respects to Lenin were treated for frostbite, hysteria and fainting.⁴⁸ During Stalin's funeral and the mourning period that preceded it, it is alleged that more than 1500 people perished, crushed to death in the frenzied rush to honour the dead body of the "immortal" Stalin.

Nikita Khrushchev

Stalin's death on March 5, 1953 brought an end to the first cycle of the Lenin cult and began the second rotation of the leader cycle. Just as when Lenin died in 1924, Stalin's death triggered a succession crisis, as his heirs fought amongst themselves to determine who would inherit the mantle of authority. In this political battle, fifty-nine year old Nikita Khrushchev, reigning First Secretary of the Moscow Party Committee, emerged the undisputed winner. Khrushchev began to

47. Ibid., p. 476

48. New York Times, January 25, 1924

consolidate his power in March 1953, when he was appointed to the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the CPSU. In October of the same year, he was selected as First Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU. Within four years, he became a virtual dictator. How does one account for Khrushchev's meteoric climb up the Party ladder? In large part it can be explained by his willingness to tear down the cult of Stalin and to rebuild the cult of Lenin.

As soon as Khrushchev set his feet on the path to power in 1953, he reset both the leader cycle and the Lenin cult. He began stage one of the leader cycle by allying himself with Lenin in order to bring down his principal opponents. As described above, Stalin had emasculated Lenin thoroughly by 1953. Khrushchev needed to restore Lenin's potency, for only Lenin could pull down Khrushchev's main opponent, Stalin, from his lofty heights.

It is ironic that it was Khrushchev who destroyed the cult of Stalin. Khrushchev had been one of the "grossest flatterers of Stalin" and was a "ring leader" of the Stalin cult.⁴⁹ He was even named chairman of the "Commission for the Funeral of Josef Vissarionovich Stalin", which was responsible for the preservation of Stalin's body, and played a major role in placing the mummy of Stalin in the Lenin mausoleum on Red Square, next to the body of his "friend" and "teacher".

49. Edward Crankshaw, Khrushchev: A Career (New York, 1966), pp. 85, 108

Not all mourned Stalin's passing. Those millions of innocents wasting away in Stalin's Gulag saw his death as their deliverance and Khrushchev was immediately overwhelmed by a flood of mail from Siberia.

This flood of mail, increasing daily, came from those languishing behind the barbed wire of labour camps, isolated from their families, and those looking for their fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters. It was a spontaneous, but at the same time natural wave of protest, hope, entreaty and faith in the restoration of shattered justice.⁵⁰

In the face of such public outcry, Khrushchev and the Party had but two choices - to continue if they could Stalin's brutal suppression or to put an end to the camp system. Wisely, they chose the latter. On March 28, 1953, the Communist Party issued the first amnesty of political prisoners. Immediately, a human wave of misery and bitterness began to wash over the breadth of the USSR. Stalin had ruined the lives of millions; the injection of these embittered masses back into the lifeblood of the nation posed a serious threat to the Party and the Soviet state. The tales of horror and injustice brought back from the Gulag challenged the legitimacy of the state. How could a socialist nation, a dictatorship of the proletariat, enslave its own people? Khrushchev was helpless to prevent this question being asked and to stem the return of history, but he took effective measures to restrict the damage. He heaped all of the blame for the nation's ills on Stalin and

50. J. Eisen, The Glasnost Reader (Markham, 1990), p. 223

cleansed Lenin and the system he had created of any iniquity.

Damage control was introduced gradually between March 1953 and January 1956. Myth by myth, Khrushchev began the arduous task of dismantling the cult of Stalin. The claim that Stalin had been the author of victory in the revolution, civil war and Great Patriotic War was dropped from official histories in 1953,⁵¹ and from school curricula in 1954.⁵² Bucking two decades of tradition, Lenin's name appeared more and more frequently without the name of Stalin attached to it. More significantly, the Stalin Prizes, awarded annually since 1941, were abolished in 1954, and the Lenin Prizes were resurrected in 1956.⁵³

Khrushchev's early de-Stalinization campaign was characterized by his personal identification with Lenin. Khrushchev, who had never known Lenin, was unable to rely on personal ties or friendship with Lenin as had Stalin. Accordingly, he stressed his ideological connections with Lenin in order to establish that he was Lenin's rightful heir. The Party helped the First Secretary establish credibility as Lenin's disciple; in April 1954, Khrushchev was awarded the

51. Dmytryshyn, p. 270

52. G. Bogdanov, Vneklassnaia rabota po istorii i konstitutsii SSSR (Kursk, 1954)

53. The Lenin Prize, created in 1925 to honour outstanding achievements in the arts and sciences, was never awarded. Stalin apparently did not want the nation's top award associated with the name of Lenin, and thus the Stalin Prize was developed.

Order of Lenin.

Khrushchev injected the Lenin cult with renewed life in 1955 when he changed the official Lenin memorial date from January 21, the anniversary of Lenin's death, to April 22, his birthday. The Soviet people were to celebrate Lenin's birth, not his death. When Khrushchev issued the resolution concerning the change on January 11, 1955, he expressed one point clearly - Lenin was still alive. Lenin, the First Secretary confirmed,

is the great life-affirming teaching, illuminating the path to the construction of communism. Lenin lives in the great works of the CPSU and in the success of our Soviet motherland. The ideas of Lenin exert a powerful influence on all aspects of world history ...the great victories of the Soviet people in the construction of a communist society are linked in the consciousness of the peoples of our country and of the workers of the entire world, with the name of V.I. Lenin and with his teaching.⁵⁴

That Lenin lived again was demonstrated during the celebration of his 85th birthday in April 1955. Lenin's birthday was ushered in by a massive media blitz. For more than a week the papers and airwaves were saturated with Lenin. A major theme stressed by the media at this time was the dominant position of Lenin in the revolution and civil war, a theme which fuelled the assault on the myths of the Stalin

54. Izvestiia, January 11, 1955

cult.⁵⁵ Lenin, it was said, was "more alive than all the living", and this claim was supported by a proliferation of memorial places, celebrations and monuments to Lenin. Groups of Muscovites wrote to the newspapers and boasted of holding "artistic exhibitions and evenings to honour [Lenin's] birthday".⁵⁶ A new official biography of Lenin, which emphasized his role as "founder of the Soviet state" and as a teacher to all, was published in a massive first edition of 3.5 million copies.⁵⁷ A new Lenin museum opened in Baku on April 21, a bronze monument to Lenin was erected in Batumi on April 22, and plans were announced to construct a new industrial city, in honour of Lenin, that was to be called Leninogorsk.⁵⁸

The immortal Lenin resurrected by Khrushchev differed in many ways from the historical Lenin. For example, though his track record in the revolution and civil war proved otherwise, Lenin was lauded as the "most humanitarian of all people". Similarly, Lenin was upheld as a man of the people. In contrast to Stalin, who had lived in an ivory tower far from the daily lives of his people, Lenin was said to have lived and worked among the proletariat. His participation in the first

55. Lenin's decisive leadership was the subject of numerous articles in Izvestiia, including "Lenin in Petrograd" (April 16), "Lenin in the Kremlin" (April 17), and "Lenin at the Putilov Factory" (April 19).

56. Izvestiia, April 19, 1955

57. Ibid., April 20, 1955

58. Ibid., April 15, 21, 22, 1955

subbotnik and his "simple and modest" apartment in the Kremlin were held up as proof of Lenin's proletarian orientation.⁵⁹

The cult of Lenin was a major source of legitimacy for Khrushchev and the Communist Party. The day of public reckoning for the atrocities of the Stalin era was drawing near and the party needed Lenin in its corner. True, Khrushchev would say, Stalin had been unapproachable and corrupt, but Lenin, the true father of the state, had opened his doors to the proletariat and had been concerned about each and every Soviet citizen. Lenin's concern for the common man was propagated in the press by I. Chekunov, in a series of articles entitled, "Meetings with Ilich". In one article, Chekunov described a meeting between Lenin and a peasant delegate in Lenin's Kremlin office. Although the peasant arrived, clad in the attire of a farmer, Lenin did not object; indeed, Lenin got up, shook the man's hand, and offered him tea. So concerned was Lenin about the welfare of the delegate and the issues he addressed, that he had a new set of glasses made for the old peasant so that he could better serve his fellow Soviet citizens.⁶⁰

That Lenin's concern about the peasantry and agriculture in general was alluded to repeatedly in the press between March 1953 and February 1956 was no accident. During this time, Khrushchev was preparing a series of major reforms that would

59. Ibid, April 17, 1955

60. Ibid., April 19, 1955

lead to the fundamental reorganization of Soviet agriculture and the economy. Under Stalin, the farming sector of the Soviet economy had been brutalized and was largely dysfunctional; corruption, inefficiency and over-centralization plagued agriculture and agricultural yields were low.⁶¹ Khrushchev needed to overhaul the Stalinist system and he needed Lenin to justify his course.

As Stalin had done before him, Khrushchev rooted around in the works of Lenin to find support for his policy. He sent his researchers into the archives and came out with fist-fulls of previously unpublished documents that confirmed his faithfulness to the precepts of Lenin. When he could not find direct expressions of Lenin's support for his policies, he used word association to bring Lenin into his camp. A poem of 1955, which linked Lenin to Khrushchev's "Virgin Lands" campaign, illustrated this word association:

Great Lenin, our Father and Friend.
You removed, you shattered our shackles with
your bare hands.
You ploughed up a large virgin land!
You, having rolled up your sleeves past your
elbows,
Went forward like an inflexible harvest hand,
And the enemy fell, cut like grass.⁶²

Khrushchev relied heavily on the media to propagate his image as a disciple of Lenin. Just as Lenin had been one with

61. In 1953, harvest yields were only 104% of 1940 levels. Roy and Zhores Medvedev, Khrushchev: The Years in Power (New York, 1976), p. 30

62. Izvestiia, April 22, 1955

his peasants, had sat and talked with them, Khrushchev portrayed himself as the peasant's friend and batiushka. To this end he emphasized and even exaggerated his peasant and proletarian origins. He made highly publicized trips to the virgin lands and to other agricultural regions, and always made sure that there was extensive documentation of his interaction with the local peasantry.⁶³

The mass media, especially the newspaper Pravda, contributed greatly to the propagation of Khrushchev myths. Pravda's chief editor, P.A. Satiukov, was a member of Khrushchev's "inner cabinet" and he directed an intensive media campaign to popularize Khrushchev as a national leader. Almost daily, his photo or words graced the headlines of the newspapers and contributed to the image of a wise and benevolent leader.

Khrushchev's propaganda efforts were highly effective and by February 1956 he was recognized as a faithful disciple of Lenin. With Lenin firmly behind him, it was time to put an end to phase one of the leader cycle. Khrushchev announced his graduation into phase two of the leader cycle in his "secret speech", delivered at the XXth Party Congress in February 1956. When the Congress was over and the dust had settled, the cult

63. Khrushchev travelled with a personal photographer, whose job it was to capture the "love" shared between the General Secretary and the peasants with whom he met. A collection of these photos was published in 1959 as a testament to Khrushchev's successes. B. Poliakov, Serdechnye vstrechi (Moscow, 1959)

of Stalin lay in ruin. The cult of Lenin, on the other hand, rose like a phoenix from the ashes, with Khrushchev holding firmly to its tail-feathers.

The destruction of the cult of Stalin was done forcefully, but ever so carefully, by Khrushchev. He had to insure that when the cult of Stalin came tumbling down, the party and the system did not come with it. Khrushchev wanted to remove Stalin from the Soviet equation, but he needed to preserve the structural network of the Stalinist system.⁶⁴ This selective reduction was no easy task. The totalitarian system created by Lenin, presided over by Khrushchev, had fathered the cult of Stalin. Khrushchev flatly denied this connection; he claimed that the Stalin cult had been a deviation from Marxism-Leninism. Stalin, he proclaimed, had betrayed Lenin and the nation. Once Khrushchev had diagnosed Stalin as a disease in the body politic, he proceeded to use Lenin like a scalpel to cut Stalin out, careful not to cut too deeply so as to minimize long-term scars.

The first nail that Khrushchev pounded into Stalin's coffin was Lenin's "Letter to the Party Congress". Lenin, Khrushchev showed, had warned that Stalin was "too rude" and had advised that Stalin be removed from his position as General

64. F. Feher, "The Social Character of Khrushchevism", in R. Miller and F. Ferenc, eds., Khrushchev and the Communist World (Totowa, N.J., 1984), p. 26

Secretary.⁶⁵ Next, Khrushchev presented to the Congress a 1923 letter from Lenin to Stalin in which the former chastised the latter for having been disrespectful to his wife, Nadezhda Krupskaya.⁶⁶ Khrushchev used these letters to establish that Stalin was not a faithful disciple, or even a friend, of Lenin. This helped to sever the links between Lenin and Stalin and removed blame for the crimes of the Stalin period from Lenin and the system he had created.

Throughout his lengthy speech to the delegates at the XXth Congress, Khrushchev contrasted Lenin with Stalin. Over and over again, he opposed positive traits of Lenin to negative traits of Stalin. Lenin's humaneness, commitment to justice, modesty and intelligence were contrasted with Stalin's cruelty, arbitrariness, arrogance, and even stupidity. In his comparative analysis of Lenin and Stalin, Khrushchev showed great adeptness at manipulating the words and cult of Lenin. Khrushchev's Lenin was a far-cry from the historical figure who had died in 1924. Lenin's own well-documented cruelty and arbitrariness were ignored.⁶⁷ His dominance in the Party was downplayed so that he conformed to Khrushchev's policy of

65. "Khrushchev's de-Stalinization Speech, February 24-25, 1956" in Dmytryshyn, p. 496

66. Ibid, p. 497

67. V. Molotov, a key member of Stalin's inner circle who knew Lenin personally, once remarked that had Lenin lived, "he would have carried out collectivization and [the purge of] 1937 even more severely than Stalin". Yuri Borev, istoriia gosudarstva sovetskogo v predaniakh i anekdotakh (Moscow, 1995), p. 64

"collective rule". Khrushchev even denied that Lenin had authored the term "enemy of the people", attributing it to Stalin instead.⁶⁸ Similarly, Khrushchev denounced the personality cult of Stalin, but said nothing of Lenin's cult, implying that the latter did not exist. When Khrushchev concluded his 20,000-word speech, Lenin had gained new-found life. He was recognized as the sole founder of the state and as architect of socialism in Russia. Lenin was the ideal. To heal the wounds inflicted on the people and the party by Stalin, it was necessary, Khrushchev insisted, to go back to the true roots of the Party and the state - back to Lenin!

Khrushchev emerged from the Congress as Lenin's champion, and he was hailed as a "true Leninist". He had no intentions, however, of "going back to Lenin" as he so often claimed. The realities of the late 1950s required different solutions than those offered by Lenin at the turn of the century. Nevertheless, as master of the Lenin cult, Khrushchev was able to continue to pull Lenin out of his hat to justify his policies and to legitimize his position, even as he made "epoch-making modifications to the Leninist Canon".⁶⁹

Another outcome of the XXth Party Congress was the emergence of a formalized cult of Khrushchev. Khrushchev was praised by the delegates at the Congress for his "in depth Marxist-Leninist analysis of the work of our Party", and was

68. Volkogonov, Lenin, p. 453

69. Crankshaw, p. 227.

acknowledged as the latest interpreter of Leninism.⁷⁰ Though Khrushchev denounced personality cults as irreconcilable with Marxist-Leninist doctrine, the rise of his own cult and the revival of the cult of Lenin testified to the totalitarian state's need for a cult of the leader. As mentioned in the introduction, the cult of the leader was a major stabilizing force in totalitarian societies. The nation had to place absolute faith in the ability of its leaders and a personality cult was an excellent vessel for the communication of the leaders' infallibility.

The second phase of Khrushchev's leader cycle was similar to that of Stalin. He began by launching an intensive publication campaign that was designed to increase his personal prestige and to strengthen his authority. Before 1953, Khrushchev did not have a single work in print. In 1956, 124 titles were published under his name. By 1959, the figure was up to 385.⁷¹ The works of Khrushchev were promoted by librarians, alongside those of Lenin, and they were given first priority by state publishing houses (see Appendix I). Khrushchev himself played an active role in promoting his publications. Taking a page from Stalin's play-book, Khrushchev awarded the top literary prize for artistic journalism in 1960 to a book devoted to his trip to the United

70. Izvestiia, February 26, 1956

71. Refer to Appendix I

States in 1959.⁷²

Khrushchev's cult grew quickly between 1956 and 1960, but Lenin's grew in leaps and bounds. Lenin's image popped up everywhere, accompanied by the slogan, "Lenin lives!". The drastic increase in the propagation of the Lenin cult in 1956 was attributable to the downfall of the Stalin cult and the subsequent removal or destruction of monuments to him.⁷³ The ceremonies, portraits and monuments to Stalin were highly visible parts of society, and they "constituted the centre of the structure of [Soviet] totalitarian art".⁷⁴ Their removal left a void in the national consciousness, a void into which Lenin was quickly substituted.

Lenin had to be substituted into a literary void as well. As shown above, Stalin vastly exaggerated his contributions to Soviet history, and had hammered these falsifications home in print. When the process of de-Stalinization began, these publications were doomed to oblivion. Official histories, biographies, and encyclopedias were pulled from shelves and replaced with new Khrushchev editions. In the new editions, Lenin was the dominant political personality, slipping once

72. Boris Korsch, The Brezhnev Personality Cult and Continuity (Jerusalem, 1987), p. 6

73. Many different fates awaited monuments to Stalin. Larger monuments were dismantled or blown up; smaller statues or paintings were placed in remote storage, or covered up; some paintings, considered to have artistic value, were doctored to remove Stalin's offending presence.

74. Golomshtok, p. 215

more out of the role of grandfather and regaining much of the substance of which Stalin had robbed him.

The new stress on Lenin during the Khrushchev era was demonstrated by the publication of the fifth edition of his collected works. Although this edition, published between 1958-1965, erroneously claimed to be the "Complete Collection" of Lenin's works, it did contain more than twice the material that had appeared in the third and fourth editions. The earlier Stalinist editions had been compiled with carefully selected material that fostered an image of Lenin that was consistent with Stalin's demands. Lenin was the grandfather, the kind old sage, who trusted Stalin above all others. Every word that appeared in these editions was designed to establish Stalin's mandate to rule and to demonstrate his faithfulness to the Leninist course. Any Leninist material that contradicted the myths of Stalin's cult of Lenin was excluded.

Khrushchev's edition of Lenin's work was also designed to confirm the correctness of the General Secretary's position. Since so many of Khrushchev's policies contradicted those of his predecessor, it was natural that he should use Lenin's Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii as a forum for discrediting Stalin. He did this by filling in the blanks left by Stalin ...many of them at least. For example, he published several pages of Lenin's "The Basic Tasks of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat in Russia" (March, 1919) that had been omitted from the Stalin editions. Among other things, the more complete version of

Lenin's text in the fifth edition warned of the need to be "especially cautious" in dealing with the nationalities problem and to ensure the equality of all people in the USSR - advise that Stalin flagrantly ignored.⁷⁵ Also added to the fifth edition were several letters from Lenin to Stalin. These letters did not appear in the earlier editions as they contained minor rebukes or criticisms of Stalin.⁷⁶

Correspondence between Lenin and other Old Bolsheviks, including Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev, surfaced in Khrushchev's edition as well. The tone and sheer volume of letters to these three, especially to Trotsky, disproved Stalin's claim that he had been Lenin's principal lieutenant and the architect of victories in the revolution and civil war.⁷⁷ Another interesting addition to the fifth edition were ninety-five previously unpublished letters from Lenin to Inessa Armand.⁷⁸ Although some concluded that these letters were censored by Stalin in order to cover up a love affair, R.C. Elwood presented a more plausible explanation in Inessa Armand:

75. V.I. Lenin, Polnoe sobranie sochinenii. 55 vols., (Moscow, 1958-1965), vol. 38, pp. 94-95.

76. In one such letter, written on May 27, 1919, Lenin complained of treason and sabotage in the army and cast doubt on Stalin's performance, stating "Please pay greater attention to these circumstances". Ibid, vol 50, p. 325

77. There was no place in Stalin's cult of Lenin for Lenin's "warm comradely greetings" to Stalin's principal rivals. Ibid, vol 50, p. 184

78. Inessa Armand served as the first director of the Women's Section of the Russian CP (Zhenotdel) and was a close personal friend of Lenin from 1909 to 1920.

Revolutionary and Feminist. Elwood argued that Lenin's letters to Armand contained information that did not conform to the cult image of Lenin under Stalin. For example, Lenin used the familiar "ty" form of address with Armand, a pronoun reserved for family and intimate acquaintances. Although Lenin's use of ty did not prove any romantic involvement with Armand, Elwood pointed out that "to the manufacturers of the myth of the omnipotent and puritanical vozhd, it was embarrassing to have to explain why he used the ty form of address with an attractive woman who was not his wife".⁷⁹ Another problem with Lenin's letters to Armand was that the vozhd was often condescending and even rude.⁸⁰ These characteristics did not fit the emasculated, grandfatherly Lenin of the Stalin era. However, they did have a place in Khrushchev's cult of Lenin. They demonstrated that Lenin was a fiery revolutionary, full of passion, and that he was a man of the people who cared for his fellow party members.

Lenin also emerged revitalized in the Khrushchev-era History of the Communist Party.⁸¹ The authors of the new history denounced The Short Course version of events and credited Lenin with the victories in the revolution and civil war. Lenin was portrayed as a strong revolutionary personality

79. R.C. Elwood, Inessa Armand: Revolutionary and Feminist (Cambridge, 1992), p. 273

80. Ibid, pp. 183, 186

81. B.N. Ponomarev, Istoriia kommunisticheskoi partii sovetskogo soiuza (Moscow, 1971)

who continued to lead the Communist Party even after his death.

The Lenin that emerged from the pages of Khrushchev-era publications was a far cry from the tired old man of the Stalin period. Khrushchev revealed that Lenin, although not a cruel man, had been strict and severe. For the first time in thirty years, Soviet citizens were shown a Lenin who had advised Trotsky to use violence to speed up enlistments in the Red Army.⁸² Surely, this aggressive, no-nonsense Lenin would have approved of his heir's tough stances over Hungary (November 1956), the U-2 affair (May, 1960) and the Cuban missile crisis (October, 1962). Lenin was not the only benefactor of historical revisionism after 1956; Khrushchev, too, came out a winner. Khrushchev, who had been a close associate of Stalin, distanced himself from his mentor by rewriting his role in history. He was praised for having warned Stalin of an imminent German attack in April, 1941, and for having requested the mobilization of troops and greater defensive preparations.⁸³ His unimpressive role in the war was also embellished, and he was credited with having taken an "active part in leading the troops" at the front.⁸⁴

The renewed cult of Lenin and the fledgling cult of

82. In a letter of October 22, 1919, Lenin told the Commissar of War to "put a machine gun behind [reluctant recruits] and shoot several hundred of them" in order to convince others to join the army. Lenin, PSS. vol. 51, p. 68

83. Ponomarev, p. 538

84. Ibid., p. 542

Khrushchev were especially active in the month leading up to Lenin's birthday each year. This was encouraged by Khrushchev, who according to the formula of the leader cycle, used the occasion of a Lenin celebration to glorify himself. Lenin's birthday was a perfect opportunity for Khrushchev to promote his own cult, as his birthday, April 17, was less than a week before Lenin's. During the birthday month, the two leaders shared headlines and much attention was paid to the fact that Khrushchev's feet were on the path blazed by Lenin. April 22 became a celebration of two living leaders: mortal Khrushchev and immortal Lenin. In 1959, Khrushchev was given equal billing with Lenin for the first time in Pravda, an indicator that he was a giant in the field of communism. This point was hammered home in Pravda's lead article on Lenin's birthday. The article was nothing more than a collage of Khrushchev quotes, which combined to show that "the Party is doing just what great Lenin recommended".⁸⁵

The joint birthday celebrations of Lenin and Khrushchev in 1959 witnessed Khrushchev's ascension into phase three of the leader cycle. Just as Stalin's fiftieth birthday celebrations in 1929 had taken his cult to a higher plain, Khrushchev's sixtieth birthday raised his cult to a new level. He was trumpeted by the Presidium as a "true student of Lenin", a "tireless fighter for the triumph of communism", and an

85. Pravda., April 22, 1959

"updater" of Marxism-Leninism.⁸⁶ Scores of greetings from international communists and statesmen filled the newspapers, praising Khrushchev for his "enormous contributions to the creative evolution of Marxist-Leninist theory".⁸⁷

The assertion that the Party acted on Lenin's orders was reintroduced at the XXII Party Congress in October, 1961, when the decision was made to remove Stalin's body from the mausoleum of Red Square.⁸⁸ Although Khrushchev's de-Stalinization campaign had been in high gear since 1956, the cult of Stalin still had many devotees. To remove his "sacred" body from the tomb, the Party needed to appeal to a higher authority. Fortunately for Khrushchev, immortal Lenin made an appearance. The shade of Lenin had come to Dora Lazurkina, a delegate at the Congress, and demanded that Stalin be expelled from the tomb. As she explained to her fellow delegates,

Comrades, I always carry Ilich in my heart and I have survived the most difficult times only because Ilich was in my heart and I took council with him. [Applause] Yesterday, I took council with Ilich. He stood before me, as if alive, and said, "it is unpleasant for me to be next to Stalin, who brought such misfortune to the Party. [Stormy applause]"⁸⁹

86. "Letter from the Central Committee" in Pravda, April 19, 1959

87. Ibid., April, April 19, 1959

88. The decision to remove Stalin's body was influenced by several factors, including Khrushchev's attempts to improve Sino-Soviet relations.

89. Izvestiia, October 30, 1961; Lazurkina's demand that Stalin be removed from the tomb was repeated by many other delegates, including I. Spiridonova. Spiridonova argued that "it is

Stalin's fate was sealed; Lenin had spoken. A two-point resolution was drafted that legislated the renaming of the "Lenin-Stalin mausoleum" to honour Lenin alone, and the removal of Stalin's body.⁹⁰ The sentence was carried out immediately. On the night of October 30/31, Stalin's body was taken from the tomb under cover of darkness, and buried next to the Kremlin wall. The "Lenin-Stalin" facing on the mausoleum came down and was replaced by the pre-1953 "Lenin" etching, which was conveniently on hand. Lenin was alone again, the sole God in the Bolshevik cathedral. Khrushchev, however, had his eye on the space in the communist pantheon that Stalin had vacated. With the aid of his own personality cult and the cult of Lenin, he was prepared to make a bid for immortality.

Every year, Khrushchev used the occasion of the April birthday celebrations to add to his cult.⁹¹ This reached a climax in April 1964, on Khrushchev's seventieth birthday. His birthday celebration was a love-fest, with accolade after laudatory accolade showered upon him. Ironically, as his cult reached its zenith, Khrushchev was acclaimed for "having begun and carried to completion the fight against the cult of

impossible to reconcile the fact that next to the body of V.I. Lenin, to whom workers of our country and all honest people of the world come to bow, there lies a man who tarnished his name with great iniquities".

90. Ibid., October 30, 1961

91. Between 1960-1963, several laudatory biographies appeared on the occasion of Khrushchev's birthday, each a little more eulogistic and historically inaccurate than the one that preceded it. Crankshaw, p. 13

personality".⁹²

It was also ironic, though typical of the totalitarian leader cycle, that Leonid Brezhnev, the man who would ouster Khrushchev from power a few months later, was one of the grossest flatters of the General Secretary. One of the principal rules of the Soviet political game was that all subordinates hail the infallible leader. Brezhnev fostered the myths of the Khrushchev cult when he stated that "our people know well that during the terrible years of the Great Patriotic War, you, Nikita Sergeevich, were always on the front lines, always there where the most ferocious battles were being fought ...".⁹³

The propagation of the myth of Khrushchev's military prowess, which resembled that of Lenin and Stalin and foreshadowed that of Brezhnev, was a fundamental aspect of all totalitarian leader cults. In a totalitarian state, the leader had to be the ultimate warrior. Since militarization and conflict were central aspects of the state's ideology, it was imperative that the leader be endowed with unfailing courage, skill and determination. The nation had to possess confidence in the ability of its leaders to protect and aggrandize the

92. Vernyi Leninets, bezzavetnyi borets za mir i kommunizm (Moscow, 1964), p. 63

93. Pravda, April 18, 1964; Khrushchev's military exploits in the civil war and World War II had been steadily exaggerated since 1953. His true role as an active, but relatively obscure member of the military soviet of the Volga region was supplanted by the notion that he had led the battle of the Volga in 1942-1943. Pravda, January 27, 1963

motherland.⁹⁴

Despite the lofty heights to which Khrushchev's personality cult soared, he was never able, as Stalin had been, to usurp Lenin's throne. He was forced to bolster constantly the Lenin cult and to reassure everyone that Lenin still lived. Khrushchev had to share the spotlight with Lenin due to the legacy of Stalin. The Party had learned a difficult lesson under Stalin and was not about to repeat the mistake of subjecting itself to an individual. The Party, however, also realized the need to have a strong leader at the helm and thus it allowed and encouraged the cult of Khrushchev. It permitted the General Secretary to amass dictatorial, but not absolute, power in his hands.⁹⁵ By not allowing Khrushchev to rise above the Party to the heights of Lenin, by not awarding him his own "ism", the collective restricted Khrushchev to the role of Lenin's disciple and denied him recognition as the new prophet of communism. Khrushchev, unlike the mythological Lenin, was just a cog in the Party machine, not the machine itself. When his cog began to wear out and no longer functioned effectively in the machine, the Party simply had to

94. Hitler's military prowess was a common artistic theme in Nazi Germany. The fuhrer commissioned paintings that depicted him on battlefields or dressed in the armour of a Teutonic knight. Golomshtok, p. 48, pl #5. Kim Il Sung's military might was the subject of many paintings in North Korea, such as a scene of Kim rallying his troops before the battle of Pochonbo (1937). Under The Banner of the Great Juche Idea of Comrade Kim Il Sung (Pyongyang, 1972), p.50

95. Rigby in Miller and Ferenc, p.68

replace him. This was done in October, 1964, when he was charged with violating the principles of collective rule. He was removed from power by the collective leadership of the Party and replaced by his faithful flatterer, Leonid Brezhnev.

Leonid Brezhnev

Khrushchev's fall from grace in 1964 completed the second rotation of the leader cult cycle in Soviet Russia. Like Stalin, Khrushchev had identified himself with Lenin from the outset and had built a powerful cult of personality on the periphery of the Lenin cult. In the end, Khrushchev's personality cult contributed to his downfall. The peasant image of Khrushchev that his personality cult had fostered did not befit the leader of a superpower. Khrushchev was too brash, offensive and rustic to represent the USSR on the ever more visible world stage.⁹⁶ His replacement was a man more outwardly suited to the task. Leonid Brezhnev was a patient, serious and persistent man who recognized the authority of the collective.⁹⁷ He also possessed a quality that was indispensable for a First Secretary: the ability to manipulate and to wield the cult of Lenin.

Brezhnev had been well schooled in the art of Leninization. As head of the Dnepropetrovsk regional Party

96. Olga Narkiewicz, Soviet Leaders: From the Cult of Personality to Collective Rule (Brighton, 1986), p. 11

97. Paul Murphy, Brezhnev: Soviet Politician (Jefferson, 1981), p. 238

Committee's Department of Ideology and Indoctrination in the late 1930s, he had served as the main propaganda transmitter for Stalin and Khrushchev in the region. This job taught Brezhnev valuable lessons about the control of information and the dissemination of propaganda, lessons that served him well when it was time to build his own cult.

Brezhnev did not wait until he became First Secretary to wield Lenin against his rivals. Like most aspiring apparatchiks, Brezhnev used Lenin on his way up the Party ladder. For example, in the mid-1950s, when serving as deputy to Party secretary P. Ponomarenko in Kazakhstan, Brezhnev criticized his boss for opposing collectivization on the grounds that:

the Party has always been vitally interested in the Sovkhoz [state farm] system. On the second day after the October Socialist Revolution, the Second All-Union Congress of Soviets treated the question of the creation of Soviet farms in the Decree on Land. The Sovkhozy were created from the original idea of great Lenin as exemplary state enterprises in agriculture.⁹⁸

As has already been shown, Brezhnev contributed greatly to the propagation of the Khrushchev cult. As late as April, 1964, Brezhnev hailed Khrushchev for "the restoration of Leninist norms of Party and public life and for the rebirth of the spirit of Lenin in all of its purity and truthfulness"." Six months later, on October 15, when the Presidium elected

98. Ibid., p. 141

99. Pravda, April 18, 1964

Brezhnev to the position of General Secretary, he did an abrupt about face. Loyal to phase one of the leader cycle, Brezhnev turned Lenin against Khrushchev. Khrushchev was stripped of his title as a "true Leninist" and was condemned by Brezhnev, just as he had condemned Stalin, for having "defamed" Lenin in order to promote his own policies and personality cult.¹⁰⁰

The denunciation of Khrushchev was accompanied by the renewal of historical erasure, a characteristic feature of phase one of the leader cycle. In order to prepare the ground for his own personality cult, Brezhnev tried to erase all traces of Khrushchev's cult from the face of the nation. Khrushchev's books were removed from library shelves,¹⁰¹ his name was erased from history texts,¹⁰² and his posters, portraits and busts were taken down and forgotten. As Khrushchev had done when carrying out de-Stalinization, Brezhnev inserted both himself and Lenin into the void left by the retreating Khrushchev.

Despite the belief of Russian historian Roy Medvedev that "it would be rather difficult to successfully create a cult of some new personality, however great the exertions of the

100. Volkogonov, Lenin p. 455

101. Refer to Appendix I

102. In their 1976 biography of Khrushchev, the Medvedev brothers confirmed the effectiveness of Brezhnev's purge, stating that "in the Soviet Union, not only are there no books on Khrushchev, but since 1964 his name has not even been mentioned in the press except for a brief item announcing his death in 1971". Roy and Zhores Medvedev, p. viii

official propaganda machine" after the collapse of the cults of Stalin and Khrushchev, a Brezhnev cult did emerge.¹⁰³ Its development testified to the essential role of the leader cult in the totalitarian state. In 1964, just as in 1924, the state needed its citizens to place their faith in the leader. Although the role of the leader had changed dramatically since Stalin's time, he still had to appear a visionary who possessed the strength and knowledge to lead the country along the path blazed by Lenin. To this end, the Party initiated Brezhnev's personality cult and embellished his image to make him a more suitable receptacle for the nation's trust.

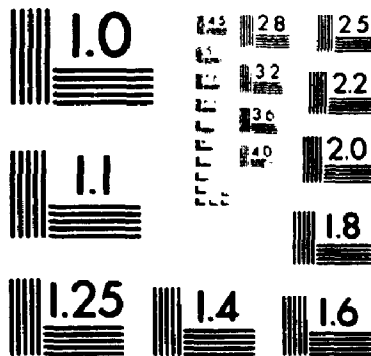
The first major stone of the Brezhnev cult was laid on V-E Day, 1965, by Brezhnev himself. In his address commemorating the victory over Germany, Brezhnev made it clear that he deserved a considerable amount of the credit for Soviet success. He dredged up the little known battle of Malaia Zemlia, a battle in which he had participated as head of the political section of the 18th Airborne division, and suggested that this footnote to World War II was in fact a turning point.¹⁰⁴ Pravda confirmed Brezhnev's assessment and reported that comrade Brezhnev had been the "soul of the army" at Malaia

103. Roy Medvedev, On Socialist Democracy (New York, 1975) p.321

104. Pravda, May 9, 1965

2

PM-1 3 1/2"x4" PHOTOGRAPHIC MICROCOPY TARGET
NBS 1010a ANSI/ISO #2 EQUIVALENT



PRECISIONSM RESOLUTION TARGETS

Zemlia.¹⁰⁵

Brezhnev's newfound reputation as a war hero was not enough by itself to sustain a personality cult. Brezhnev's cult needed that most basic ingredient in the leader cult recipe: Lenin. Lenin remained the primary source of legitimacy for the Party and the state and the First Secretary had to earn recognition as his rightful heir and disciple. Brezhnev was keen to wear the mantle of Lenin's heir. From day one in office, he saddled himself to the ghost of Ilich and "would take no step without consulting Lenin".¹⁰⁶ In article after article, and speech after speech, Brezhnev supported his course of action with a barrage of quotations from Lenin.

The Party contributed to Brezhnev's image as Lenin's disciple, nudging him into phase two of the leader cult cycle in 1966. Brezhnev's ascension into stage two began at the XXIII Party Congress in March-April 1966, when he was exalted as "a political leader of the Leninist school", and was completed in December during his sixtieth-birthday celebrations. At the official state ceremony honouring the First Secretary, Brezhnev was awarded the Order of Lenin for his "exceptionally great contributions to the activities of the

105. Ibid., May 8, 1965: Brezhnev's military record continued to improve until his death. By the late 1970s, Brezhnev was recognized as the liberator of Novorossisk and as an architect of victory in World War II. Brezhnev loved military medals and "he awarded himself every imaginable decoration, title and rank". Volkogonov (English edition), p. 459; see also Brezhnev, p 52; L.I. Brezhnev, Malaia Zemlia (Moscow, 1978), pp. 1-48

106. Volkogonov, Lenin p. 456

Party and state in the restoration of Leninist principles
...".¹⁰⁷

Though the first phase of Brezhnev's leader cycle was completed in just two years, phase two lasted a decade. The reason for this unusually slow maturation of the Brezhnev cult was the stiff competition offered by the Lenin cult. 1967 and 1970 marked the occasion of two important Soviet anniversaries: the fiftieth anniversary of the October Revolution and the one-hundredth anniversary of Lenin's birth. These two anniversaries were seized upon by the Party propaganda machine and used to hammer home the need to fulfil the socialist mission that Lenin had begun in 1917.

More than at any other time in Soviet history, from the summer of 1967 until the summer of 1970, the cult of Lenin was everywhere. For three years Lenin dominated the media and was the subject of countless publications, posters and paintings. The first real display of the intensity that would characterize the Lenin cult for these three years came on November 7, 1967. During the commemoration of the revolutionary anniversary, Lenin was the focus of seemingly endless praise and adulation. On posters and banners everywhere, Maiakovskii's famous slogan proclaimed: Lenin lived, Lenin lives, Lenin will live! (see illustration 5). These words were often accompanied by a vivacious, fiery Lenin, who strode or pointed with confidence

107. Murphy, p. 265

toward the future.¹⁰⁸ In the revolutionary celebrations, the living Lenin commonly mingled with his immortal counterpart. Such was the case on the night of November 6/7, when a gigantic portrait of Lenin was suspended from a balloon high above the Kremlin. When the portrait was illuminated, it took on a supernatural appearance. It was as if the Bolshevik God was looking down on his flock from the communist heavens.¹⁰⁹

The cult of Lenin barely abated after the revolution's jubilee had passed. Almost immediately, preparations began for the commemoration of Lenin's centennial. Under the catch phrase "Lenin is always with us", Lenin evenings were held in schools, new editions of his books were published,¹¹⁰ and new statues and memorials to him popped up like mushrooms.¹¹¹

The buildup to Lenin's centennial entered its final, most intensive, phase on January 1, 1970. In the New Year's Day edition of Izvestiia, Soviet readers were reminded that:

108. V. Ivanov produced a Lenin poster of this variety for the revolution's golden anniversary. It was printed in a massive edition in 1967 and reprinted in 1969. Baburina, p. 192

109. Pravda, November 7, 1967. This bit of light and magic was repeated on the eve of Lenin's centennial in 1970

110. In 1969-1970 alone, 76 million copies of books by or about Lenin were published. Korsch, p.48. See Appendix I.

111. The Stalinist image of Lenin as "such a good soul and dreamer, lost in a world of simple, everyday happiness" was condemned under Brezhnev. Artists were reminded that "the greatness of Lenin developed not by listening to birds, but through a protracted revolutionary battle". Accordingly, Lenin monuments erected at this time, such as statues at Ploshchad Ilich and in the Kremlin, tended to portray a young and vivacious Lenin. Shefov, p. 188

1970 is an important year ...for it begins a new decade in the twentieth century. However, the most important and main event heralded by the arrival of the 1970s, an event of global historical significance, is that the people of our homeland and the workers and progressive thinkers of the entire world will celebrate the one hundredth birthday of the greatest man of all, of V.I. Lenin, whose name is linked to all revolutionary changes of this century and who is the founder of a new world - the world of socialism.¹¹²

Over the next three and a half months, praise such as this was heaped on Lenin daily. He was credited with having "personally led the [soldiers] at the front during the civil war", and even with leading the Red Army to victory in World War II.¹¹³

There is no need to chronicle the exact nature of the Lenin centennial in 1970. Suffice it to say that between January and May, Lenin was unavoidable. What does deserve mention is that Brezhnev began to share Lenin's spotlight. Just as Khrushchev had fostered his cult through association with Lenin's birthday, Brezhnev used the occasion of Lenin's centennial to kickstart his own cult. Wherever there was a Lenin ceremony, Brezhnev could usually be found. He travelled to Ulianovsk, Lenin's birthplace, to preside over the official opening of a colossal new Lenin memorial site on April 16,¹¹⁴ and then returned to Moscow in time to deliver the keynote

112. Izvestiia, January 1, 1970

113. Ibid., January 2, 1970

114. Dina Kislik, V.I. Lenin Memorial Places in the USSR (Moscow, 1983), p. 18

address at the official centennial celebration in the Kremlin.¹¹⁵ In this incredibly long and dull speech, Brezhnev expertly manipulated the words of Lenin to justify his policies. In subsections of his speech, such as "Leninism and Problems with the Construction of Socialism" and "Leninism in the World Revolutionary Process", Brezhnev insisted that he and the Party remained faithful to the precepts of Lenin.

Far from obeying the precepts of Lenin, Brezhnev and his comrades were busy breaking all of Lenin's most sacred commandments. The most obvious example of this infidelity was Brezhnev's policy of Detente. Although Lenin had never advocated lasting Detente, Brezhnev identified him as the author of peaceful coexistence. Brezhnev cited Lenin's Decree on Peace, the first decree issued by the Bolshevik regime in 1917, as proof of Lenin's commitment to peace. He denied the realities of the revolutionary situation that had forced Lenin to buy a "breathing space" (peredyshka) in 1917-1918, and argued that Lenin had actually desired lasting peace with the United States and the capitalist west.¹¹⁶ This gross misrepresentation of Lenin's ideology allowed Brezhnev to legitimize Detente and to wear the title of "champion and exponent of Lenin's policy of peaceful coexistence".¹¹⁷

115. Izvestiia, April 22, 1970

116. Leonid I. Brezhnev: Pages from his Life (New York, 1978), pp. 170, 222

117. Ibid, p. 172

Between 1971 and 1976, Brezhnev and the Party allied themselves ever more closely with Lenin in order to prove that their policies reflected those of the state's founder. In this effort, a "living" Lenin was more useful than a dead one. Accordingly, the resurrection of Lenin began in earnest. The subbotnik, that day of free labour for the state introduced by Lenin in 1918 and phased out under Stalin, was revived. The publication of works on Lenin and Leninism continued at a pace only slightly less than that of 1970. One of these books, Lenin in Profile, bore testament to the vitality of Lenin. This book, a collection of 113 articles and poems about Lenin, was divided into two sections - life and immortality - with no mention of death in between.¹¹⁸ Aided by material such as this, the Party ardently propagated the notion that "Lenin is more alive than all the living".¹¹⁹ Brezhnev even went so far as to issue Lenin a new Party card, # 000000001, in 1973.¹²⁰

If Lenin was Bolshevik #1, then Brezhnev was Bolshevik #2. Within the Party, Brezhnev was compared to Lenin for his "warmth and humanity",¹²¹ and it was maintained that

118. Zlobin

119. Following the death of Mao Zedong, it was officially declared that "even today, Mao is more alive than all the living". The exact correspondence of this Maoist motto with that of Lenin illustrates just how similar totalitarian leader cults can be. Novoe Vremia, 1994, No. 1, p. 39

120. Volkogonov, Lenin, p. 448

121. Krasnaia zvezda, September 16, 1973

"Brezhnev, like Lenin, [was] a great leader".¹²² Personal comparisons with Lenin, limited before 1976, flourished in the months leading up to Brezhnev's seventieth-birthday festivities in December, 1976. This birthday propelled Brezhnev into the third and final phase of the leader cycle. The title of vozhd was bestowed upon him and it was established that he was the "incontestable and infallible leader" of the Communist Party.¹²³ The Central Committee heaped praise on him, identifying him as "an example of selfless service to the motherland and to the Leninist path".¹²⁴ Thousands of institutions and individuals repeated this refrain and lauded Leonid Ilich as "a worthy continuer of the works of great Lenin".¹²⁵

Some historians have argued that it is "exaggerated to refer to a cult of Brezhnev",¹²⁶ and suggested that "what was happening around [Brezhnev] was just the usual base court flattery".¹²⁷ The methodical acclamation of Brezhnev in the years after 1976, however, bore the unmistakable markings of a

122. Brezhnev, p. 290

123. Pravda, October 15, 1976

124. Slavnyi syn kommunisticheskoi partii i sovetskogo naroda (Moscow, 1977). p. 13

125. Pozdravleniia i privetstviia v sviazi s semidesiatiletiiem general'nogo sekretaria TsK KPSS, tov. Brezhneva, L.I. (Moscow, 1977) p. 461

126. Robert McNeal, The Bolshevik Tradition (Engelwood Cliffs, 1975), p. 181

127. Feher in Miller and Feher, p. 13

well-developed cult of personality. Faithful to the rules of phase three of the leader cult cycle, the Brezhnev cult built upon myths that had been developed in the first two stages and established the First Secretary as an updater of Leninism and as a "leader of genius". In the late 1970s, the cult of Brezhnev even vaulted past that of Lenin; his works were published alongside those of Lenin and were listed as essential reading for a thorough understanding of Leninism. The size of the editions of Brezhnev's works surpassed those of Lenin and his publications, listed in Soviet bibliographies alongside the works of Marx, Engels and Lenin, were trumpeted as "the most outstanding phenomenon in the political arena and cultural life" of the USSR.¹²⁸ Official biographies were churned out to confirm Brezhnev's greatness. One official publication even went so far as to state that "[Brezhnev's] biography is a part of the biography of the entire Soviet people", a statement that was strangely similar to the slogan "we say Lenin, we imply the Party ...".¹²⁹

The cult of Brezhnev remained a highly visible feature of Soviet society until Brezhnev's death in 1982. Even after Brezhnev fell ill and was no longer capable of fulfilling his duties, his image makers in the party propaganda machine erected a public facade and maintained that Brezhnev was a strong *vozhd* of the "Leninist variety" who was leading the USSR

128. Korsch, pp. 10-12

129. Brezhnev, p. 9

to socialism. The Party denied Brezhnev's illness, but it did not ignore it. It prepared for Brezhnev's passing by gradually scaling down his cult, while escalating that of Lenin yet again. In 1982, the last year of Brezhnev's life, the publication of Lenin's works reached an all-time high.¹³⁰ This preemptive wave of the Lenin cult was designed to help ease the transition from one General Secretary to the next. Mortal leaders like Brezhnev came and went - but immortal Lenin never died.

When Brezhnev finally succumbed to illness on November 11, 1982, the Communist Party was well prepared. Yuri Andropov, long-time head of the KGB, was quickly promoted to the General Secretary's chair and a new leader cycle began. Andropov was the new chosen one, the latest heir of Lenin. However, he was not to enjoy deification as had his predecessors. Neither Andropov nor his successor, Konstantin Chernenko, lived long enough to complete even the first stage of the leader cult cycle. The mantle of authority and the legacy of the leader cycle thus fell into the hands of fifty-four year-old M.S. Gorbachev. His experiences with the cult of Lenin will be the subject of chapter four.

Propaganda and the Mass Media

As has been argued above, the cult of Lenin was an

130. In 1982, 668 titles dealing with Lenin were published, an increase of almost 50% over the previous year. (Appendix I)

essential component of the Soviet authoritarian regime in the period 1935-1985. During this time, whenever the state faced a major crisis, such as the Great Patriotic War, it was to Lenin that the Party turned for stability and inspiration; whenever a fundamental change in policy, such as detente or de-Stalinization, was initiated, it was with the words of Lenin that the new policy was introduced; and whenever it came time to begin construction of the cult of the new General Secretary, it was on the cult of Lenin that the foundations were laid. Unquestionably, Lenin was a powerful tool in the hands of the Party and its leaders.

Despite the strength and longevity of the Lenin cult, it was a fragile creature that was entirely dependant for survival on another tool of the totalitarian system - the monopolization over the media and the dissemination of information. The role of the media and the importance of the Party's control of information has already been discussed in passing, but there are several important factors that merit further attention. First of all, as was stated in chapter one, rigid state control of the media was not unique to the USSR - it was a basic characteristic of all modern totalitarian states. In the totalitarian state,

... the establishment and use of means of public communication are reserved to the Party ... their content, their use and utilization are always determined by the Party. This system enables [the ruling Party] to invade with its ideology the mind of every member of

the dominated society.¹³¹

The survival of the Lenin cult demanded that the state strictly adhere to this tenet of totalitarianism. If the state relinquished, or was stripped of, its monopoly over information, the Lenin cult, built on myths, lies and semi-truths would collapse. The Party and its leaders fully realized this fact, which explains why every word, photograph, portrait and electronic signal that originated in the Soviet Union from 1935-1985 was carefully censored. Dissenting views of Lenin were not tolerated, which allowed the Party to transform immortal Lenin into a puritanical, omnipotent leader whose real visage was obscured behind a golden mask.¹³² State control of the media was a major tool in the construction of other totalitarian leader cults, such as that of Mussolini in Italy. In the 1930s, one foreign observer in Italy noted that "it is interesting, when it is not too nauseating, to observe how Mussolini fills the front page, the back and the middle pages" of daily newspapers.¹³³

The film industry, like the press, bolstered the cult of Lenin and contributed to the overall political indoctrination

131. Chalupa, p. 13

132. Occasionally, artists and journalists rebelled against the Party's monopoly over the media. When this happened, the state took swift action. Following the publication of an article in Moskovskii komsomolets (1967), which complained of the inability of the media to criticize the cult of the leader, the newspaper's editors and offending authors were dismissed. Remnick, p. 175

133. Finer, 305

of the Soviet masses. Lenin's heirs took to heart their master's words that cinema "was the most important of arts" and built up a massive movie business that employed more than 300 000 people by 1982.¹³⁴ Lenin movies were an especially popular subject for movie directors throughout the Soviet period. Dozens of Lenin movies were produced and added credence to the Lenin cult's claim that Lenin lived. Lenin films were an important indoctrinational tool and primary school teachers were encouraged to use them in their classrooms.¹³⁵ So effective was the Lenin movie as a propaganda tool that Lenin made the leap from the big screen to the live theatre stage. The appearance of Lenin on the local theatre stage was an even more powerful reminder to Soviet citizens that Lenin was alive - at least the Party thought so. In the 1960s it was suggested that every Soviet theatre have its own Lenin actor.¹³⁶

Radio was an equally effective tool in propagating the cult of Lenin, so long as the state could control all the airwaves. In the first half of this century, maintaining a radio monopoly was not overly difficult, because transmission

134. Moscow Times, February 18, 1995

135. V.G. Kartsov, Metodika prepodavaniia istorii SSSR v nachalnoi shkole: posobie dlia uchitelei, 2nd ed. (Moscow, 1951), p. 163

136. As noted on Russian television. "Chelovek s chainom", broadcast on Rossiskaia kanal, November 11, 1994

technology was primitive.¹³⁷ Before technology improved in the 1960s, the Party was able to saturate the airwaves and to accost citizens in their own homes with Leninist propaganda. Other totalitarian states, including China and Germany, realized the potential of radio in propagating leader cults as well. In Maoist China, radio broadcasts were often devoted exclusively to the glorification of Mao and the promotion of his cult of personality.¹³⁸ Similarly, In Germany, Paul Josef Goebbels, head of the Nazis' propaganda activities, regarded radio as the "chief instrument of propaganda". Goebbels even created a Chamber of Radio, outside the jurisdiction of the propaganda ministry, which allowed radio, "more than any other single instrument of communication, to shape the German people to Hitler's end".¹³⁹

Television became a major contributor to the cult of Lenin following its introduction to the USSR in 1964.¹⁴⁰ Television

137. By the late 1960s, technology had improved and foreign radio stations were able to send anti-communist messages into the USSR. Brezhnev denounced these "subversive radio stations that have usurped names such as 'Liberty' and 'Free Europe'" and, through frequency jamming, maintained the state monopoly as best he could. Brezhnev, p. 207

138. Ironically, Khrushchev denounced Chinese use of radio to propagate the cult of Mao. He once complained that he had to stop listening to Chinese radio broadcasts "because it was simply disgusting to listen to. The broadcasts were monotonous repetitions of Mao's sayings - that, and praise for Mao, like a prayer". Schecter, p. 160

139. Shirer, p. 247

140. Doder, pp. 87-88.

allowed Soviet propagandists to breach that final frontier; with the dawn of the TV era, a walking talking Lenin could be sent into private homes. Television also helped to sustain the cult of Brezhnev. When Brezhnev fell ill in the early 1980s, television technicians carefully edited footage of his appearances. Through voice overs and touchups, they managed to replace the ramblings of a stammering, senile old man with the clear, strong voice of his younger, healthier self.

Despite the importance of the electronic media, the printed word remained the staple source of propaganda in Soviet Russia, and the cult of Lenin was largely sustained by the publication of Lenin literature (see Appendix I). Thousands of books by and about Lenin were published in huge editions and were heavily promoted in the libraries.¹⁴¹ This literary campaign had close parallels in other cults. Just as Lenin had his Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii, Stalin and Kim Il Sung were honoured with the compilation and publication of their collected works.¹⁴² *Leniniana*, books devoted to the glorification of Lenin, had parallels as well. Khrushchev, Brezhnev and Kim Il Sung were all the subjects of laudatory

141. At the Lenin Library in Moscow, a large, permanent exhibit on the works of Lenin was maintained and librarians were instructed to direct readers to the twenty-two drawers in the card catalogue that contained the listing of works related to Lenin.

142. V.I. Stalin, Sochineniia, 13 vols. (Moscow, 1946-1951); Kim Il Sung, Works, 30 vols. (Pyongyang, 1980-1987).

publications on the occasion of certain birthdays.¹⁴³ The interesting thing about all these different publications was their uniformity. Though the names changed from one to the next, the phraseology and the artistic images used were virtually identical.

The blanket of propaganda that covered Soviet Russia between 1935-1985 was highly effective, and most people accepted, or at least did not refute, the cult image of Lenin. Not all, however, were hypnotized by the cult's spell. A few people managed to see through the myths and to identify the true Lenin beneath his cult mask. Fewer still had the courage to speak out and to unmask Lenin before others. One such rare unmasking of Lenin took place at Moscow State University in 1959. Marina, a "very obedient Komsomol girl" in her early twenties, was studying in a university library when she overheard a blasphemous conversation. "Two men were talking behind me", Marina recalled,

and I was completely shocked by what they were saying. This was in 1959 remember ... and although I was used to hearing about Stalin's [crimes], I had no doubts about Lenin. But what I heard these men say ...! I heard that Lenin - Lenin! - was the greatest criminal in human history!¹⁴⁴

143. Examples of laudatory literature published in connection with the leader's birthday include Khrushchev's Vernyi leninets, Brezhnev's Pozdravleniia i privetstviia and (N. Maloleteva) Vydaiushchiisia borets za mir i kommunizm (Moscow, 1981), and Kim Il Sung's Comrade Kim Il Sing.

144. Personal interview with Marina Glazova, Moscow, March 2, 1995

As a loyal communist, Marina's duty was obvious: report the treasonous speech. Rather than report the men, she married one of them. Marina was outraged but intrigued by what she had heard, and thus she agreed to go with Yuri, one of the two heretics and her future husband, to a meeting with others who shared his views. Through Yuri, Marina entered a circle filled with former political prisoners and disenchanted intellectuals, including Andrei Sakharov. For the first time in her life, Marina escaped the Party's monopoly over information and was given access to material that challenged the official state doctrine. The underground literature (samizdat) led to her awakening. She explained:

I was reading a lot of underground literature, and people [in the circle] were so nice and so intelligent ... they had suffered so much. They were telling me their stories and gradually I began to trust them more than I trusted the official propaganda.¹⁴⁵

The conversion of Marina Glazova is a powerful example of what happens when a totalitarian state loses its absolute control over information. Loyal disciples of the state ideology quickly lose faith when confronted with the truth. In order to prevent the emergence of more Marina Glazovas, the Soviet state waged a bitter battle against samizdat, one of its most deadly enemies, and those who manufactured it.

145. Ibid. Yuri and Marina Glazov were blacklisted in the early 1970s for their outspoken opposition to the Communist system. They fled the Soviet Union in 1972 and eventually took up residence in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Both currently teach in the Faculty of Russian Studies at Dalhousie University.

Occasionally, the state uncovered underground literature that had incredibly destructive potential. Such was the case in 1973 when the KGB unearthed Alexander Solzhenitsyn's The Gulag Archipelago. In this epic work, which chronicled the horrors of the Stalinist system of labour camps, Solzhenitsyn revealed that Lenin, not Stalin, was the true father of repression in the USSR. He showed that it was the system created by Lenin in 1917 that bore direct responsibility for the purges and the terror that developed under Stalin.¹⁴⁶ Solzhenitsyn's anti-Leninist blasphemies were an unforgivable sin; if published, they had the potential to undermine not just the cult of Lenin, but the legitimacy of the state as well. Naturally, the state took quick and effective action to prevent Solzhenitsyn from fanning the flames of anti-Leninism in Soviet Russia. Gulag Archipelago was officially denounced and suppressed, and Solzhenitsyn was condemned as a traitor. In 1974 his sentence was carried out; He was expelled from the USSR, earning the dubious distinction of being the first person since Leon Trotsky to be forcibly exiled. The severity of Solzhenitsyn's punishment provided graphic proof of just how seriously the state regarded the threat posed by his pen.

The expulsion of Solzhenitsyn did not bring an end to bothersome criticism of Lenin and the communist state. Despite its best efforts, the Party continued to be plagued by samizdat

146. Alexander Solzhenitsyn, The Gulag Archipelago (New York, 1973), pp. 27, 30, 33, 297

and by the efforts of individuals who refused to mechanically bow before the golden calf on Red Square. Though thousands of dissidents were jailed or committed to mental institutions, others always stepped forth to carry the anti-Leninist banner.¹⁴⁷ So long as the Soviet regime struggled to maintain its' control over all aspects of its peoples lives, the damage inflicted by these few dissidents could be minimalized. Should the Party ever abandon its totalitarian controls, the cult of Lenin and the state would have to fight a battle for survival. This battle is the subject of chapter four.

147. Many dissidents were committed to mental institutions for psychological assessment. According to Khrushchev, "only a psychologically abnormal person could be unsatisfied with life in Soviet society". Novoe vremia, 1991, No. 25, p. 33

Chapter 3**Youth and Education**

"Without teaching there is no knowledge and without knowledge there is no communism"

- Lenin

"People must be grown carefully and tenderly, just as a gardener grows his favourite fruit tree"

- Stalin

In a totalitarian state there is no resource more valuable than children. Devoid of any preconceptions or personal ideologies, children are empty vessels into which knowledge is poured. With no experience on which to base their learning or to question what they are taught, children naturally accept what they are told as truth. The information that a child receives in the first few formative years of his or her life strongly influences his or her maturation and contributes to the manner of subsequent thinking and behaviour. As the Jesuits say, "give me a child until he is five, and I will give you back the man".

In Soviet Russia, as in other totalitarian societies, the state refused to "tolerate the education of the young in the spirit of indifference to Soviet politics, in the spirit of a devil-may-care attitude and ideological neutrality".¹ As a result the state did not educate its children, it indoctrinated

1. Resolution "On The Journals Zvezda and Leningrad" in Swayze, p. 39

them. The difference between education and indoctrination, as explained by Hans Buchheim, is that the former "presupposes a spontaneous and free unfolding of the human person... and furthers and regulates such development", whereas the latter provided "training towards specific modes of thought and conduct that are predetermined and can therefore be calculated to fit a particular function".² This indoctrination of Soviet youth was begun in infancy and continued mercilessly throughout childhood. In nurseries, pre-schools, kindergartens, primary schools and youth organizations, Soviet children were assailed with Party propaganda and taught how to act and think like good communists (Illustration 6). At all stages of the indoctrination process, but particularly in the first ten years of a child's life, the cult of Lenin figured prominently.

Between 1935 and 1985, the cult of Lenin was most consistent and sustained in the primary classroom.³ The political wrangling that altered the complexion of the Lenin cult on the national stage in these years did not dramatically alter the face of the cult for children. Lenin was depoliticized for children and thus did not pose a major threat

2. Buchheim, p. 16

3. In the Soviet educational system, nurseries, kindergartens, and grades one through four were classified as primary. Nurseries were for children aged six weeks to two years of age, while kindergarten was for children aged two to six. Soviet youth entered the "general educational school" (obscheobrazovatel'nye shkoly) at the age of seven and reached fourth grade by the age of ten.

or challenge to the reigning General Secretary and his policies. As opposed to the larger cult, where Lenin was used as a source for legitimizing political manoeuvres and changing policies, amongst children Lenin was used primarily as an exemplar.

In the role of exemplar, Lenin had three distinct faces. First of all, he was Volodia, the boy who excelled in school and was a model for his peers. In texts and storybooks throughout the Soviet period, children were greeted by a portrait of this sober, young llich. Often, Volodia was shown seated at his school desk, and was described in the following terms:

The young boy is sitting nicely; he has everything in order. His buttons all are done up, his hair is smoothly brushed. Even in his appearance he is a role model for others. Before Volodia, his books are neatly organized. Obviously, the teacher is explaining a lesson. Young Volodia gives her all his attention. His eyes are trained forward and one can see deep thought within them. He strains, so as not to miss a single word; he wants to know everything. Everything.⁴

That Lenin knew "everything" and that he was already a committed revolutionary in childhood was the subject of numerous myths. His cult builders fictitiously alleged that Lenin had discussed the case of imprisoned Russian revolutionary Nikolai Chernyshevsky with his brother Alexander,

4. Kartsov, pp. 136-138. Underlined in the original.

when still a third grader.⁵ The myth of Lenin's revolutionary commitment as a boy was reinforced by a story about F. Kerensky, the director of Ilich's gymnasium. Party historians erroneously stated that Kerensky, who was the father of Alexander Kerensky, future leader of the Provisional Government, attempted to "deny" Vladimir his gold medal for academic excellence. Cult builders wanted to show that even in childhood, Lenin and his rival of 1917 were at bitter odds with one another.⁶

The second cult image for children was Lenin, the committed revolutionary who delivered the masses from Tsarist repression. Children were taught that as leader of the revolution, Lenin had been the personification of all things noble and desirable. Here was a man, they were told, who possessed a "mighty intellect, an overpowering will, a holy hatred of slavery and oppression... and a borderless belief in the creative will of the masses".⁷ Children also learned that despite his devotion to the revolution, Lenin remained deeply concerned about the welfare of all the state's citizens, even

5. V.S. Svitkova, Khrestomatiia po vneklassnoi rabote: shkol'nye istoricheskie vechera, 3rd ed. (Moscow, 1970), p. 161

6. Igor Yakovlev, Den i zhizn (Moscow, 1988), p. 45

7. F.D. Astrova, Metodicheskie rekomendatsii po kommunisticheskomu vospitaniiu uchashikhsia na primere zhizn i deiatel'nosti V.I. Lenina na urokakh istorii (Minsk, 1972), p.2

those who had transgressed against him.⁸ The image of Lenin as the devoted but caring revolutionary, was powerful and led many children to strive to emulate the vozhd.⁹

The third image of Lenin for children was "Grandpa Ilich", the kind old gentleman who loved children and was deeply concerned about the welfare of all the state's youngest citizens. In actual fact, it is likely that Lenin cared more for cats than for children; his cult-builders conveniently overlooked this fact and promoted the image of Lenin as "best friend of all children". Lenin was said to have displayed unusual warmth and a gentle attitude towards children,¹⁰ and to have thrown an elaborate Christmas party for orphaned children less than a month before his death.¹¹ Youngsters were

8. It was often rumoured that in 1918, Lenin had personally intervened to save the life of Fanya Kaplan, the woman who may have attempted to assassinate him at the Michelson factory in August. Borev, p. 39

9. Children who expressed a desire to grow up to be like Lenin were often quoted in print. For example, a teachers' manual of 1968, attempting to demonstrate the effectiveness of indoctrinating children with the Lenin cult, quoted a young girl who said "I want to become more demanding with myself and with my actions. I want to be like Lenin and to always carry my work through to completion". N.P. Kovalevskaia, Istoriia SSSR po vneklassnoi rabote (Moscow, 1968), p. 74

10. Shefov, p. 194

11. Moskovskii komsomolets, June 9, 1987: Stories about the leader's generosity toward children were propagated in other totalitarian states. In fascist Italy, for example, a 1932 primary level reader described how Mussolini went around to the poorest regions of Rome and distributed gifts to children. It was explained that while playing Santa Claus, "the Duce smiled all the time at children, whom he loves above all, because with these children, consoled, aided, and educated by fascists, he

were told that Lenin went around to the houses of poor children at night and cleaned their shoes and mended their clothing.¹² Faced with such evidence that "Grandpa llich was a person who was close to children and concerned about them", it is no wonder that the Soviet youth grew up to accept the image of Lenin as the benevolent vozhd and protector¹³

This trinity of Lenin - the boy, the man and the grandfather - was designed to instill patriotism in children, and to create an ideal against which others could be compared. Lenin's trinity was also used to convince children that the state was committed to their education and protection.

Myths of the leader for children were by no means restricted to Soviet Russia and the Lenin cult. The leader myth was a fundamental component of all totalitarian personality cults. The reason for these myths was explained by art historian Igor Golomshtok.

While in normal societies the private lives of dictators, tsars and presidents are to some extent open to the public, and they exist in the consciousness of the public as real people, the personality of the totalitarian leader is shrouded by an impenetrable cloak of mythology.... Big brother is everywhere, but no one can see him. Every possible virtue and achievement is ascribed to him, but no one can distinguish reality from legend.¹⁴

feels sure of Italy's future". Wiskemann, p. 40

12. Vecherniaia moskva, January 23, 1995

13. A.I. Volkova, Podarki detei V.I. Leninu i N.K. Krupskoi (Moscow, 1970), p. 4

14. Golomshtok, p. 210

The validity of Golomshtok's evaluation was proven not just by the trinity of Lenin, but by the golden masks that other totalitarian dictators donned before facing their states' children. Just as Lenin was the example for Soviet children and the embodiment of all honourable qualities, so too were Mao Zedong, Hitler, Mussolini, and Kim Il Sung cast in this role in their respective nations. For example, in China, children were encouraged to emulate "Great Mao", lover of children and master of all trades.¹⁵ Children were taught that chairman Mao was "a man of firm determination and unpredictable mood. [He was] quick in decision and fast in action, soft yet strong, sophisticated yet earthly and delicate yet robust".¹⁶ Just as Lenin was meant to be all things to all people in Soviet Russia, Mao was to embody everything noble and good in China.

In Soviet Russia the heavily promoted myth of Lenin's goodness paid dividends to the Party even before Lenin's death, as evidenced by the flood of gifts and letters to Lenin from children in state orphanages. Employees at the children's homes told their young charges that Vladimir Ilich was "personally responsible for saving thousands and thousands of homeless children from cold and hunger" during the civil war.¹⁷ Apparently, many orphaned children really did place their faith in Lenin. In a letter sent to Lenin in April 1923,

15. Novoe vremia, 1994, No. 1, p. 38

16. Mao Zedong, Ten Poems and Lyrics (Amherst, 1975), p. 4

17. Volkova, p. 2.

the children who lived in the orphanage at Gorki thanked "Grandpa Ilich" for the "fortunate lives of all proletarian children" and urged him to recover soon from his illness and resume his duties. He was, they reminded him, responsible for their happiness.¹⁸ Children living in state homes in other totalitarian states also learned that they owed their lives to their dictator. For example, in North Korea in the early 1970s, children were taught that their "fatherly leader", Kim Il Sung, built well organized orphanages and kindergartens to take care of the needs of the states' youngest citizens.¹⁹

After Lenin's death, the cult of Lenin for children became more feverish and earned more devotees. It did not really come into its own, however, until the mid 1930s, when the Soviet school system began to stabilize. By 1935, the Communist Party had abandoned the "irresponsible experiments" that had characterized education in the post-revolutionary period. Instead, the Party adopted a modified version of the pre-revolutionary school system.²⁰ The return to normalcy in education allowed the state to begin the effective, systematic indoctrination of children with the cult of Lenin.

The ability of the state to promote effectively the cult

18. Quoted from letter, sent April 23, 1923. In the house-museum of Lenin at Leniniskii-Gorki

19. Under The Banner, p. 145

20. Discussion about the pre-1935 Soviet educational system is contained in: George Kline, ed., Soviet Education (London, 1957), pp. 12-17, 25-37; Grant, pp. 20-23

of Lenin amongst children after 1935 was facilitated by four factors. First of all, the Soviet educational system was very centralized and the state enjoyed a monopoly over teaching. Educational policy and curricula for the entire Soviet state came from Moscow, the heart of the Lenin cult, and thus conformity and uniformity characterized learning throughout the empire (Illustration 6). The use of the same textbooks and the enforcement of the same learning outcomes ensured that the state could project a unified vision of Lenin with little regional variance.

A centralized educational system characterized fascist Italy and Nazi Germany as well. In Italy, Mussolini insisted that the state monopoly over education was an "intractable" policy, voicing the opinion shared by all totalitarian dictators that "ours must be the teaching".²¹ In order to ensure that fascist indoctrination was the only educational influence in a child's life, Mussolini, like his counterparts in Soviet Russia, outlawed non-state schools and prohibited the use of texts that had not been approved by the state.²² A similar pattern developed in Germany in the 1930s. In 1933, public schools, traditionally under the jurisdiction of local governments, were placed under the direct authority of the Reich Minister of Education. New Nazified curricula and

21. *Finer*, p. 428

22. *Adrian Lyttelton, The Seizure of Power: Fascism in Italy, 2nd ed., p. 410*

textbooks were produced in order to fulfil Hitler's oath that "the new reich will give its children to no one, but will itself take youth and give to youth its own education and its own upbringing".²³

A second contributing factor to the success of the Lenin cult in Soviet primary education was the very early age at which the indoctrination of children began. In the Soviet state, all women were expected to do "socially productive work", to contribute to the construction of socialism, and thus the state often usurped their roles as mothers soon after childbirth to get them back into the workforce. To accomplish the "liberation" of women from "domestic slavery", tens of thousands of nurseries and daycares were built in the 1930s alone. The result was that children as young as six weeks old passed into the hands of the Communist Party.²⁴ In the care and tutelage of these state institutions, children were bombarded with the Lenin cult. Indeed, as described by one Soviet observer, if the first words a child learned were "mama and papa, the next [was] bound to be Lenin".²⁵

Educators in Fascist Italy employed the same tactics as their counterparts in Russia, targeting infants with the cult of Mussolini. In Italian nurseries and daycares, the duce's portrait hung on the walls and his myths rained down

23. Shirer, p. 249

24. Kline, pp.1-5

25. Vladimir Bukovsky, To Build a Castle (London, 1977), p. 52

ceaselessly on the children. The goal of the Italian fascists, like that of communist educators in Soviet Russia, was:

to secure the young before they have time to think; before other ideas are put into their heads by teaching or experience. Let us teach them the truth before they have learnt error. Let us take them when they are impressionable, and if they should never be entirely ours, at least they will never be anyone else's.²⁶

A third feature of Soviet society that facilitated the propagation of the Lenin cult for children was the state's monopoly over information. In non-totalitarian societies, the education a child receives outside the school environment often contradicts what has been taught inside the walls of the school. Movies, television and the press exert a strong influence on a child's development. In totalitarian states such as the Soviet Union, the harmful effects of these "de-schooling" influences were overcome by the monopolization of information. In Soviet Russia, what a child saw, read and heard about in school was reinforced by the information that assailed him outside the institutional environment. All forms of media were mobilized by the state in the war for the minds of the young. The 1946 decree on literature illustrates the point well. In the decree it was explained that "the task of Soviet literature is to aid the state to educate youth correctly and to meet their demands, to rear a new generation strong and vigorous, believing in the cause, fearing no

26. Finer, p. 426

obstacles and ready to overcome all obstacles"²⁷.

The fourth factor that contributed to the success of propagating the cult of Lenin amongst children was the different Communist youth organizations. These organizations, which had recreational and political functions, were intimately linked to the Party's control over information and the elimination of de-schooling influences. Like the Communist Party, these organizations were hierarchical. At the top of the youth pyramid stood the Komsomol, an organization for people sixteen to twenty-seven years of age. Directly below and subordinate to the Komsomol was the Young Pioneer organization, an organization for children aged ten to fifteen. At the base of the pyramid was the Little Octobrist Organization, for children seven to nine years of age.²⁸ The bottom two organizations, the Octobrists and the Pioneers, were roughly the equivalent of the Boy Scouts, but with closer affiliation with the school system and greater political indoctrination. Children went on field trips, participated in festivals and learned arts and crafts, but they also got a healthy dose of the Lenin cult.

The younger children were encouraged to become Octobrists while still in kindergarten (detskii sad). Poems such as "All Children into the Octobrists" sang the virtues of those "happy

27. Swayze, p. 39

28. Volkova, pp. 1-5; "Communist Youth Organizations of the Soviet Union", in The Modern Encyclopedia of Russian and Soviet History, vol. 7 (1978), pp. 228-234

children" in the Octobrist organization who were ready to defend the homeland.²⁹ As members of the Little Octobrists, children were taught to honour and love Grandpa Ilich and were prompted to make repeated vows to be "faithful Leninists". They were given collar pins emblazoned with the image of Lenin and were taken on regular excursions to Lenin museums, memorials or exhibits.

The child's indoctrination with Lenin and the Leninist precepts increased when he or she turned ten and entered the Pioneer organization. Graduation into the ranks of the Pioneers, an occasion considered to be the "greatest event in young people's lives", usually occurred on the anniversary of Lenin's birthday and was accompanied by all the solemnity and ritual of a religious ceremony. During the induction ceremony, the child swore on oath to be "Always Ready" (vsegda gotov!) to defend the cause of Lenin and to "live, learn and struggle as great Lenin bade us".³⁰

The youth organizations of Soviet Russia had very close equivalents in other totalitarian states. The *Balilla* Organization in Italy and the *Hitler Youth* in Germany fulfilled the same indoctrinational functions as the Pioneer and Octobrist organizations. These organizations combined the same mixture of recreation and sport with political indoctrination.

29. P.A. Afanas'ev and N.A. Kostin, Bukvar (Moscow, 1936), p. 48

30. Izvestiia, April 21, 1966

They even had solemn oaths to the leader that echoed the vow of the young pioneer to be "vsegda gotov!". In Nazi Germany, for example, a ten-year old child preparing to enter the *Jungvolk* (youngfolk) swore to "devote all of my energies and my strength to the saviour of our country, Adolf Hitler". He concluded this sacred vow to Hitler with a pledge that "I am willing and ready to give up my life for him, so help me God".³¹ The Italian version of the youth oath to the leader contained the same promise. The child who swore the oath to Mussolini "no longer belong[ed] to himself but to the Duce and to the cause of the Revolution".³²

Long before Soviet children entered the Pioneers and swore their allegiance to Lenin, their indoctrination was well underway. Indeed, as has already been stated, it began as soon as a child entered a state-run daycare or educational institution. The teachers at these institutions were the state's first tool in securing the minds of the young. As the "influences of the teacher on the development of the child [began] on the first day" that a child passed into his or her care, the state took pains to ensure that the instructor vigorously promoted the cult of Lenin.³³ Teachers themselves were thoroughly indoctrinated with the cult of Lenin and any instructor who displayed ideologies counter to that of the

31. Shirer, p. 253

32. Finer, p. 441

33. Vasilieva, p. 3

current Soviet administration was dismissed. Between 1935 and 1985, it was standard rhetoric in all teaching manuals that instructors must be ardent supporters of Lenin and the communist ideology. In a 1952 manual, for example, it was stated that "in order to indoctrinate young people with Soviet principles and Soviet national pride, the teacher must be a devoted believer in the correctness of the idea of communism and the ideas of the Party of Lenin-Stalin". It was stipulated that "he should have a fiery patriotism for our motherland and should love our people and our homeland as he loves Lenin...".³⁴

In Nazi Germany, an equally high level of commitment to the official ideology and the cult of the leader was demanded of teachers. All teachers had to join the National Socialist Teachers' League, attend special schools for instruction in National Socialist principles, and swear an oath to be "loyal and obedient to Adolf Hitler".³⁵ Those who did not live up to the Reich Chancellery's expectations were quickly dismissed. Italian teachers whose political views opposed those of Mussolini suffered the same fate. Laws of 1923, 1925, 1926 and 1927 ensured that any teachers or civil servants whose views were "incompatible" with those of the government would be

34. A.F. Elisevoi, Vospitanie sovetskogo patriotizma i sovetskoi natsionalnoi gordosti, (Moscow, 1952), p. 29

35. Shirer, p. 249

removed from their positions.³⁶

To ensure that Soviet teachers effectively delivered the proper information about Lenin, the state provided instructors at all levels with a strict set of guidelines that outlined the methods to be used and the content to be stressed. In Teachers College and in regularly updated teachers' manuals, instructors were told how to incorporate Lenin into different lessons and exactly what they were supposed to be teaching children about Lenin at any given stage of their development.

Teachers at the primary level were given especially detailed instructions concerning the promotion of the cult as their charges were the state's youngest and most impressionable citizens. If the seeds of patriotism could be implanted in the minds of the young students then there was a strong possibility that they would grow up to be faithful and obedient communists. The trinity of Lenin was an ideal tool for the political indoctrination of children, for it catered to a wide range of emotions. Children were encouraged to admire and emulate young Volodia, to revere Lenin and to love Grandpa Ilich. Once children were completely enamoured with their state's founder it was a small step to get them to extend these feelings to the Party of Lenin, which was continuing his works.

In promoting the cult of Lenin amongst small children, the teacher had a number of methods at his or her disposal. One of the most effective means was reading and talking to the class

36. Finer, p. 479

about Lenin. Teachers told their pupils that "Lenin was concerned about all people and that he worked very hard so that the [Soviet Union] could become strong and so that adults and children could live well".³⁷ This message was a staple of primary school textbooks. In the Azbuka and Bukvar, the first texts that passed into the hands of Soviet school children, as well as in supplementary literature, Lenin usually figured prominently. In texts such as these, children were reminded that Lenin's legacy lived on and that it was the responsibility of each and every Soviet citizen to defend the cause of Lenin.³⁸ Children were also continually reminded that Lenin had been a fiery patriot, and were encouraged to emulate this trait. Teachers were told to emphasize the connection between Lenin and patriotism. A number of different teaching manuals of the period 1935 to 1985 stressed that "love for one's homeland and respect and love for the founder of the Soviet state, V.I. Lenin" were intimately connected and of utmost importance in the "moral development" of a child.³⁹

In order to "instill in children a feeling of respect for V.I. Lenin and the idea that V.I. was the best friend of all children", the state relied heavily on art.⁴⁰ An arsenal of

37. M.V. Zaluzhskaiia, Programma vospitaniia v detskom sadu, 3rd ed. (Moscow, 1969), p. 125

38. A. Kravchenko, Detiam o Lenine (Moscow, 1980)

39. Zaluzhskaiia, 1969, p. 6

40. M.A. Vasilieva, Programma vospitaniia i obucheniia v detskom sadu (Moscow, 1985), p. 75

paintings and portraits of Lenin by Soviet artists, those psycho-engineers of the totalitarian state, was assembled and placed at the disposal of Soviet educators (see illustration 7). It was believed that Leninist art could have a "strong impression" on a young student and that "a change for the better" would occur in children who looked on the canvas face of Lenin.⁴¹ Accordingly, all classrooms and student halls had a portrait of Lenin and primary readers contained a picture of the smiling vozhd. From 1935 to 1985, virtually every teaching manual and curriculum outline stressed the significance of incorporating Leninist art into primary lessons and provided strict guidelines as to what messages were to be conveyed to the different age groups.⁴² For example, younger children, aged 2 to 6, were shown portraits of Lenin, either alone or surrounded by a group of children. They were taught to identify the vozhd by name and to understand that "Lenin loved children and was concerned about them".⁴³ Children aged 7 to 9 were to be given a more comprehensive knowledge of Lenin's role through the examination of pictures such as "V.I. Lenin in the Worker's Circle in Petrograd". While looking at this

41. Kovalevskaia, p. 74

42. Besides the information that teachers were given in their curriculum guides, they also received regular updates and pointers in pedagogical journals on how to incorporate Leninist art into their lesson. Articles on this topic appeared in the journal Semia i shkola in 1960, No. 4: 1961, No. 4: 1963, No. 41: 1964, No. 1.

43. M.A. Vasilieva, Programma vospitaniia v detskom sadu, 9th ed., (Moscow, 1982), p. 90

picture, it was stressed that:

the children will make with the help of their teacher, several independent conclusions. They will use simple calculations to determine the number of people in the circle. Once they have become familiar with the furnishings of the quarters, they will notice that the circle met in the basement of a house. Finally, the teacher will show the children the role of Lenin as the organizer and leader of the circle by pointing out that the workers have their attention and eyes fixed on Lenin and are listening to him speak.⁴⁴

Art served the educational needs of the state and promoted the leader cult in schools throughout the totalitarian world. Art was one of the most effective means at the teacher's disposal. What better way to convince young people that the leader was the best friend of children than to show a picture of him in the company of children. Just as was the case with Lenin, Kim Il Sung was often depicted in art surrounded by a group of happy smiling kids. In several paintings, he was actually shown playing with the children.⁴⁵ Mussolini was another cult leader to be portrayed artistically as friend of children. In a primary textbook of the mid-1930s, a jovial Grandpa Mussolini appeared holding aloft a delighted infant. The child saluted Mussolini and proclaimed "long live the Duce!". Above the illustration, a caption clarified the love shared by Mussolini and children. It read: "*BENITO MUSSOLINI*

44. Kartsov, p. 64 (emphasis added). To help the children reach their "independent conclusions", a six-step process for showing Lenin's pictures was developed.

45. Under the Banner, pp. 146-149

ama molto i bambini. I bambini d'Italia amano molto il Duce".⁴⁶

Teachers in Soviet Russia reinforced the messages conveyed through art by showing their classes films about Lenin. Both historical newsreels and documentaries such as "Lenin in October" and "Lenin in 1918" were commonly shown in primary classrooms in an attempt to "expand the knowledge of students about Lenin the vozhd, the military leader and the organizer of the revolution".⁴⁷ It was hoped that students who watched these films would identify with the exceptional qualities that Lenin manifested during the revolution and would seek to emulate them. It was also hoped that Lenin's on-screen heroic would implant in students "the features of a communist fighter, revolutionary, patriot, and internationalist".⁴⁸

Children who lived in centres that were affiliated with the life and works of Lenin were subject to an additional form of political indoctrination; they were taken on pilgrimages to the holy places of the Lenin cult. In Moscow, children were taken to the mausoleum, the Central Museum or to Lenin's apartment museum in the Kremlin. In Leningrad, they went to Lenin's office museum at Smolny or to the Leningrad chapter of the Central Lenin Museum. In Ulianovsk, they visited the house

46. Finer, p. 425. Emphasis in the original.

47. Astrova, p. 10; M.P. Malyshev, O prepodavanii istorii v nachalnoi shkole (Moscow, 1947), p. 13; Kartsov, p. 163; Bogdanov (1954), p. 10

48. Kovalevskaia, p. 10

where Lenin was born and the classrooms where he studied. In the weeks leading up to these excursions, teachers filled their students heads with visions of the Lenin trinity so as to create the proper mood of excitement and solemnity that the occasion mandated. Children's excursions to Lenin's memorials were a favourite subject for Soviet newspapers and received extensive coverage throughout the entire Soviet period. Photos of delighted, enraptured children filing past glass display cases or into the mouth of the Lenin museum helped to sell the image of a vibrant and renewable cult of Lenin.

Just in case a student happened to miss the indoctrinational messages that were directed his or her way by the teacher, art, films, or excursions, special in-class and extracurricular activities were organized to promote the cult of Lenin. The activities for children ten and under usually coincided with major state anniversaries, such as the anniversary of the October Revolution or the birth and death of Lenin. Children began to celebrate these anniversaries when they were two years old by laying flowers and lighting candles around a large portrait of Lenin. When they turned three, they began to sing songs and listen to poems and stories about Lenin. When they turned five, the level of indoctrination increased. In 1962, for example, five-year old children were prepared for the anniversary of Lenin's birthday by memorizing the poems "Prazdnik Oktiabria" and "portret Lenina". They were also to listen to the short story "Malchik i Lenin" and several

songs about Lenin, including "Pesnia o Lenine".⁴⁹ By the time they turned six, children were ready to become active participants in Lenin celebrations. Not only were "stories and poems about Lenin ...read to children", students were also required "to bring flowers to a monument of V.I. Lenin and to put together an album of illustrations on his life".⁵⁰ Children aged seven to ten participated in special evening ceremonies to celebrate Lenin anniversaries. These evening celebrations, held in schools and Pioneer halls throughout the Soviet Union, were practically identical to one another. The state did not want to waste a valuable opportunity to indoctrinate a child with the cult of Lenin and thus it provided teachers with detailed instructions on how to conduct Lenin celebrations. Everything - from the songs to be sung to the poems to be read, to the colour of flowers and the position of the obligatory Lenin bust - was painstakingly prescribed and choreographed by Moscow.

As the above examples illustrate, the commitment of the Soviet State to propagating the cult of Lenin in the primary classroom was absolute. The Communist Party perceived education as a means of national advancement and thus it lavished unprecedented attention on the indoctrination of the young. Even cold war era Western observers were forced to

49. M.V. Zaluzhskaia, Programma vospitaniia v detskom sadu, (Moscow, 1962), p. 124

50. Ibid, p. 176

admit that "it is doubtful that any society ... ever poured such a high proportion of its energies and resources into educational activities, in the broadest sense of the term, as the Soviet Union".⁵¹

It is true that no state matched the Soviet Union's indoctrination efforts, but other totalitarian states came close. As argued above, the indoctrination of youth with political ideologies and the cult of the leader was a staple ingredient of all twentieth-century totalitarian states. Not just in Soviet Russia, but in Fascist Italy, Nazi Germany and communist North Korea as well, education was regarded as an "essential long term investment".⁵² Adolf Hitler, who understood well the importance of indoctrinating the young, summed up the rationale of the totalitarian states' concentration on winning over the youth . In a speech given in 1933, Hitler explained:

When an opponent declares "I will not come over to your side", I calmly say, "Your child belongs to us already ... What are you? you will pas on. Your descendants, however, now stand in the new camp. In a short time he will know nothing else but this new community".⁵³

Changing Curriculum: 1935-1985

The cult of Lenin for children was undoubtedly the most

51. Grant, p. 192

52. Wiskemann, p. 37

53. Shirer, p. 249

stable manifestation of the cult, but it was influenced by the tumultuous leader cycle that so drastically altered the face of the larger Lenin cult. As the cults of Stalin, Khrushchev, and Brezhnev rose and fell their presence was felt in primary curriculum. Textbooks changed to include the cult of the General Secretary and his portrait found a place on the classroom wall next to that of Grandpa Ilich. However, never did the cult of Lenin become impotent, as was the case with the overall cult on several occasions.

The vitality of the Lenin cult in the area of primary education characterized the entire 1935-1985 period, but was most marked during the Stalin era. In contrast to the broader Lenin cult, which was forced to take a back seat to the Stalin cult for most of the period 1935-53, the Lenin cult was never relegated to a supporting role in the classroom. An examination of children's readers and the teachers' manuals that accompanied them makes it clear that, at worst, Lenin was forced to share the spotlight with Stalin. A 1935 methodology for grade three history teachers illustrates the strength of the Lenin cult. The authors heaped considerable praise on comrade Stalin, but it was to Lenin that they turned most often. When recommending literature to be read by young students in class, the authors singled out and cited Lenin as the number one source, listing twenty-seven of Lenin's works as important sources. In contrast, Stalin ranked third on the list, behind the duo of Marx-Engels, and only eight of his

works made the reading list.⁵⁴

In a Bukvar of 1936, the cult of Lenin made another strong showing. Whereas portraits of Lenin in the press at the time tended to be of a tired and frail "Grandpa Ilich", the portrait of Lenin in this primary reader showed an energetic, healthy young revolutionary, who appeared no less dynamic than the accompanying image of Stalin. Words confirmed what the pictures in this text confirmed - that the cult of Lenin was alive and well. Stalin was hailed as "vozhd of the Party of Bolsheviks", but Lenin was cast in the more important role of exemplar.⁵⁵ The illustration on the cover page of the reader emphasized this. In the picture, a happy, young boy - the spitting image of Volodia Ulianov - prepared himself to go off to school. His hair was neatly combed, his buttons were done up to the top, and he even wore a cap like one often worn by Lenin.⁵⁶ That Lenin was the boy's role model was confirmed by the clearly distinguishable portrait of Lenin on the wall and

54. V.P. Bernadskii and E. Kozlova, Ukazanie po prepodavaniiu istorii v nachalnoi shkole (Moscow, 1935), p. 14: The predominance of works by Lenin in the primary curricula contrasted sharply with the general state of Lenin's literature. As demonstrated in chapter two, the publication of Lenin's works had fallen off sharply by 1935.

55. Afanasev, p. 59

56. Children were commonly cast in Lenin's likeness to emphasize their virtue. For example in a 1930s painting of Pavlik Morozov, the young boy who turned over his parents to the authorities as enemies of the people, "the inspirational pose and proud angle of his head reminds one very much of the young Lenin, as portrayed in dozens of different situations". Golomshtok, p 196

the tome on the bookshelf with Lenin's name embossed on the binding.⁵⁷

Between 1937-1941, the cult of Stalin began to sink deeper roots into primary education by associating itself even more closely with the Lenin cult. For example, in 1937 it was concluded in a Bukvar that since "Lenin loved children and took care of each of them" and Stalin was "the closest and best pupil of Lenin", therefore so too was Stalin a "friend of all children".⁵⁸ Despite this infringement by Stalin on the domain of the cult of Lenin, Lenin did not lose his reputation as champion and lover of Soviet youth. Teachers continued to foster the three images of Lenin to great effect. In 1940, it was stated that Lenin remained the favourite subject of songs, stories and poems by and for Soviet children; a fact which prompted one observer to conclude that "at his time, Lenin is a close and very dear person for our children - very close and very dear".⁵⁹

In the post-war period, the cult of Lenin was down scaled a little to accommodate the swelling Stalin cult. Stalin wanted children to learn at the earliest stage that he had been the author of Soviet victory in 1917 and during the civil war, and that he had led the valiant yet unsuccessful revolutionary bid

57. Ibid., p. 1

58. K.N. Popov, Bukvar (Moscow, 1937), pp 7, 73

59. Pravda, April 22, 1940

of 1905.⁶⁰ Lenin had to be de-emphasized to achieve these results, but he could not be emasculated. The Lenin cult for children was too powerful a tool for Stalin to dismantle it, or even to undermine it seriously. Accordingly, all three cult images of Lenin survived between 1945 and 1953 and were upheld as the perfect model for children: Volodia, the schoolchild who "studied well", who "helped his comrades before school" and who was said to "know everything" by his peers;⁶¹ Lenin, the "ingenious theoretician" who "taught us how to live in a new way"⁶² and who was a "perfect example of honest service to the motherland for all people;⁶³ and "Grandpa Ilich", who "loved children and willed them to 'study, study, study'".⁶⁴ The only real change was that the trinity of Lenin was forced to coexist with the new trinity of Stalin. In the late 1940s and early 1950s, the Party's myth-makers created three images of Stalin that closely resembled Volodia, Lenin, and Grandpa Ilich. There was Stalin the boy, who came from an impoverished

60. Kartsov, pp. 15, 28, 20-33; M.P. Malyshev, O prepodavanii istorii v srednei shkole (Moscow, 1947), p. 7. Grade three history teachers were instructed in this methodology to devote an entire lesson to the biography of Stalin, but only "suitable sections" of Lenin's life were to be mentioned, and only "in passing".

62. N.A. Kostin and S. Redozubov, Bukvar (Moscow, 1951), p. 126; also Kartsov, p. 132; K.B. Gadashevich, Iz onyta vneklassnoi i vneshkolnoi raboty po istorii i konstitutsii SSSR (Alma-Ata, 1952) pp. 9-10

62. S.P. Redozubov, Bukvar, 6th ed. (Moscow, 1951) p. 90

63. Elisevoi, pp. 24, 136-137

64. Redozubov, p. 94

family, but whose patriotism and strict devotion to communism allowed him to achieve great things;⁶⁵ Stalin the revolutionary, who "remained calm, deep in thought and literally did not sleep at all" during the revolution and civil war and whose "actions in the years of the civil war are a clear example for all young students";⁶⁶ and finally, he was Grandpa Stalin, the happy and strong old man who was the "best friend of all children" and who was the source of the "happiness and prosperity" of Soviet youth.⁶⁷ Once this trinity was established, Soviet children had two examples to emulate. Teachers were instructed to give equal doses of the Lenin and Stalin cults to their students. It was explained that "the examples of Lenin and Stalin should be brought out gradually, from lesson to lesson, and the teacher should highlight first one and then the other".⁶⁸

Following the death of Stalin, Lenin quickly regained sole possession of the exemplar's mantle in primary education. By 1954, substantially less material on Stalin was included in teachers' manuals and children's readers. In contrast, Lenin was the focus of expanded coverage.⁶⁹ The emphasis on Lenin

65. Kartsov, p. 185; Malyshev, O prepodavanii istorii v nachalnoi shkole, p. 7

66. Elisevoi, pp. 22, 25

67. Kostin (1948), pp. 8, 124

68. Kartsov, pp. 137-138

69. The greater emphasis on the cult of Lenin was clearly distinguishable in Bogdanov's teachers' manual of 1954.

in education became more pronounced following the denunciation of the cult of Stalin at the XX Party Congress. Immediately after this congress, Moscow sent out a warning to teachers across the Soviet Union that their textbooks were seriously flawed. It was admitted that in any current educational material dealing with Soviet history and politics, including the Azbuky and Bukvary, "the role of I.V. Stalin has been exaggerated while that of V.I. Lenin has been belittled".⁷⁰ Teachers were told to correct this imbalance, but they had to do it without the aid of new textbooks. As there was not sufficient time for Moscow to prepare de-Stalinized textbooks for the 1956-1957 school year, teachers were instructed to "fully acquaint" themselves with the "fundamental lies and mistakes" of pre-1956 books and to make necessary curriculum changes on their own.⁷¹ Stalin's portrait was ordered off the classroom wall, poems and stories about him in children's readers were ignored, and he was stripped of his title as best friend of all children. In some cases, Stalin's image was even physically purged from books - his picture was torn out and his name covered up.⁷²

70. Nekotorye voprosy prepodavaniia istorii SSSR v shkole (Moscow, 1956), p. 12

71. A.M. Pankratova ed., Voprosy prepodavaniia istorii SSSR v svete reshenii xx s'ezda KPSS (Moscow, 1956), p. 7

72. in a copy of A.F. Eliseevoi's Vospitanie sovetskogo patriotizma (1952) stored at the Ushinskii Pedagogical Library in Moscow, the opening page of the book, which likely contained Stalin's portrait, has been removed. Similarly, Stalin's name is inked out whenever it appears in adjectival form (e.g.,

When new, post-XX Party Congress textbooks and readers were finally ready, they fulfilled the promise made by the Ministry of Education to "emphasize that all the preparatory work for the creation of the USSR was done under the direction of V.I. Lenin".⁷³ This message assailed students of all levels, including those in the primary grades. For example, one 1963 grade three reader was saturated with Lenin stories, with two complete chapters devoted to Lenin. In this book, Lenin made frequent appearances as Volodia and as Grandpa Ilich, but it was the revolutionary image of Lenin that figured most prominently. Stories were devoted to his revolutionary activities in St. Petersburg in the late 1890s, to his arrest and exile, and to his formation of the Bolshevik Party in 1903. Children also learned of Lenin's lifelong fight against tsarism, his role in the revolutions of 1905 and 1917, and the leadership he provided in the civil war.⁷⁴

Another striking feature of this 1961 reader was the absence of almost all other political figures. Unlike pre-1956 textbooks, in which political figures such as Voroshilov, Molotov, and Mikoyan made cameo appearances, in 1961, N. Khrushchev was the only politician besides Lenin who was acknowledged. It is interesting to note that the segment on

"Stalinist" constitution).

73. Nekotorye voprosy, p. 12

74. A.I. Voskresenskaia, P.A. Zavitaev, eds., Kniga dlia chteniia b tretem klasse, 2nd ed., (Moscow, 1961)

Khrushchev, the reigning General Secretary, was very brief, consisting of Khrushchev's portrait and a copy of a letter that Khrushchev sent to New York schoolchildren, expressing his sincere desire for world peace.⁷⁵ The brevity of this section on Khrushchev, not to mention its non-political nature and obscure position on page 414-415, sent a clear message about the new role of cults to the living leader in Soviet education. Neither Khrushchev, nor any who came after him, would attempt to compete with the cult of Lenin for the minds of Soviet youth.⁷⁶ Why bother? The Lenin cult had proven to be an effective tool for fostering patriotism and loyalty to the Party in children. Let the children develop these qualities first, and they would be inclined to accept the cult of the living General Secretary, Lenin's earthly disciple, when they matured.

Thanks to the minor role played by the cult of Khrushchev in primary education, no major overhaul of curriculum and educational material was mandated by Khrushchev's fall in 1964. The Lenin cult was already a potent force in the schools and thus Leonid Brezhnev did not have to reinvigorate or reinvent it, as he was forced to do with the larger, national Lenin cult. For the first several years of Brezhnev's reign, the

75. Ibid, pp. 414-415

76. Khrushchev never received more than one or two pages of coverage in any children's texts. Emphasis was usually placed on his role as a "fighter for peace". No specific details about his policies, or embellished accounts of his past, were ever presented to primary school children.

cult of Lenin for children sailed along the same course charted by Khrushchev. Patriotism and faith in Lenin were the two major virtues that the cult attempt to instill in children, and it did this with the immortal Lenin. Children were taught that Lenin was omnipotent and omnipresent, and that he was always watching over them and their homeland. These notions were promoted by poems and songs, such as "V.I. Lenin". In this 1965 poem, a child rhymed:

The sun comes up
and it looks in on me -
And it clearly lights up
the portrait on the wall:
And as if he is wishing me
 a good day,
Ilich, as if alive,
looks out at me.⁷⁷

A similar poem of 1966 reinforced the idea that the immortal Lenin looked out for Soviet children. In "The Portrait", the mother of a young girl recounts that once, when her daughter prepared to go to bed, she looked at the portrait of a seated Lenin that hung above her bed, and asked:

"mama, will Lenin go to bed soon?"
mama answers - "You fall asleep and Lenin
 will lie down
and when you get up, Lenin will be ready
 again.
He gets up at first light".
Though our daughter sleeps,
the light on the portrait does not fade.
Lenin is always sitting at his table ready.
He is Ready!"⁷⁸

Between 1967 and 1970, the cult of Lenin for children

77. I.F. Svadkovskii, Bukvar 13th ed. (Moscow, 1965), p. 82

78. A.V. Prudnikova, Bukvar (Moscow, 1965), p. 90

preached the same messages about Lenin's immortality and patriotism, only at a much more fevered pace. In celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the October Revolution and in preparation for the one hundredth anniversary of Lenin's birthday, children were given an especially strong dose of Lenin. Extra readings on Lenin were included in their textbooks, more songs and poems about Lenin were memorized and recited in class, and additional Lenin excursions and celebrations were organized to familiarize children with the accomplishments of Lenin, both past and present.⁷⁹

Between 1971 and 1979, the cult of Lenin became a little less pronounced in primary curriculum. To be sure, the Lenin cult remained a potent force in a child's indoctrination; it was just not promoted so ardently as it had been from 1967 to 1970. After 1979, the Party revived the fast-paced cult. In that year, a decree "on further improving ideological and political education" was issued and had a direct impact on the cult of Lenin. This Central Committee decree of April 1979, called on teachers to give their students better understanding of Marxist-Leninist doctrines and to place more stress on Lenin's faith in the young.⁸⁰ The 110th anniversary of

79. Due to the intensity of the Lenin cult at this time, the Communist Party was able to draw the connection between Lenin and the policies of Brezhnev in primary textbooks (e.g., Kovalevskaia, pp 10-11). Usually, Lenin was not used to legitimize state policy amongst such young children.

80. M.P. Vidanov, Izuchenie proizvedenii V.I. Lenina na urokakh istorii (Kuibyshev, 1982), p. 3

Lenin's birthday, provided a perfect opportunity for the Party to enact this decree. A whole slew of new books and educational material for children poured out of publishing houses and into the hands of children. It is interesting to note, that this flood did not subside as it had after Lenin's centennial celebration a decade before. Indeed, between 1981 and 1985, the waters of the Lenin cult for children continued to rise higher and higher. In a 1982 methodology for kindergarten teachers, Lenin was the recipient of his own subsections for the first time.⁸¹ Teachers were told to introduce Lenin into more of their lessons, including sections devoted to "acquaintance [of children] with their surroundings and the development of speech",⁸² and "nature"⁸³ The suggestions provided for incorporating Lenin into lessons on nature were especially creative. Three and four-year old children were to be given flowers, instructed to place them reverently around the illuminated portrait of the vozhd, and then asked to identify them.

By 1985, Lenin had saturated primary education. This was made apparent in the 1985 edition of the Programma vospitaniia i obucheniia v detskom sadu, a book which remains in use in Russian classrooms to this date. In the chapter dealing with

81. Vasileva (1982)

82. Ibid, p. 71

83. Programma vospitaniia v detskom sadu, (Moscow, 1982), p. 230

the curriculum for four-year old children, teachers were told that their primary objective was to "intensify children's feelings of love and respect for Lenin".⁸⁴ Though in previous editions of this text, Lenin had not made an appearance until the second or third page of the chapter, in the 1985 version Lenin was the sole subject of the chapter's second paragraph.

That teachers were to push the Lenin cult in schools was not simply implied by the location of Lenin material in their curriculum manuals, it was plainly stated in each of the chapter's sections dealing with learning outcomes. Teachers were told that the number one thing a four-year old child should know at the end of the school year was that "Lenin was the best friend of all children".⁸⁵ Lenin topped the list of learning outcomes for five-year old as well, and amongst six-year old preparing to enter the first grade, the most important educational objective was to provide a good understanding of the "elementary concepts about the work of V.I. Lenin and his comrades".⁸⁶

The increased stress on the cult of Lenin for children in the early 1980s was a preemptive effort by the Party, designed to limit the damage that impending reforms would inflict. Though glasnost and perestroika would not begin to surface until 1986, the Party knew long before Gorbachev's ascension in

84. Vasilieva, 1985., p. 67

85. Ibid, p. 75

86. Ibid., pp. 101, 127

1985 that the Soviet system was in desperate need of an overhaul.⁸⁷ Accordingly, it began to prepare the children for the changes well in advance. As early as 1980, children were warned that changes were on the horizon and that reform was a healthy part of communist life. In a 1980 book devoted to Lenin and children, not only were young readers indoctrinated with the trinity of Lenin, they also were taught to recognize that "the life of people changes all the time and it changes for the better for all those who work hard".⁸⁸ The changing nature of primary curricula after 1980, particularly the increased emphasis on the cult of Lenin amongst children, represented an attempt to bolster the Soviet ship against the perils of much needed reform. It was hoped that by injecting youth with increased doses of patriotism and Leninism, they would have sufficient defences to weather the approaching storm. For several years after 1985, the Party's enhanced indoctrinational efforts proved successful and, as a result, the cult of Lenin for children was one of the last bastions of the cult to fall.

Ironically, the ultimate collapse of the cult of Lenin, which will be discussed in chapter four, can be partially attributed to the totalitarian educational system of the Soviet

87. In the late 1970s, Party members began to accept the inevitability of reforming the Soviet state. Yuri Andropov and his colleagues were concerned with the glaring signs of economic and social decay in the USSR and warned of the need to reform. Volkogonov, Lenin, p. 463, Doder, p. 35

88. Kravchenko, p. 76

Union that so effectively fostered the cult. The restrictive educational system in the USSR was not conducive to the development of qualified and innovative individuals who possessed the ability to steer the Soviet Union in the proper direction. Indeed, Soviet school masters discouraged individuality and creativity in order to foster conformity. In 1938, Count Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi identified the Achilles Heel of the Soviet Union's totalitarian educational system. He explained that "no atmosphere is less adapted to breed leaders than the totalitarian state. You cannot at one and the same time crush human personality and educate it". The Count made another astute observation which, in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union, appears very prophetic. Forty-seven years before Mikhail Gorbachev was to become General Secretary of the Communist Party and lead the Soviet Union down the road to its destruction, Coudenhove-Kalergi predicted:

The totalitarian state will not find the future leader which it seeks and needs because it kills that freedom which is the one breeding ground of personality. Should a personality, the fine growth of a totalitarian man, be developed by some chance miracle on the stony ground of a totalitarian state, he will not inherit the dictatorship, but overthrow it - in the name of freedom and humanity.⁸⁹

89. Coudenhove-Kalergi, p. 102

Chapter FourThe Decline and Fall of the Cult of Lenin, 1985-1995

When in a city the holidays have passed,
When the sinners and the righteous are
 sleeping,
The government lawmakers
Quietly forsake the monuments.
 Alexander Golich.

It is a devastating thing for a society to
discover that its greatest myths are based not
on truth but on propoganda and fantasy.
 Viacheslav Shostokovskii.

When the winds of change began to blow in Soviet Russia in the mid-1980s, they posed no immediate threat to the cult of Lenin. Over the course of more than six decades the cult of Lenin had demonstrated an impressive ability to survive dramatic change, always emerging from major crises intact and robust. In 1985, there was no reason to forecast that the impending period of reforms would produce different results. The nature of change in the late 1980s, however, proved to be unlike anything the cult of Lenin had ever faced before. The reforms introduced by M.S. Gorbachev under the twin banners of perestroika and glasnost represented more than traditional policy reversal or "creative updating" of Leninist doctrine. Through perestroika and glasnost, Gorbachev sought to alter the very nature of the totalitarian regime. Such tampering with totalitarianism proved fatal for the cult of Lenin, as Lenin was not amenable to reform. Once the state began to dismantle

the system of totalitarian controls that had supported the Soviet regime since its inception, the cult of Lenin began to erode; and once the cult of Lenin began to decline, support for the totalitarian Soviet regime that the cult legitimized waned further. Locked in an inseparable embrace, the cult of Lenin and the Soviet state spiralled downward together.

Gorbachev's Inheritance

When Gorbachev came to power in 1985 he had no intention whatsoever of sounding the death knell of either the Soviet Union or the cult of Lenin. Far from it! Gorbachev was a loyal son of the Communist Party and a faithful disciple of the Lenin cult who "accepted almost literally the official image of Lenin the scholar and philosopher".¹ Gorbachev was also a realist who recognized the need to overhaul the existing Leninist system. Thanks to decades of corrupt, ineffectual and incompetent leadership, the Soviet Union was mired in a prolonged period of stagnation that had allowed the West to pull steadily ahead of the USSR on a number of fronts. Gorbachev was determined to reverse this trend and to break the USSR out of its slump with a series of progressive reforms that were intended to "restructure" society and to foster "openness" in the totalitarian state.

Gorbachev's climb up the Party ladder was facilitated by

1. Dusko Doder and Louise Branson, Gorbachev: Heretic in the Kremlin (Markham, 1990), p. 14

his willingness to praise his superiors,² and by his strict adherence to Party ritual.³ Even before he first sat in the General Secretary's chair, however, Gorbachev began to deviate from his predecessors. In 1984, Gorbachev echoed the words of Yuri Andropov, his political mentor, and warned of the need for perestroika and glasnost to reinvigorate the stumbling Soviet state.⁴ Again, in February 1985, Gorbachev hinted that he would not be satisfied with maintaining the status quo once in office. He criticized the "party tradition of self flattery and satisfaction with achievements", insisting that they were detrimental and could no longer be tolerated.⁵

Following his election to the post of General Secretary of the Communist Party after the death of Chernenko in March, 1985, Gorbachev served notice that he intended to bring a fresh approach to politics in the Kremlin. Though he delivered the expected praise of Chernenko at the latter's funeral, hailing his predecessor as a "faithful Leninist" and promising that "the strategic line which was worked out with the active

2. Gorbachev frequently heaped accolades on his superiors. For example, in 1978 he praised Brezhnev for his victory at Malaia Zemlia and credited him with a "talent for leadership of the Leninist type". Robert G. Kaiser, Why Gorbachev Happened: His Triumphs and Failures (Toronto, 1991), p. 47

3. In April, 1983, Gorbachev delivered a speech at the official Kremlin celebration of Lenin's birthday, an important indicator that his star was rising. A more important sign appeared in March, 1985, when he was placed in charge of orchestrating K. Chernenko's funeral.

4. Kaiser, pp. 77-78

5. Moskovskii Komsomolets, February 21, 1985

participation of Yuri Vladimirovich Andropov and Konstantin Ustinovich Chernenko at the XXVI Congress (1981) and at the last Plenum of the Central Committee will remain unchanging", he refused to follow in the footsteps of his predecessors in fostering his own cult of personality.⁶ At the time of his election, Gorbachev issued a personal directive to the mass media, demanding that his career not be exaggerated and that his person not be eulogized.⁷ The matter-of-fact nature of the biographical sketches that appeared in print at this time indicate that Gorbachev's directive was received and obeyed.⁸ In the months and years that followed, Gorbachev continued to resist efforts to glorify his person, as demonstrated by a directive of the late 1980s that forbid the Soviet media from referring daily to his accomplishments, old speeches, and personal milestones.⁹

Some traces of a Gorbachev cult did emerge, as evidenced by the increased publication of his works and the cessation of publication of works by his predecessors, a characteristic feature of phase one of the leader cycle. There was also a

6. Ibid., pp 1-3

7. Personal interview with Professor Maria Zezina, Professor of Modern History at Moscow State University. Moscow, February 2, 1995

8. Factual biographical sketches of Gorbachev appeared in Voprosy istorii, 1985, No. 4, p. 5 and Moskovskii komsomolets, March 12, 1985. His biography remained factually accurate during his entire tenure, as evidenced by the sketch printed in Moskovskii komsomolets on May 26, 1989.

9. Doder, p. 119

tendency amongst Party members, acting in accordance with Party tradition, to heap praise on Gorbachev and to attempt to build a leader cult. In 1987, Boris Yeltsin condemned this practice, stating that "the tendency to adulation is unacceptable. To criticize to peoples faces, that is necessary - but to develop a taste for adulation, which can become the norm again, can become a 'cult of personality'. We cannot permit this".¹⁰ Yeltsin need not have worried. As was proven at the XXVII Party Congress, Gorbachev shared his distaste for a cult of the living Party leader. When a delegate at the congress repeatedly referred to the General Secretary and supported his case with quotations from Gorbachev, Gorbachev asked irritably, "Why should one keep quoting Mikhail Sergeevich?".¹¹ Gorbachev's refusal to permit a personality cult to arise around him was detrimental, both to himself and to the totalitarian state. It robbed the state of the important image of the infallible leader and left the door open for doubt and criticism to creep in.

Though Gorbachev departed from the leader cycle by not allowing a cult of personality to immortalize his person, he faithfully adhered to one rule of the leader cycle: he championed the cult of Lenin and sought to earn recognition as Lenin's most faithful disciple. In order to embark on the course of anti-Leninist reforms that he hoped would lead to the

10. Kaiser, p. 180

11. Doder, p. 119

modernization and salvation of the Soviet ship, Gorbachev needed the ghost of Lenin next to him at the helm. Even sixty years after his death, Lenin continued to legitimize the policies of his political descendants who acted in his name. Accordingly, from his first day in office until his last, Gorbachev fortified his position with quotations from Lenin.

It was of vital importance for Gorbachev to establish that glasnost and perestroika, his trademark policies, were actually forged in the fires of Leninism. To this end, he was quick to point out that glasnost was a term coined by Lenin.¹² Similarly, Gorbachev reassured the public that perestroika was a policy that sprang from the "immortal ideas" of Vladimir Ilich.¹³ He insisted that, "the course of October is the course of perestroika",¹⁴ and even asserted that "perestroika brings us closer to Lenin, and brings Lenin closer to us".¹⁵ Using the General-Secretary's time-tested tool of selective quotation, Gorbachev used the words of Lenin to justify sweeping social and political reform. He argued that for Lenin, the precepts of Marx and Engels were nothing more than general tasks, "which are necessarily modified by the concrete economic and political conditions of each particular period of

12. The term "glasnost" appeared twenty-three times in the fifth edition of Lenin's collected works. Ibid., p. 75

13. Moskovskii komsomolets., April 22, 1989

14. Ibid., November 8, 1989

15. Ibid., April 23, 1988

history".¹⁶ Through distortions of Leninist theory such as this, Gorbachev was able to portray Lenin as the "spiritual source" of his reforms and to claim that perestroika and glasnost were consistent with the original precepts of Lenin.¹⁷

To demonstrate that he was the faithful disciple of Lenin, Gorbachev relied heavily on the physical props of the Lenin cult. For example, when he officially launched his perestroika campaign in May, 1985, he did so from the steps of the Smolny Institute in Leningrad, the Bolshevik headquarters during the Revolution, so as to underscore his timeless connection with Lenin.¹⁸ Similarly, in later years when he visited cities, collective farms, or factories to propagate his reform policies, he usually found time to make a well-publicized wreath laying pilgrimage to the local Lenin memorial or monument, a gesture that was designed to prove to the locals and to the world that he honoured the Leninist legacy entrusted to him.¹⁹

By 1985, it was not difficult for Gorbachev, or anyone else for that matter, to find a Lenin memorial at which to

16. Doder, p. 117

17. Kull, pp. 46-47

18. Moskovskii komsomolets, May 18, 1985

19. For example, in October 1987, when Gorbachev visited Murmansk, he laid a wreath and delivered a key speech at the base of the city's Lenin memorial. Moskovskii komsomolets October 2, 1987

worship. Besides the 100 geographical locations and 500 buildings that were "linked with the memory of Lenin",²⁰ there were approximately 100 000 other monuments, statues, plaques, and museums to the father of the Soviet state scattered across the vast reaches of the USSR.²¹ The number of these monuments continued to grow steadily until the late 1980s, as Gorbachev fulfilled the sacred duty of the General Secretary and contributed to the national arsenal of Leniniana. In the Moscow region alone, dozens of new Lenin memorials were erected after 1985. In April, 1985, a bas-relief portrait of Lenin was unveiled at Aerovokzal.²² Two years later, two new Lenin museums opened, one at Kostin²³ and another on the grounds of Lenin's estate at Gorki.²⁴ In April 1989, a statue of Lenin and his wife was erected at the corner of Leninskii Prospekt and Ulitsa Krupskaja.²⁵

Despite his best personal efforts to defend the cult of Lenin, Gorbachev unwittingly issued the cult a death sentence. In order to save the decaying Soviet state, he believed it essential to kickstart it by overhauling the political apparatus and granting greater cultural and social freedoms.

20. Kislik, p. 7

21. Moscow Times, January 25, 1995

22. Moskovskii komsomolets, April 21, 1985

23. Ibid., April 15, 1987

24. Ibid., June 9, 1987

25. Ibid., April 22, 1989

What he did not realize was just how uncontrollable were the reforms that he set in motion and how unamendable to reform was the cult of Lenin. The cult of Lenin was based on myths and lies and could only survive so long as the state maintained its monopoly over information. When Gorbachev began to relinquish his Party's monopoly in 1986 and allowed rays of historical truth and criticism to seep out, he paved the way for the destruction of the cult of Lenin. The return of history was a foe that the cult of Lenin could not overcome.

The flood of history and truth that would eventually sweep the cult of Lenin from the hearts and minds of the Soviet people began as a mere trickle in 1986. In that year, two events that had a negative impact on the Lenin cult took place. First of all, Gorbachev pardoned Andrei Sakharov, the one-time darling of Soviet physics who had turned pacifist-dissident. Under Brezhnev, Sakharov had been sentenced to internal exile in the industrial city of Gorki for his outspoken criticism of the state. His pardon in 1986 foreshadowed greater tolerance of political dissidence and criticism, two features that were incompatible with a strong cult of Lenin.

The second event of importance was the appointment of liberal, pro-glasnost editors at three Moscow newspapers. As was shown in the preceding chapters, Soviet newspaper editors were traditionally staunch conservatives, under the direct supervision of the Party, who could be relied on to publish faithfully the current propaganda in their papers. With the

appointment of Vitali Korotich at Ogonyok, Sergei Zalygin at Novyi Mir, and Yegor Yakovlev at Moscow News, this role changed. For the first time in decades, limited freedom of the press was granted. As a direct result, the Party's stranglehold on the media and control over information was broken.

The limited freedom gained by these three papers in 1986 was extended to other news agencies the following year. At a meeting with members of the media in March 1987, Gorbachev announced a drastic reduction in the state's control over information and extended unprecedented freedom to the media. The forfeiture of the Party's monopoly over information, a cornerstone of the totalitarian regime, was problematic and dangerous, but it was a vital component of Gorbachev's plan to revitalize the USSR. In order to explain the nation's current state of stagnation and decay, Gorbachev realized that he had to allow a cautious, yet frank, public reevaluation of the past and even limited criticism of the Party itself.²⁶ It was necessary to prove that the current plight of the Soviet Union stemmed not from Leninist doctrine and communist ideology, but from abuses that had been committed in the name of Lenin and the Party, particularly during the Stalin era. Gorbachev hoped to convince the Soviet flock that simplistic interpretations of Lenin and over centralization were the cause of the nation's

26 "Criticism is a bitter pill", Gorbachev told reporters in February, 1987, "but the illness makes it necessary". Izvestiia, February 15, 1987

ills. For a while, he did just this. As will be shown below, in the first period of glasnost blame was heaped on Stalin, Brezhnev and other Party members. Eventually though, the historical probes began to delve deeper and to seek out the source's of the system that had birthed Stalinism and fostered stagnation. As will be demonstrated below, journalists and historians eventually turned their attention to Lenin and challenged the validity of his cult myths. Serious efforts were made to halt this process, to put the historical genie back in the bottle, but it was too late. The unmasking of Lenin had begun. Unintentionally, Gorbachev's concessions to the media in 1987 dug the grave of the Lenin cult.

Immediately after the historic meeting between Gorbachev and members of the media, the complexion of Soviet publications, radio broadcasts, and television programs began to change. Between March and October 1987, a series of long-banned novels, including Boris Pasternak's Nobel Prize-winning Doctor Zhivago and Alexei Rybakov's Children of the Arbat, were resurrected and published officially for the first time in the Soviet Union. Of more relevance to the Lenin cult was the broadcast of Leonid Pchelkin's 1960s television mini-series, "A Few Touches to Lenin's Portrait". This four-episode mini-series, produced for Lenin's centennial celebrations in 1970, had been condemned as politically incorrect shortly after

completion and had never been aired.²⁷ When it finally reached the screen in 1987, it became clear to audiences why Pchelkin's docu-drama had lain in the archives for almost two decades. The Lenin who stepped from the screen in "A Few Touches" was a mortal man, who exhibited no traces of "messianic omnipotence or omniscience". Pchelkin's Lenin made no attempt "to hide his doubts and vacillations", nor did he "immediately, or even always, find the sole correct answers".²⁸ Lenin was still upheld as the exemplar and as the greatest authority on communism, but for the first time in decades many of the myths that shrouded immortal Lenin were peeled away to provide a glimpse of the historical figure who lurked beneath.

The first phase of historical reevaluation, from March to November 1986, was characterized by caution and restraint. Soviet journalists and historians were too familiar with the nature of "thaws" and the "freezes" that followed than to rush headlong into the melee. This restraint disappeared in November 1987, when Gorbachev served notice that the window of thaw was not about to slam shut anytime soon. During the celebration of the seventieth anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution, Gorbachev reaffirmed his commitment to historical reevaluation, stating that "it is necessary to

27. Leonid Parfenov, "Onward To Lenin". Novosti Collection, File # 21.1.3, Special Collections, Carleton University Library.

28. Current Digest of the Soviet Press, March 25, 1987, p. 20

assess the past with a sense of historical responsibility and on the basis of historical truth".²⁹ The green light had been given, and the race to restore Russian history began. Soon, Gorbachev's thaw would turn into a full-scale meltdown.

The historical blitzkrieg that began in November 1987, was very methodical, comprehensive and well orchestrated. Many news agencies and academic journals recognized their inability to deal properly with the delicate task at hand, hamstrung as they were by staffs full of aging Party supporters who had made careers out of propagating historical untruths. In order to ensure that they did not miss the unique opportunity to rewrite history, many papers and journals purged the conservative elements of their staffs and replaced them with more liberal-minded individuals. Nowhere was this purge carried out more effectively than at the editorial office of Voprosy istorii, the "flagship of Soviet historical thought". In January 1988, eighteen of the journal's twenty-one editors were released, including long-serving chief editor V.G. Trukhanovski. The new staff, led by A.A. Iskenderov, promised to fulfil the mandate of a true historical publication, and to write history without "blank spots" and "forbidden zones".³⁰ Iskenderov's pledge, echoed by editors at other journals and newspapers, did not bode well for the cult of Lenin.

Despite the warning that there were no more "forbidden

29. Pravda, November 3, 1987

30. Voprosy istorii, 1988, No. 2, p. 3

zones" in the media, Lenin did not come under fire immediately. His cult had been too painstakingly constructed to attract immediate attention. For six decades, Lenin's cult builders had been deflecting blame and criticism from Lenin, and thus in 1987 and 1988, the well-fortified Lenin was not subjected to serious reappraisal. Historians and journalists looked to the more recent past, not to the origins of the state, to find answers to the nation's problems. In accordance with this trend, one of the first to face the critics' fire was not Lenin, but Leonid Brezhnev.

Brezhnev had only been in his grave for five years, and his reign was still fresh in the public's mind. It was natural that he be singled out and saddled with a considerable amount of blame for the disastrous condition of the USSR. Attention was drawn to the corruption and inefficiency that had plagued his regime and led to the "era of stagnation".³¹ Reaction to the revelations about Brezhnev was heated and historical justice was quickly served. In early January 1988, Brezhnev's name was stripped from a number of geographical locations, including the city of Naberezhnie Chelny and Moscow's Cheremushki Borough.³² Faithful to the rules of phase one of the leader cycle, the criticism and condemnation of Brezhnev increased the stature of Lenin for a time. Disillusioned writers and historians insisted that Brezhnev had deviated from

31. Izvestiia., January 1, 1988

32. Ibid., January 7, 1988

the path blazed by Lenin. They argued that it was essential to "go back to Lenin" and to raise a generation of "active citizens of the land of Soviets who, letting go the last drops of servility, will be the direct heirs of those whom Lenin reared ...".³³

The next page inserted into the new history of the USSR was written by Gorbachev himself. On February 5, 1988, Gorbachev announced the rehabilitation of Nikolai Bukharin and 19 other Old Bolsheviks who had been purged under Stalin. Bukharin's rehabilitation was of great tactical value for Gorbachev; Bukharin had been a leading proponent of Lenin's New Economic Policy (NEP), the policy that Gorbachev claimed to be emulating with perestroika and glasnost. By removing the stain of disrepute from Bukharin, Gorbachev conferred legitimacy on the policy that Bukharin had advocated.

The rehabilitation of purged Party members was accompanied by the removal of the literary ban on their works. In April 1988, it was announced by V. Solodin, a member of the collegium of the Chief Administration for the Protection of State Secrets in Print, that 6 000 banned political treatises were to be made available to the public.³⁴ The resurrection of these "subversive" works pounded a nail into the coffin of the Lenin cult; for the first time, people would be able to see that Leninism was not the only, or even the best, political

33. Ibid., January 1, 1988

34. Ibid., April 3, 1988

alternative for Russia.

The rehabilitation of purge victims and their writings, though detrimental to the cult of Lenin in the long run, granted Lenin a temporary reprieve from reappraisal, as the name of Stalin was far more closely associated with the purges. Throughout 1988 and the early part of 1989, the media was obsessed with Stalin. The pages of newspapers and journals alike were saturated with material that revealed the atrocities committed by Stalin and his henchmen in the 1930s, '40s and '50s.³⁵ For a time, the horrific nature of Stalin's crimes dulled the senses of the masses. Many concluded, as Gorbachev hoped they would, that Stalinism and the cult of personality had been terrible deviations from Leninist ideology. This conclusion was encouraged by the apparatus as the Party sought to raise Lenin above the fray. Through books such as V.I. Lenin i VChK, attempts were made to absolve Lenin of all blame for crimes that had been committed in his name. In this book by M. Stepichev, it was stated that unlike Stalin, who had wantonly abused the power entrusted to him, Lenin "reacted sharply ...to the improper use of authority". Stepichev reassured his readers that Lenin "demanded at all times that the sharp edge of the CHEKA weapon [only] be used against the

35. Stalin's crimes were the subject of a series of articles in Voprosy Istorii. The massacre at Katyn, the purge of the military, and the Stalin's China were all discussed at great length. Voprosy Istorii, "Problemy dvadtsatogo veka", No. 9, 1988; "Stalin u svoikh vremeni", Nos. 1-4, 6-10, 1989; Leon Trotsky's "Stalinskaia shkola falsifikatsiia" (extracts), No. 6, 1989.

enemies of the revolution and that socialist legality be strictly observed".³⁶ Despite such rhetoric, Lenin could not remain an untouchable for long. Once people had time to absorb the terrible historical information that assailed them, they began to wonder if perhaps Stalinism had not been such an aberration after all.

Gorbachev did his best to prevent people from reaching the conclusion that the state's rottenness stemmed from Lenin. He continued to make regular pilgrimages to the holy places of the Lenin cult and could often be heard preaching that the "works of Lenin are being carried on by our policy of perestroika". Gorbachev attempted to shore up the Lenin cult by reminding people that "Leninist thought and Lenin's example are our great wealth and our reference points in our revolutionary work at this current stage, and in the development of Soviet power". By the late 1980s, however, it is doubtful that many believed Gorbachev's empty boast that "it is to be noted with pride that [Lenin's] plans and scientific predictions have become reality".³⁷

The first public defections from the Lenin cult began in mid-1988. While most remained preoccupied with Stalin, a few individuals turned their anger and resentment towards Lenin. One such demonstration of bitterness towards Lenin saw two young men vozhd attack and destroy a portrait of the vozhd with

36. Pravda., December 10, 1987

37. Moskovskii komsomolets., September 16, 1988

their fists. Owing to the supposed severity and unprecedented nature of the "crime", the incident became the subject of a heated debate in the newspaper Molodoi Leninets. Surprisingly, reaction to the vandalism was not all negative. Although older respondents denounced the action as an outrage, and even as sacrilegious, many younger readers, such as twenty-four year old Sergei Chepesiuk of Shadrinsk, condoned the attack. "I am completely on the side [of the assailants]", affirmed Sergei. "I think that the youths punched nothing 'sacred', but merely the portrait of a man whose teachings brought us to where we are today".³⁸

Such criticism of Lenin would never have found its way into print a year or two earlier when the state's monopoly over information was intact. With the Party's powers of control reduced sufficiently by the late 1980s, the cult of Lenin was forced to fend for itself. As events would prove, the cult of Lenin was unable to stand without the supporting arm of the totalitarian state. The fate of the Lenin cult was foreshadowed by a political cartoon that appeared in Moskovskii komsomolets in September, 1988. In the cartoon, a statue that seemed to represent Lenin, stood atop a pedestal, buffeted by a powerful wind that bent trees and scattered leaves. So strong were the winds, they ripped the laurel crown from the head of the startled statue. In desperation the statue turned, mouth agape, and reached in vain for its lost crown.

38. Molodoi Leninets., 1988, No. 13

In the summer of 1988 it was, perhaps, not too late to turn back the clock, to halt the thaw, and to preserve the cult of Lenin. An event of that summer changed all this: the Central Party Archives of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism revealed the existence of a large cache of unpublished Lenin documents. Historians, including Vladimir Mel'nichenko, director of the Central Lenin Museum in Moscow, were outraged and demanded to know why these documents had been kept secret for so long. The director of the archives shrugged off this question, explaining that it would have been "politically inexpedient" to publish the documents at an earlier time.³⁹ As the documents slowly began to seep out of the archives in the years that followed, everyone understood why the archivists had not produced them earlier. Here was the historical Lenin, stripped of the golden mask, standing naked-faced for the first time since before his death. What the de-mythologized Lenin proved was that his Party, his system and the state he had fathered were rotten to the core.

The rush to examine and publish the trove of new Lenin documents was hampered by reactionary party members, conservative archivists and a trepidatious public. As a result, the cult of Lenin did not face the full force of the subsequent historical onslaught for more than a year after the documents were revealed. By the time they flooded the media,

39. Vladimir Mel'nichenko, Drama Lenina na iskhode veka (Moscow, 1992), p. 7

the cult of Lenin had already been seriously undermined by another source - Alexander Solzhenitsyn's Gulag Archipelago. Although the Party tried to prevent its resurrection, Solzhenitsyn's epic tale was published in instalments in Novyi Mir beginning in 1989.⁴⁰ The publication of Gulag, a text considered so dangerous that its author had been forcibly exiled from the Soviet Union fifteen years earlier, struck a serious blow at the heart of the Lenin cult. Although Stalin starred as the book's principal villain, Solzhenitsyn unmistakably identified Lenin as Stalin's spiritual father. The myth that canonized Lenin as "the most humanitarian of all people", so tenderly nurtured for six decades, was seriously challenged for the first time. Would a humanitarian have ordered the execution of peasant labourers who did not remove snow from railroad tracks quickly enough?⁴¹ Would a man of the people have aimed to purge "the Russian land of all kinds of harmful insects" - including members of the proletariat?⁴² For most people, the answer to these questions was no.

The decline in the cult of Lenin was paralleled by a decline in the state's authority and support for the political apparatus. As has already been stressed, the cult of Lenin and the state were intimately linked. It was not possible for the

40. Remnick, 267: That Novyi Mir defied the Party's wishes and escaped retribution, demonstrates the extent to which the state had lost control over information by 1989.

41. Solzhenitsyn, 30

42. Ibid., p. 27

cult of Lenin to survive without totalitarian control and it would have been difficult for the Soviet state to survive, in its traditional authoritarian form at least, without the cult of Lenin. The state had legitimized itself with Lenin for too long to escape the consequences of Lenin's unmasking; we say Lenin, we imply Party ... Accordingly, when people began to question Lenin on central questions and to challenge his myths, they also began to question the legitimacy of the Party and state at large. The relationship between the decline in the cult of Lenin and that of the state was implied by Professor S. Kull in Burying Lenin. In his book, Kull pointed out that the "cornerstone of new thinking" that was responsible for the decline and eventual collapse of the Soviet system, was its "challenge to the orthodoxy of Lenin".⁴³

Since the dawn of Soviet time, the Communist Party had ruled from on high, allowing no criticism, opposition or factionalism. Once the sanctity of Lenin was challenged, so too was the sanctity of the Communist Party. In 1989, Central Committee member Alexander Tsipko went so far as to challenge the motivation of the Old Bolsheviks, the state's founding fathers. He questioned the reasons for the October Revolution, asking "was everyone looking for the truth in Marxism and revolution" or were some revolutionaries simply eager to belong

43. Kull, p. 11

to an elite vanguard and to "avoid the routine" of daily life.⁴⁴

Critical evaluation such as Tsipko's had a negative effect on the cult of Lenin and the state as a whole. Not only did people lose faith in the Leninist mission willed to them in 1917, they also lost faith in the ability of Lenin's heirs, led by Gorbachev, to solve their problems. Gorbachev, who had refused to foster his own cult of personality and the myths that went with it, possessed none of the "infallibility" that his predecessors had. Accordingly, when it became obvious that his policies were not working as had been anticipated blame was not deflected to his subordinates, as had often been the case with his predecessors, it was placed squarely on his shoulders. Gorbachev was not the new messiah. This was made painfully obvious in the fall of 1989. In a poll conducted by the Moscow weekly Argumenty i Fakty, Gorbachev did not rank as one of the top ten most popular political figures in the USSR. To make matters worse, former dissident Andrei Sakharov was listed as the nation's most popular figure.⁴⁵ Shortly after this poll was published, Gorbachev slashed out and threatened to fire the paper's editors. Unlike Brezhnev, however, who had been able

44. Ibid., Critical evaluation of the revolution and the Old Bolsheviks became very common after 1990. By 1993, it was widely accepted that "there was no revolution, but only some sort of Bolshevik coup, and there were no fiery revolutionaries, but only a small group of scoundrels, rogues and coercivists ...". Novoe vremia, 1993, No. 31, p. 50

45. Dođer, p. 391

to silence journalists whose words stung him, Gorbachev lacked the totalitarian monopoly over information to quash criticism.

Open criticism of Gorbachev and the Party led to public awareness of the true nature of the state and Leninism: they did not work. This bitter realization had come to many by 1990, as witnessed by the millions of formerly loyal Party members who defected from the ranks of the CPSU.⁴⁶ The mass exodus from the Communist Party and the ideology it espoused, resulted in the pruning and eventual abandonment of the state pageantry that had played such a crucial role in building Soviet myths. For decades, the elaborate military parades on May 1 and November 7, not to mention the more modest celebrations on Lenin's anniversaries, had contributed to the Soviet Union's facade of vitality and strength. They had also been important occasions for propagating the cult of Lenin. Holiday parades had provided an opportunity for the reigning General Secretary to climb atop the Lenin mausoleum and to demonstrate his solidarity with Lenin. Through physical proximity to the remains of the vozhd and by spewing out Leninist slogans, the leader portrayed himself as Lenin's faithful heir. By 1990, Gorbachev recognized the futility of attempting to maintain the facade of wellness through state pageantry. The nation was collapsing from within and one or two empty demonstrations a year could not disguise the fact.

46. By September, 1991, only 2.3% of the Soviet population fully trusted the Communist Party, 90% less than in 1989. Izvestiia, October 1, 1991

Accordingly, in April 1990, Gorbachev cut away another central pillar of the Lenin cult and decreed that public participation in May Day and November 7 celebrations was no longer compulsory.⁴⁷

Gorbachev's decision to scale back state pageantry was accompanied by a more startling and drastic pronouncement. In April 1990, he announced that it was "high time to put an end to the absurd idolization of Lenin".⁴⁸ This resolution, a drastic departure from 70 years of Party etiquette, simply gave official confirmation to what was already happening. The cult of Lenin was staggering and stumbling towards extinction, a fact that Gorbachev and the Communist Party could no longer completely deny.

The person most responsible for the decline of the Lenin cult was not Gorbachev, Sakharov, or some other contemporary politician: it was Lenin himself. The hidden cache of Lenin documents that had been uncovered at the Central Party Archives in 1988 began to find their way into print, and Lenin stood damned by his own words and deeds. The publication of these long-banned Lenin documents, many of which were shocking, "quickly [robbed] the character of the vozhd of its godlike

47. Gorbachev's resolution on holiday celebrations also extended to non-communist elements the right to participate in the ceremonies. On May Day 1990, pro-democracy demonstrators took advantage of the opportunity and appeared before Lenin's tomb carrying placards and banners that read "Communists: have no illusions. You are bankrupt", and "down with the cult of Lenin". Kaiser, 311

48. Ibid., p. 411

nimbus".⁴⁹

Among the first archival material to be declassified were photographs of Lenin that had been taken in 1922 and 1923. These photographs, published in late 1989 and early 1990, showed a feeble, illness-ravaged Lenin (Illustration 9).⁵⁰ One look at these photographs was surely enough to convince even the most die-hard disciple of the Lenin cult that Lenin had not played a major or active role in the political life of Russia in the last two years of his life. Instantly, dozens of myths and lies about Lenin's never-ceasing work during convalescence dissipated like smoke in a stormy breeze.

More destructive to the cult of Lenin than pictures were a whole slew of revolutionary documents that revealed a side of Lenin that few Soviets had been allowed to see before: cruelty. Beginning in late 1989, the Soviet public was blitzed by a wave of documents that implicated Lenin in countless acts of revolutionary terror and barbarity, including the aggressive war against the clergy and the bloody campaign against the kulaks. Here was a Lenin who, far from being a friend of peasants and workers alike, admitted that "we [the Bolsheviks]

49. Volkogonov, Lenin (Russian edition), vol. 1, p. 9

50. One such photograph appeared in komsomolskaia pravda (January 21, 1990) beneath the heading, "He Awoke Russia". The picture, of Lenin in a wheelchair, was accompanied by a brief caption which reminded readers that the "unique" photo "may never have appeared at all if the time had not passed when nothing was considered a 'Polnoe sobranie' of photographs or works except volumes that had been carefully screened through the fine sieve of ironbound 'historical concepts'".

don't like peasants ...they have fallen behind and are strong supporters of the land owners. It is necessary to take the attack to such people".⁵¹ In the light of such statements, the myth of the kind, humanitarian Ilich - the great Russian who "wanted to do good but did not have time" - crumbled with a roar.

Documents that showed the falsity of the myth of Lenin's goodness, also helped to bridge the remaining chasm between Lenin and Stalin. As one startling revelation after another was made about Lenin, more and more people began to accept that "the negative qualities of socialism arose not only because of the influence of Stalin's personality cult and his administrative-bureaucratic system, as has been officially declared, but had already developed in the activities of Lenin".⁵²

The direct line between Lenin and Stalin, painstakingly erased by Lenin's cult builders for so long, was even acknowledged by some members of the Communist Party, including Gorbachev ally Alexander Yakovlev. Yakovlev, a former ambassador to Canada and a major architect of perestroika, admitted in 1989 that "the idealisation of violence", which was responsible for the atrocities of the Stalin period, "was

51. Novoe vremia, 1991, No. 44, p. 91

52. I. Kovalchenko, "Some Problems in the Methodology of History", in Novaia i noveishaia istoriia (Moscow), 1991, No. 5, p.6

starkly evident during the October Revolution".⁵³ Practically every new document that emerged from the safety of the archives confirmed Yakovlev's assessment and cast the ominous shadow of the Gulag evermore on Lenin. In 1990, Lenin's share of the responsibility for the crimes of the Stalin era was summed up beautifully in a political poster by E. Tsvik (Illustration 10). In the black and white poster, the head and torso of the mummified Lenin appeared. Above the corpse, written in blood-red barbed wire, was Stalin's famed oath: "We swear to you, comrade Lenin, that we will faithfully fulfil all of your commandments".⁵⁴ Lenin's implication in the crimes of Stalin robbed him of his cult title "most humanitarian of all people" and transformed him into the "the most humanitarian man with a gun".⁵⁵

As the cult of Lenin was being washed away by the flood of history, a few ardent disciples of Lenin tried to stem the tide and to downplay the significance of the newly released

53. Remnick, p. 299

54. Baburina, p. 209

55. An article entitled "the most humanitarian man with a gun" (samyi gumanitarnyi chelovek s ruzhem) appeared in the "laughter through tears" section of Novoe vremia in November 1992 (No. 37, p. 48). This article, which listed dozens of quotations from Lenin that had helped to debunk the myth of Lenin's goodness, began with a series of traditional Leninist quotations that had been used by generations of Soviet leaders to legitimize their policies. An illustration at the top of the page, depicting Party leaders climbing atop Lenin's mausoleum with the aid of a ladder, expressed the author's opinion that Lenin's heirs had used his cult as a stepping stone in their careers.

documents. Many defenders of the Lenin cult, including Central Lenin Museum director Vladimir Mel'nichenko, argued that Lenin was being judged too harshly and that his crimes were being taken out of their revolutionary context. Moreover, Mel'nichenko insisted that people should not be so surprised by evidence of Lenin's ruthlessness, because his devotion to terror and harsh methods was well documented in the fifth edition of his collected works.⁵⁶ Natalia Morozova of Moscow agreed with Mel'nichenko and argued in print that recent "revelations" about Lenin held little surprise for her, since she had read about 99 percent of Lenin's "crimes" almost thirty years earlier in the Polnoe sobranie sochinenii. Morozova proudly admitted that "Vladimir Ilich has been my love, my pain and my major influence", and argued that "in their proper context, the horrors [committed by Lenin] do not make such a terrible impact as when they are distorted beforehand and thrown together in a bunch".⁵⁷

Attempts by Mel'nichenko, Morozova, and others to prop up the sagging cult of Lenin failed miserably. Their defensive statements were attacked and condemned by those who could find no justification for the crimes of Lenin. For example, Morozova's request that people look at Lenin's "horrors" in their historical context was slammed by Tatiana Ivanova. Ivanova angrily responded to Morozova's published letter, and

56. Mel'nichenko, Drama, p. 19.

57. Novoe vremia, 1991, No. 5, p. 37

demanded:

Consider this in context. It is nighttime. There is a dark house; frightened children; a quivering woman who clutches at the boots of the executioners, prepared for personal humiliation. There is the old mother; and there is the man - suspected of conspiring with an SR [Socialist Revolutionary]. How do they shoot him? In the back? In the heart? In the forehead? What did he say, what did he think just before death? What would become of his children?

Ivanova concluded her impassioned invective against Morozova by stating: "You are one of those who attempt to convince us of how democratic, freedom loving and humanitarian Lenin was. But I am one of those who knows a different Lenin ...".⁵⁸

The historical, de-mythologized Lenin that Morozova recognized was gradually revealed to everyone through proper historical analysis. Once Lenin's dirty laundry had been publicly aired, historians assembled the data and tried to make sense of all the new documents, placing them in their proper historical context. The portrait of Lenin that they created confirmed the bankruptcy of the myths of the Lenin cult.

The biographical portrait of Lenin that hangs in the halls of Russian history today was painted by Russians and westerners, prominent academicians and shameless profiteers alike. The background of the portrait was the work of Adam Ulam, Louis Fischer, Bertram Wolfe and other western historians, whose relatively objective histories of Lenin, marred primarily by incompleteness due to restricted access to

58. Ibid., p. 38

information, slipped through the iron curtain toward the end of the Soviet period and provided a base on which other historical studies could build. The fringes of the portrait were filled in by tabloid-style writers, who catered to the gossip-loving element in society and produced sensational "biographies", such as The Intimate Life Of V.I. Lenin.⁵⁹ The face of Lenin, a face that was obscured behind a golden mask for seventy years, remains incomplete to this date. However, a considerable amount of detail was added in 1994 with the publication of Dmitri Volkogonov's Lenin.

Dmitri Volkogonov, a doctor of history and philosophy, a retired three-star General, and a special advisor to President Yeltsin on matters of defence, was well-qualified to produce the first "complete" biography of Lenin, a biography that delivered the knock-out punch to the cult of Lenin. As chairman of the parliamentary commission on opening the archives of the Communist Party, Volkogonov had access to the Lenin archives, that "holy of holies", which held all the answers to Lenin's past.⁶⁰ Armed with more than 3 000 secret documents, Volkogonov emerged from the archives and sent the cult of Lenin to its grave. In the pages of Lenin, Volkogonov attacked the cult of Lenin ferociously and methodically, felling one myth after the other. Expanding on damning evidence that had already appeared in the press, Volkogonov

59. B. Orsa-Koidanovskaia. Intimnaia zhizn Lenina (Minsk, 1994)

60. Moscow Times, January 25, 1995

further trampled myths of Lenin that had collapsed and reduced those that were still standing to ruin.

In reconstructing the life of Lenin, Volkogonov confirmed that Lenin was the true father of totalitarianism in Russia and he drew a direct line between Lenin and Stalin. Supporting his thesis with dozens of examples, Volkogonov demonstrated that Lenin was "the true father of the Bolshevik concentration camps, the executions, the mass terror, and the 'organs' which stood above the state".⁶¹ He showed that Lenin was committed to violence and terror, and was willing "to employ incredibly violent and ruthless measures to achieve his goals".⁶² For Lenin, poison gas, mass executions and unjustified arrests, deportation, and random violence were all legitimate weapons in the battle to establish Soviet power.⁶³

Volkogonov left no stone of Lenin's life unturned and pounded the final nail into the casket of the Lenin cult. His book proved so lethal to the Lenin cult because, unlike some earlier attempts to examine de-classified Lenin documents, Volkogonov's study provided a fairly objective account of Lenin's life. He strove to present a balanced portrait of the vozhd, the good along with the bad. Such balance prevented all but the most fanatical disciples of Lenin from dismissing Volkogonov's work and accusing him of distorting facts and

61. Volkogonov, (English ed.) p. 235

62. Ibid, p. 182

63. Ibid., pp. 69-70, 197, 241, 242, 342

ignoring historical context in order to discredit the *vozhd*. In the eyes of the majority, Lenin stood condemned before the court of history.

The destruction of Lenin myths that began in 1987 and culminated in 1994 with the publication of Volkogonov's Lenin, was paralleled by a corresponding, albeit somewhat delayed, reduction in the physical props of the cult. As history transformed Lenin from a deified cult leader into the anti-christ, shrines and cathedrals to the Bolshevik god became nasty scars on the face of the nation. Accordingly, when Lenin began to slip from his lofty pedestal in the late 1980s, monuments and memorials to him fell like dominoes.

Place names associated with Lenin were amongst the first cult tributes to be discarded. Since "place names reflect history and shape the national memory", cities and institutions that had been named for Lenin over the last seven decades rushed to cleanse themselves of the iniquity that association with Lenin brought.⁶⁴ Such was the reasoning of the people in the 2 500 year-old city in the Tadjik republic, that had borne the name "Leninabad" since 1936. In a referendum held in December 1990, an "overwhelming majority" of the population voted to restore the city's historical name of Khodzhen.⁶⁵

64. Izvestiia, May 8, 1991: Place names associated with Lenin were not the only ones targeted. In December 1990, the decision was made to restore the historical name Samara, to the city and province of Kuibyshev. Similarly, Kalinin reverted to Tver, Gorki to Nizhni-Novgorod, and Zagorsk to Sergieev Posad.

65. Ibid., December 27, 1990

In February, 1991, "historical justice" was served and the name "Leninabad" disappeared from the map of the USSR.

A more prominent tribute to Lenin was revoked in the summer of 1991, when the people of Leningrad chose to restore the historical name of Saint Petersburg to their northern city. Petrograd, a city intimately connected with Lenin, was renamed just days after Lenin's death in 1924, as the workers of the revolutionary capital sought to give Lenin "the best we had".⁶⁶ By the spring of 1991, the affection felt by Leningraders for their state's founder had waned exponentially and a significant percentage of the population, including Leningrad mayor Anatolii Sobchak, were campaigning vigorously to rescind the honour bestowed on Lenin in 1924. In Leningrad, as in Leninabad, a referendum was held and the city's denizens were asked "would you like our city's historical name of Saint Petersburg to be restored?".⁶⁷ Despite the enormous projected cost of renaming the city, and the strong emotional ties that many had for "Leningrad" due to the 900-day German siege in World War II, fifty-five percent of residents voted in favour of restoring the name Saint Petersburg.⁶⁸ The legality and justification of the referendum were challenged by many of those who had voted against the renaming. For months after the referendum, a battle was waged in the press with neither side

66. Massie, p. 379

67. Current Digest, 1991, No. 18, p. 19

68. Izvestiia., June 14, 1991

giving quarter. Confused journalists, not knowing whether to refer to the city as Leningrad or St. Petersburg, simply began to refer to the revolutionary capital as "the city on the Neva". Despite the opposition to the renaming, Leningrad bowed out to St. Petersburg in late 1991. The decision to rename Leningrad reflected the desire of most people to distance themselves and their city from the nation's communist roots. It was widely believed that the abandonment of Soviet era names such as Leningrad would allow Russians "to return, above all, to the sources, to the [historical] roots, that nourish us all".⁶⁹

Cities and towns were not the only places to change their names so as to dissociate themselves from Lenin. Hundreds of institutions and organizations followed suit and freed themselves from the burden of Lenin's name. Throughout the history of the Soviet Union, affiliation with Lenin had conferred status and prestige on places and institutions named in his honour. By 1991, as evidenced by the renaming of Leninabad and Leningrad, Lenin's name hung like an albatross from their necks. Lenin had come to symbolize cruelty, injustice, and a system that did not work. It was no longer beneficial or desirable for organizations that hoped to survive and to prosper in the fast-developing new Soviet world to be associated with failure and to share the stain of Lenin's disrepute. Accordingly, prominent organizations such as Moscow

69. Pravda, July 29, 1990

State Pedagogical Institute and the Moscow Metro dropped Lenin's name from their titles.

Many newspapers and journals joined in the exodus from Lenin and stripped his name and image from their publications' mastheads. On August 22, 1991, the day after the anti-Gorbachev coup failed, Izvestiia appeared for the first time without the familiar Order of Lenin on its masthead. Pravda soon followed suit. On August 31, the portrait of Lenin that had graced the top left corner of the paper's front page for decades was dropped.⁷⁰

One of the most notable purges of Lenin's name was carried out in 1992, when the Lenin State Library of the USSR changed its name to the Russian State Library. The Lenin Library, which had been renamed to honour Lenin in 1925, had faithfully propagated the cult of Lenin for six decades.⁷¹ When the Leninist system began to disintegrate, however, and the state's totalitarian control of the library relaxed, the cult of Lenin was pushed out the front door. Lenin's books were removed from display, his museum was shut down, and, just days after the

70. Lenin's portrait was restored to Pravda's masthead less than a year later. In post-Soviet Russia, Pravda is the forum for communist supporters and Lenin remains the banner under which they rally.

71. Throughout the Soviet period, the Lenin Library maintained a Lenin museum within its walls and displayed prominently the works of Vladimir Ilich. More significantly, the Lenin Library, "one of the country's foremost ideological, scientific and information institutes", stood at the top of the USSR's system of 50 000 libraries and was thus able to propagate the cult of Lenin throughout the nation.

August coup in 1991, the decision to strip his name from the library was reached.⁷² Library director Igor Filipov ruled that the library was not a political battlefield and thus should not "promote one ideology above any other". In order to express the library's commitment to objective and free research and science, Filipov deemed it necessary for the library to shed Lenin's name. His decision received official state approval on January 22, 1992. On that day, the Lenin library ceased to exist.

Although Filipov was quick to order the renaming of the library, he did not attempt to purge the library's shelves of Leninist texts. He acknowledged the right of the communist ideology of Lenin to exist within the library. As expressed by Filipov's secretary, Lutfia Arifulova, "Vladimir Ilich is no longer the main ideologue in our lives, but he has joined the ranks of other philosophers, and historical-political figures who played a role in our country's past". How the mighty have fallen. Lenin, once the God of the entire communist world, now just a "historical figure" in his nation's saga.

The Lenin Library made no attempt to purge its monuments to Lenin either. The large statue to Lenin in reading hall three and his giant portrait in hall two remain in their familiar positions. The survival of these props of the Lenin cult does not imply that the cult itself survives. Rather, the

72. Personal interview with Lutfia Arifulova, Academic Secretary, Russian State Library, Moscow. February 23, 1995

monuments are considered an essential part of the building's architecture and history and cannot, "in good conscience", be taken away.

Not all monuments to Lenin were as fortunate as those at the Lenin Library. In thousands of cases the artistic and historical value of a statue or painting was outweighed by the wrath of an angry mob or the embitterment of disillusioned masses. Beginning in 1991, statues of Lenin began to fall like dominos. In August 1991 the gigantic statue of Lenin on Kiev's central square came down.⁷³ In June 1992, the ten-storey high bronze statue of Lenin in Tashkent was toppled "under the cover of night".⁷⁴ In 1993, the large marble bust of Lenin that greeted travellers arriving from Moscow at the train station in Saint Petersburg was replaced by the head of Peter the Great; and in October 1994 the beautiful black marble statue of Lenin that stood, like a silent sentinel, in the Kremlin courtyard since 1967 was whittled away -- a gesture that symbolized the expulsion of Leninist ideologies from Russian politics.

The manner in which the Lenin statue was removed from the Kremlin was significant. It was not removed outright; rather, a tall wooden fence was erected around the statue one Saturday evening and it was officially explained that the monument was under repair (Illustrations 11 & 12). Three months later, the fence still stood and no signs of ongoing renovation were

73. Izvestiia, August 27, 1991

74. Ibid., June 8, 1992

evident. After much prodding, and a ten thousand ruble donation to a Kremlin guard, it was learned that the statue had been taken to Leninskii-Gorki in October.⁷⁵ The fence, the guard explained, was simply a device to ease the transition and to prevent public outcry. It will remain until it has become a familiar fixture. When it eventually comes down, people will care that the eyesore fence, not the statue, is gone.

The practice of removing Lenin monuments in stages, an attempt to limit criticism and opposition, was used extensively throughout the Soviet Union. History professor Maria Zezina explained how the gradual purge of Lenin monuments was carried out at the state's leading post-secondary institution, Moscow State University. "If a bust of Lenin stood in the centre of a hall", Zezina related with amusement, "it would be moved to the side at first. A little while later, it would be moved again, this time a little closer to the door. When it was finally removed altogether, no one really noticed. [The removal] was a gradual process and thus no one complained very loudly".⁷⁶

75. Fallen statues of Lenin were dispensed of in many ways. Some, like the Kremlin statue, found their way into historical museums, like that at Leninskii-Gorki, or to artistic parks, like the one behind the Central House of Artists in Moscow. Others were purchased by individuals, such as French artist Sezar, who bought up fifty Lenin busts as artistic raw material. (Novoe vremia, 1992, No. 34, p. 60). Still others were simply discarded, such as the 2 200-pound bronze statue of Lenin which was sold to a Connecticut scrap metal yard for its material value of fifty cents per pound. Boston Globe, January 14, 1994

76. Personal interview with Maria Zezina, MGU, February 2, 1995

Few raised their voices in protest when Lenin museums began to close either. Between the summer of 1991 and the fall of 1994, dozens of museums throughout the former Soviet Union shut their doors, either shipping their exhibits off to historical museums or placing them in dusty storage somewhere. Included in the list of casualties were Lenin museums in Baku, Tashkent, Kiev and L'vov, all thirteen Lenin museums in the St. Petersburg area, the office and apartment museums of Lenin in the Kremlin, and his death train pavilion in Moscow. The latter, dominated by the massive red locomotive that returned Lenin's body to Moscow from Leninskii-Gorki in January 1924 for burial, once housed more than 300 exhibits to Lenin. Today, only the train and a massive marble bust remain, preserved because they are too large to dispose of easily. The two monoliths of the Lenin cult remain like dinosaurs in the pavilion, dwarfing the building's new residents - stolen foreign luxury cars (Illustrations 13 & 14). A guard at the showroom, when asked to comment on the irony of a capitalist venture operating in a former communist shrine, looked around the "museum" and eventually fixed her eyes on the train. "Lenin belonged to yesterday, to the Soviet days. These", she said pointing at the Lincolns, Mercedes and BMWs that now dominate the room, "are the new Russia".⁷⁷

The most significant museum closure was that of the

77. As told to the author during visit to the former museum in October 1994.

Central Lenin Museum in Moscow, the flagship of the USSR's fleet of Lenin museums. Since 1924, Moscow's Lenin Museum had been housed in the massive red brick building next to the Kremlin that was home to the Moscow city Duma before the Revolution. In August 1991, just days after the anti-Gorbachev coup was put down, Moscow Mayor G. Popov suggested that the Lenin Museum be relocated to allow the City Soviet, heir of the Duma, to reoccupy the building.⁷⁸ Museum director Mel'nichenko and his staff, realizing that the proposed relocation would actually be a move "from somewhere to nowhere", bitterly opposed the Mayor's proposal.⁷⁹ The efforts of Mel'nichenko and the preoccupation of the municipal authorities with more pressing matters earned the central Lenin museum a temporary reprieve. For a time, the museum served as a rallying site for communist demonstrators and devout Leninists (Illustration 15). In the fall of 1993, however, the museum was issued another eviction notice, this time by new Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov. On October 5, 1993, Luzhkov ordered the prefect of Moscow's Central Administrative Okrug to prepare a draft decree on behalf of the President of the Russian Federation. This decree was to authorize the transfer of museum exhibits to the Moscow's Museum of the Revolution as well as the renovation of the museum building in preparation

78. Mel'nichenko, Drama, p. 41

79. V. Mel'nichenko, Muzei ne stavshii na koleni (Moscow, 1993), pp. 2, 13

for the arrival of the City Soviet.⁸⁰ Mel'nichenko redoubled his efforts and launched an aggressive public campaign that was designed to rally defenders of the museum. He chastised those who refused to condemn the closure, claiming that "not a single civilized country would allow itself to liquidate the museum to the man who founded that state. This is absurd".⁸¹ Unfortunately for Mel'nichenko and other supporters of the museum, their cries fell on deaf ears. Most Muscovites were too absorbed in their personal struggles for subsistence and survival to concern themselves with the fate of Lenin's museum. Others, including one man who firebombed the museum on the night of October 6, 1993, actively supported the closure, seeing it as a measure of retribution against the man who had placed their nation on the wrong road to a glorious future seventy years earlier. Whatever the reason, on October 7, the museum was closed down for a week. Although the doors reopened on October 13, the one-week hiatus was a sign of things to come. Like the statues at MGU that were slowly pushed out of a room, the museum was gradually being liquidated. A cult museum to the disgraced leader of the fallen state could not exist in the heart of the reborn nation. In early 1994, the doors of the museum closed for the final time. Museum supporters continued to fight for the reopening of the museum, but to no avail. The die had been cast. As one former

80. Ibid., p. 13

81. Ibid., p. 12

employee of the museum bemoaned, while hawking the works of Lenin in front of the fenced-off museum in October 1994: "no one wants to learn about Lenin anymore. Lenin is dead".⁸²

The liquidation of the Central Lenin Museum, a cornerstone of the Lenin cult, indicated just how deeply de-Leninization had set in. What had begun as a sporadic movement on the cult's peripheries a few years earlier, had now reached the very heart of the cult. From the least to the greatest, from the trivial to the magnificent, monuments, museums and myths of Lenin were being methodically destroyed. With the closure of the Lenin museum in Moscow, notice was given that no temple of the Lenin cult was sacred anymore. This became unmistakably clear in 1994 when an all-out attack was launched against the holiest relic of the Lenin cult --the Lenin mausoleum -- that golden calf on Red Square.

The Lenin mausoleums with the preserved remains of V.I. Lenin had been the Mecca of the communist world since 1924.⁸³ For almost 70 years, pilgrims flocked to the mausoleum in dizzying numbers, always ready to stand in the endless line to catch a glimpse of their vozhd.⁸⁴ As the myths of Lenin were

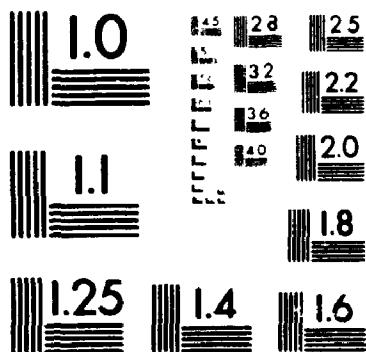
82. As told to the author in Moscow, October 1994.

83. Several different Lenin mausoleums, the first one made of wood, were built in the years after Lenin's death. The Granite and marble edifice that stands on Red Square today was erected in the late 1920s and opened to the public in 1930.

84. Between 1924-1994, it is estimated that more than 150 million people passed through the Lenin mausoleum. Volkogonov, p. 442

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PM-1 3½"x4" PHOTOGRAPHIC MICROCOPY TARGET
NBS 1010a ANSI/ISO #2 EQUIVALENT



PRECISIONSM RESOLUTION TARGETS

dispelled, however, the line of worshippers before the tomb dwindled steadily. By 1992, it had disappeared altogether, unmistakable proof that worship of Lenin's mummy could only exist in a totalitarian state dominated by dogmatic thinking.⁸⁵ Anti-Leninist crusaders seized on the mausoleum's declining popularity and attempted to send it down the same path as the Central Lenin Museum. Repeated demands for the closure of the mausoleum and the burial of Lenin were made; the mausoleum's hours of operation were reduced; and on October 6, 1993, Post #1, the honour guard that maintained a twenty-four hour vigil over Lenin since his death, was abolished.⁸⁶ Lenin's tomb was not to go down without a fight. Although only a few had come forth to defend other failing icons of the Lenin cult in their hour of need, public response to the threat to Lenin's body was more animated. Lenin's myths may have been destroyed and his godlike status debunked, but many refused to allow the body of the man they had worshipped to be defiled. This was demonstrated over and over again between 1991 and 1995. For example, in November 1991, there was a mass outcry when it was reported that the Soviet government was preparing to sell Lenin's body. Internal Affairs Minister Viktor Brannikov acted swiftly to defuse the volatile situation. He

85. Ibid, p. 445

86. Nezavisimaja gazeta, October 10, 1993: In a poll of 1500 Russians conducted in December 1993, the removal of Post #1 ranked as the tenth most important event of 1993. Moskovskii novosti, January 2-9, No. 1, 1994.

dismissed the report as a "shameless provocation" and denied any rumours that he had been told "to prepare the body of V.I. Lenin to be sold for hard currency at an international auction".⁸⁷ Similarly, public outrage compelled the government to reject outright a proposal by Armenian promoter Stas Namin to take Lenin's mummy on a world tour.⁸⁸ The most visible display of support for the Lenin mausoleum began in October 1993, following the removal of Post #1. On the day Lenin's guard walked away from his tomb, Itar-tass reported that a presidential decree was in the making that would lead to Lenin's burial. Outraged communists flocked to Red Square. Fearing that Lenin's body would be removed from the tomb under the cover of darkness, as Stalin's had been, the demonstrators held a twenty-four hour vigil for several weeks in order to "prevent sacrilege".⁸⁹

The voices of Lenin's defenders could not be ignored and his body was left on display in Red Square.⁹⁰ However, anti-Leninists did not give up their fight to purge the land of all

87. Izvestiia, November 7, 1991

88. The Whig Standard (Kingston, Ontario), January 14, 1992

89. Moscow Weekly, #2, 1994

90. On October 21, 1993, it was officially confirmed that the embalmed body of Lenin would remain in the mausoleum for the time being. Although a draft decree ordering the eviction had been drafted, President Yeltsin had not signed it. On behalf of the president, it was explained that "it would be best not to disturb the mummified leader of the world proletariat in any way before [1994] and to allow the Federal Assembly to decide the question of reburying the body". Izvestiia, October 21, 1993

traces of the Lenin cult, including the Lenin mausoleum. They simply changed tactics. Realizing that the popularity of Lenin's mummy was partly attributable to the mystery that shrouded it, they resolved to strip away Lenin's mystique with scientific evidence. Lenin's brain was the first mystical part of his anatomy to face serious scientific reappraisal. Under microscopic scrutiny at Moscow's Institute of Brain since 1924, Lenin's brain had long been touted by Soviet officials and scientists alike as vastly superior to other great minds on a molecular level. In January 1994, this facade was dropped. The director of the Institute admitted that although scientists had sliced Lenin's grey matter into 30 963 pieces, they had found no scientific evidence to suggest that Lenin had been a mental superman. Indeed, the director conceded, Lenin's brain had been slightly smaller than average.⁹¹

Lenin's body came under similar scientific scrutiny in 1994. For thirty years the chemical formula used to preserve Lenin's tissues had been jealously guarded by the army of scientists at Moscow's Institute of Biological Structures, who attended the corpse. By not revealing the chemical combination that made Lenin's preservation possible, the state had been able to foster the notion of the incorruptibility of Lenin's remains.⁹² Many sceptics, lacking solid scientific evidence,

91. Volkogonov, Lenin, p. 447

92. In Lenin Lives, Tumarkin explained that the incorruptibility of remains was often associated with Orthodox saints. The secrecy that surrounded the preservation of Lenin

rejected outright the boast of the state that the formula used to preserve Lenin was "one of the greatest discoveries of Soviet science",⁹³ and concluded instead that the body on display in the mausoleum was actually a wax dummy.⁹⁴

That the body in the tomb was real and subject to decay was confirmed by Argumenty i Fakty in January 1994. The Moscow weekly published a grid map that was used by Lenin's caretakers to maintain Lenin's appearance. The grid was made up of forty drawings of Lenin's head and hands, with each square focusing on a different anatomical detail (Illustration 17). The map was accompanied by a brief caption that explained that a whole series of photographs, based on the grid pattern, was taken every time the body was "washed" with the preservative treatment formula. The photographs were then compared with those from the previous treatment to ensure that the "God Ilich" did not undergo noticeable facial change.⁹⁵

More of the mystery surrounding Lenin's mummy fell away in September 1994, when the impoverished Centre for Biological Structures announced its willingness to "market" its anti-

was probably intended to lead people to conclude that Lenin's remains were naturally incorruptible. (p. 5)

93. Bolshaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopediia, 2nd ed. (Moscow, 1953), vol. 9, p. 98

94. Scepticism over the existence of an embalming formula abounded. Much of the scepticism stemmed from the refusal of the cash-strapped Soviet government to sell the secrets of mummification to the capitalist west, despite offers of "enormous money". Novoe vremia, 1993, No. 42, p. 17

95. Argumenty i fakty January 2-3, 1994

bacterial solution used in the preservation of Lenin. Prior to this, embalming had been reserved for the communist elite, including Lenin, Mao, Ho Chi Minh, and, for a while, Stalin. However, when the Biological Institute offered its service to anyone in the world, capitalist or communist, for \$300 000 to \$500 000 (US), the unique and honoured position of the communist mummies was eliminated.

The final assault on the secrecy surrounding Lenin's corpse began in January 1995, just in time to coincide with the 71st anniversary of Lenin's death. Three days before the anniversary was to be marked, Izvestiia published a letter by the late Boris Khomutov, a Doctor of Biological Science who attended Lenin's corpse for more than thirty years.⁹⁶ Khomutov, who wrote the article shortly before his death as a scientific testament, broke the vow of silence observed by generations of scientists and described in detail the history of Lenin's mummy. He explained that the basic chemical formula used to preserve the body had been worked out in the late nineteenth century by Russian scientist N. Melnikov-Razvednikov and modified by V. Vorobev at the time of Lenin's death. When first preserved in 1924, and in every subsequent treatment since, the body of Lenin was put through a three-step embalming process. First, the body was treated with a water and formaldehyde solution. When the body was thoroughly soaked, an ethyl alcohol compound was applied. Finally, the entire body

96. Izvestiia, January 18, 1995

was submerged in the embalming solution, which was composed of glycerine and acetate potassium.

More startling than the chemical formula divulged by Khomutov was his revelation that "as it turns out, the methods of Melnikov-Razvednikov not only do not work, but have actually advanced the processes of [tissue] destruction". He explained that considerable damage was done to the body in the first decade of preservation thanks to the harsh chemicals in the embalming fluid and the body's storage in an oxygen atmosphere at the comparatively high temperature of sixteen degrees centigrade. The result, Khomutov confirmed, was the "destruction of the body's tissues (the main one being the skin!) and the gradual change [in the corpse's] appearance". For decades Soviet scientists, unwilling to admit defeat and to face the wrath of the Party, covered up signs of the mummy's destruction. The unstoppable withering of Lenin's skin, which caused a "noticeable change in the amounts of soft tissue on the face and hands", was masked with injections of paraffine, glycerine and carotin,⁹⁷ while the unnatural texture and colour of the dead flesh was disguised with ultraviolet light and filtered glass.⁹⁸

97. Ibid

98. The process involved in camouflaging Lenin's inhuman complexion was divulged in February, 1995, by glass technician Mikhail Itkin, who worked on the development of Lenin's fourth sarcophagus in 1982. Itkin revealed that under normal lighting, Lenin's face and hands are a "bright chestnut" colour. He also explained that the special glass developed for Lenin's sarcophagus was tested on another corpse, so as not to

Khomutov denounced the claims of fellow scientists that the body of Lenin could be preserved unchanged for an indefinite period of time. He insisted that one look at "the [object] inside the sarcophagus without its special rubber coveralls" would be enough to sway anyone to his point of view. Khomutov concluded that due to the condition of the mummy, "it is absolutely absurd and even immoral to preserve the body of Lenin" any longer.⁹⁹

Khomutov was not the first to suggest that it was "immoral" to continue to preserve Lenin's corpse. Many, including Leningrad/St. Petersburg Mayor Anatoli Sobchak, had insisted since the early 1990s that it was necessary to inter the body of Lenin at Volkova cemetery in St. Petersburg, next to the bodies of his family members, in accordance with Christian tradition. Sobchak's reference to the Orthodox religion, that opium of the Russian people which Lenin had so avidly campaigned against, was not an isolated incident. By the early 1990s, Russia was experiencing a major religious revival, a situation that had been brought on by Gorbachev's relaxation of restrictions on worship. Free of the fear of religious persecution, closet Christians flooded into the arms

damage Lenin's mummy any further. Komsomolskaia pravda, February 17, 1995

99. Izvestiia, January 18, 1995

of the church in the latter half of the 1980s.¹⁰⁰ Increased tolerance of religion seriously undermined the cult of Lenin and sped up its decline. Lenin, the god of Bolshevism, could not compete on an even playing field with the Gods of Christianity and Judaism. He could only remain a deity so long as he was the only God allowed in the state's pantheon and so long as his religion, communism, was the only choice for worshippers. The admittance of a rival god or ideology into the Soviet heavens doomed Lenin to be cast out.

The exodus from the Lenin cult into the arms of religion began in earnest in the early 1990s, when people began to recognize fully the demonic nature of the Bolshevik deity and the bankruptcy of the communist faith. Just as people had sought a new batiushka after Bloody Sunday in 1905, and had eventually settled on Lenin, an alternative receptacle for people's faith was required when Lenin lost his appeal. That religion was already on the rebound greatly contributed to the speed with which many fled the cult of Lenin. Religion provided a ready-made alternative to faith in communism and Lenin.

That religion filled a void in the lives of the masses left by the retreating Lenin cult was evidenced by a proliferation of churches and religious monuments that countered the rapid decline in the trappings of the Lenin cult.

100. Between 1985 and July 1990, there was a fifty percent increase in the number of religious associations in the USSR. Argumenty i fakty August (#32), 1990, p.8

At the same time that the Central Lenin Museum was being methodically liquidated, a block away on Red Square, the Kazan Cathedral, razed by Stalin in the 1930s, was being rebuilt.¹⁰¹ Virtually everywhere that holy temples to Lenin were being torn down and boarded up, religious shrines were popping up.¹⁰² Just as the communists had converted Christian churches into Bolshevik temples after the revolution,¹⁰³ in the late 1980s and early 1990s Christians cast out communist institutions to make room for religious worship.¹⁰⁴

The return of religion was accompanied by the revival of another pre-revolutionary sentiment that contributed to the speedy collapse of the Lenin cult: monarchism. Seventy years of Soviet rule led a substantial percentage of the Russian

101. The cathedral was consecrated by Patriarch Alexei II in November, 1993. Significantly, the ceremony was attended both by Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov. Nezavisimaia gazeta, November 5, 1993.

102. Religion even managed to force Lenin from one of the Soviet Union's most reliable indoctrinational institutions: the prison. In an article entitled "Prisoners Lose Lenin, Gain Jesus", Moscow Times columnist Anton Zhigulsky explained that the Lenin Room in Moscow's Prison No. 5 was converted into an Orthodox chapel after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Moscow Times, October 28, 1994

103. After the revolution, dozens of Orthodox churches were converted into planetariums to act as a "counterweight" to religion. Through planetary science, "the Bolsheviks wanted to show the masses that there was no God, that there were no angels, and that the planets revolved according to scientific laws". Moscow Times, February 2, 1995

104. By July 1990, twenty-one state-owned buildings had been converted into religious monasteries (Argumenty i fakty, 1990, No. 32, p. 11). In late 1994, a planetarium, housed in the shell of an old Orthodox church, was restored to the church. Moscow News, February 2, 1995

proletariat to reconsider the harsh destruction of the monarchy in 1917. This change of heart came to many once it was learned that Lenin had played a major role in the 1918 execution of the Tsar and his family.¹⁰⁵ The executions were widely denounced as "the most terrible and most sinister crime of the twentieth century" and as a "villainous plot against Russia, its foundations, and the things that it held sacred".¹⁰⁶ The myth of the tsar, it appears, did not entirely perish on Bloody Sunday. Just as "Back to Lenin" had been a catch phrase in Soviet days, "Back to the Monarchy" became popular in the early 1990s. This phrase was not simply waved around by a few radical or reactionary elements in society. Many saw tsarism as a viable alternative to Lenin and thus did not hesitate to flee the cult of Lenin. Indeed, by November, 1994, eighteen percent of Russians and twenty-five percent of Muscovites considered it desirable to restore the monarchy.¹⁰⁷

The scientific and historical revelations about Lenin after 1990, not to mention religious and monarchist revivalism, caused all but a tiny vanguard of diehard disciples to forsake the Lenin cult. Though a few hardline communists such as Nina Andreeva continued to champion Leninism and to espouse the genius of Lenin, others, either less committed or more

105. Lenin's role in the murder was outlined by Edward Radzinsky in The Last Tsar (1992).

106. Literaturnaia Rossiia, February 5, 1991

107. Segodnia, November 2, 1994

realistic, abandoned Lenin's cult once his myths were destroyed. Even arch-conservative Yegor Ligachev, who ardently supported Andreeva's highly publicized crusade against the critical reevaluation of the Soviet past in 1988, was compelled to admit in 1991 that "Vladimir Ilich was a man, not a god".¹⁰⁸

At about the same time that Ligachev conceded Lenin's mortality, primary school curriculum finally began to wiggle out from under the thumb of the Lenin cult. The rest of society, including children in the more advanced grades, were released from the spell of the cult as early as 1988, but primary school children continued to be indoctrinated with the Lenin cult right up until the final collapse of the Soviet Union.¹⁰⁹ As was shown in chapter three, the cult of Lenin was propagated most heavily amongst primary aged children, because they were the most easily influenced. For the most part, young children remained ignorant of Lenin's fall from grace in the late-soviet era, and thus remained susceptible to the myths of the Lenin cult. The monolithic Soviet educational system had a series of well-defined learning outcomes for students, and it was in the best interests of teachers to

108. Remnick, pp. 72-77: A complete transcript of Andreeva's letter is contained in Eisen, pp. 24-31

109. In June, 1988, high school history exams were cancelled in the USSR. The cancellation, hailed as "the victory of common sense" (*Izvestiia*, June 10, 1988), resulted in the publication of more than 400 new school textbooks in the next two years. Ibid, February 14, 1990

ensure that their students achieved them all, including outdated ones related to the virtues of Lenin. Accordingly, teachers continued to portray the three shades of Lenin as exemplars all.

The stubborn survival of the Lenin cult for children was reflected in primary school readers. For example, in a standard 1989 kindergarten reader, a large colour portrait of Lenin graced the front page, while page two contained the reassuring promise to Soviet parents that "your [children] will learn to read and write... the words which are the most dear and the closest to all of our [hearts]: **Mama, Homeland, Lenin**".¹¹⁰ In a grade one reader of the same year, children were greeted by a similar portrait of Grandpa Ilich and received Maiakovskii's sixty-five year old message -- "Lenin lived, Lenin lives, Lenin will live".¹¹¹ By mid-1991, Lenin was beginning to fade from the limelight in primary schools. No portrait of the vozhd filled the front page of that year's Bukvar, and Maiakovskii's familiar refrain was no where to be found. However, Lenin was not completely purged. On page one

110. V.G. Goretskii, V.A. Kiriushkin, Bukvar, 9th ed. (Moscow, 1989), pp. 1-2. Emphasis in the original.

111. V.G. Goretskii, V.A. Kiriushkin, Azbuka, (Moscow, 1989), pp. 2-3; In February 1995, Moscow journal novoe vremia (1995, No. 6, p. 58) spoofed Lenin's regular appearance in children's readers. Expressing the opinion that Lenin was more a criminal than an exemplar, Lenin appeared on the cover of an Azbuka, dressed in prisoner's stripes. On his chest was his party card number, 00000001, transformed by Lenin's garb to imply that he was criminal #1.

of the reader, the name of Lenin continued to rank alongside "Mama" and "Homeland" as one of the three most important words in a child's vocabulary.¹¹²

Until mid-1991, the cult of Lenin for children was sustained in the press as well as in classroom texts. Inexplicably, Moskovskii komsomolets and other news agencies, while actively participating in the destruction of the cult, continued to promote the myth that Lenin was the best friend of all children, a strong indicator that not all conservative elements had been purged from the press. The myth of Lenin's friendship and love for young people was reinforced in January 1991, by the story "Marcia and Lenin". In the story, a young girl, picking apples in the countryside, happened upon Lenin, who was sitting on a bench at his estate. When Lenin noticed the interloper he responded with delight. "Oh what a good girl", he said and gave her a piece of candy. Krupskaja, who was sitting with Lenin on the bench, told the girl: "Remember that this is Lenin. He gives candy to everyone". The happy scenario soured when Trotsky pulled up in a big black car. Trotsky got out of the car and promptly scolded Lenin. "Why is there an outsider on the grounds?", he demanded to know, "and why are you squandering candy? I'm going to tell Josef Vissarionovich everything". Marcia was forced to return the candy. As she left the grounds she reached the conclusion that

112. V.G. Goretskii, V.A. Kiriushkin, Bukvar, 11th ed, (Moscow, 1991)

"Lenin is a good uncle and Trotsky is a bad uncle".¹¹³

By the middle of 1991, indoctrinational material, such as "Marcia and Lenin", appeared less and less frequently. Once the hammer and sickle was lowered for the last time from the roof of the Kremlin, it disappeared altogether. In 1992 a new series of primary textbooks that aimed at education, not indoctrination, were published. For the first time in sixty years, Lenin was not included in the primary school curriculum.¹¹⁴

By February 1995, Lenin had been almost completely purged from the primary classroom. At Moscow's kindergarten No. 958 and primary school No. 109, both located in the city's 9th mezhraion, barely a trace of Lenin could be found. His portraits, which had long enjoyed pride of place at the front of each classroom, had been taken down more than two years earlier and his busts, which had greeted students at the schools' front doors every morning for years, had been exiled to the boiler rooms.¹¹⁵ Only a few children's texts about

113. Moskovskii komsomolets, January 5, 1991

114. The new texts resembled western-style readers more than their Soviet equivalents. Political material was completely purged as the new emphasis was placed on play, fun and imagination. Examples of this new style of text include: G. Ananov, V. Sviridov, Azbuka v komiksakh (Moscow, 1992); V. Gusev and Alexander Shibaev, Azbuka v kartinakh dlia malyshei (Moscow, 1993); N.V. Nechaeva, Bukvar, 2nd ed, (Samara, 1994)

115. Natalia Andreeva, a teacher at kindergarten (detskii sad) 958, revealed that monuments to Lenin were taken down in late 1991. She explained that "no one told us to take them down ... it was just time". School visit, February 10, 1995 (Moscow)

Lenin in the schools' libraries hinted that these institutions had served as propaganda factories during Soviet days.

Liudmila Borisovna, a young teacher at Kindergarten 958, was eager to reassure that the cult of Lenin for children no longer lived in her classroom. She produced her teaching manual, a copy of Vasil'eva's 1985 methodology, and proudly pointed out that all the sections dealing with Lenin had been inked out. "These no longer concern us at all", she said, referring to learning outcomes that related to Lenin. "They have been entirely removed from our program".¹¹⁶ The four-year old children in Borisovna's class confirmed their teacher's claim. Whereas children in Soviet days were taught to identify Lenin even before they could speak, not one of the students in Borisovna's class was able to identify Lenin from his portrait (See Appendix II). The ignorance of the children, or perhaps it was their innocence, sent out one message loud and clear. The cult of Lenin is no more. Lenin is dead.

Kindergarten 958 and primary school 109 were not the only children's institutions to forsake Lenin. Throughout the former Soviet Union, schools, like society at large, acknowledged the falsity of the Bolshevik God and repudiated his icons. This was demonstrated when one Moscow kindergarten abandoned its Soviet-era home to make room for an orphanage. The school staffers meticulously transferred all of their

116. Personal interview with teacher Liudmila Borisovna, Detskii sad 958, Moscow. February 10, 1995

supplies to their new premises, leaving behind only two useless items: a copy of Krupskaja's Vospominaniia o Lenine, and a large bronze bust of Lenin. The director of the children's home made it very clear that these relics of a bygone era had no place in her orphanage either.¹¹⁷ She pointed at Lenin's bust, relegated to storage in a cardboard box, and explained, "we try to hide him". She then ventured: "Maybe we should use him for fundraising. Anyone want to buy a Lenin statue?".¹¹⁸

117. In Soviet days, it will be recalled, orphanages had provided some of the most fertile grounds for propagating the cult of Lenin.

118. Moscow Times, January 25, 1995

Chapter Five**Lenin Today... and Tomorrow?**

There can be no doubt that the cult of Lenin has ceased to exist in the former Soviet Union. Anyone who attended the seventy-first anniversary memorial in Moscow to mark the occasion of Lenin's death can testify to this fact. The event, attended by fewer than one hundred Lenin disciples, was a fiasco. A small core of demonstrators, barred from Red Square by a presidential decree, huddled together in Ploshchad' Revoliutsii, singing the praises of Lenin (Illustration 24). Although their words were sincere and their intentions genuine, the effectiveness of their demonstration was undermined by a number of factors. First of all, there was the hulking skeleton of the former Lenin Museum, which towered over the square. The darkened windows stared emptily out at the sombre gathering, betraying no traces of the vital cult temple that had once operated within. Secondly, there was the Coca-Cola stand to which the communist demonstrators flocked to refresh themselves. True, demonstrating is thirsty work, but it seemed incongruous for defenders of Lenin to pay their homage at a capitalist kiosk. Third, there was Alexander Koklenkov, a dead-ringer for Lenin who circulated through the crowd, offering people the opportunity to have a polaroid taken with the immortal Lenin for a mere 15 000 rubles (Illustration 23). Koklenkov was asked to comment on the irony of "Lenin" selling

his image, but agreed to discuss the subject only if I agreed to hand over his 15 000 ruble sum. Fourth, there were the demonstrators themselves, not a single one of them under the age of forty. No movement can survive without youth. The collapse of the Lenin cult in the classroom, the failure of communist youth organizations, and the enthusiasm with which most young people greeted the dawn of capitalism in Russia has deprived the Lenin cult of any future recruits (Illustrations 19, 20 & Appendix II).¹ Finally, there was the procession to Lenin's tomb, an event originally scheduled for 6:50 pm, the exact time that "the heart of the earth's greatest son stopped beating".² However, by 5:15 pm the demonstrators were growing restless. Although they claimed that the day's frigid temperatures only brought them closer to Lenin, who died on an equally cold day, they were eager to get the demonstration over with and leave the square. Accordingly, the decision was made to move the procession up an hour or so. At 5:30, the demonstrators passed onto Red Square and gathered before the tomb. Flowers were placed on the mausoleum's steps, and a minute of silence was observed at 5:35 pm. Then the disciples

1. The Communist youth organizations collapsed at the same time as the Soviet Union. Some ardent communists are attempting to revive the Pioneer organizations, but with little success. Currently, the Pioneer Organization in Moscow has two members. Moskovskii komsomolets. January 22, 1995

2. Golos kommunista No. 1, January 19, 1995: This phrase was used almost every year when discussing the death of Lenin, and indicates how unchanging the language and ritual associated with the Lenin cult have always been. A virtually identical phrase appeared in Izvestiia on January 21, 1937

of Lenin quickly turned and hurried from the square. It was too cold, everyone agreed, to stand around any longer.

A tour of former hot spots of the Lenin cult demonstrates that the lack of enthusiasm for Lenin that was displayed on the anniversary of his death was not an isolated incident. On the November, 1994 day that I visited Lenin's house museum at Leninskii-Gorki, one of the two surviving Lenin museums in the former Soviet Union, I was the museum's only visitor of the day; actually, according to curator Alexandra Grigorovna, I was the only visitor in the last three days. A similar result greeted me when I returned to visit the estate's huge political museum, formerly a museum to Lenin. Lenin still dominates, despite the museum's name change, but he plays to an empty house. The lights were shut off when I entered the building. The cash-strapped museum, explained curator Sergei Chipkov, was trying to save money. No one had visited in the last two days anyway, so why bother illuminating the cavernous halls? (Illustration 16). The museum had drawn more than 350 000 visitors in 1987. In the first two months of 1995, less than 1000 people made the trek to Leninskii-Gorki.³

The barren halls at Leninskii-Gorki are not the only signs that the Lenin cult has totally and utterly collapsed. A walk through Izmailovskii Park in Moscow screams this fact loudly.

3. The other surviving Lenin Museum, the huge memorial complex at Ulianovsk, is in a similar plight. Attendance has fallen by more than eighty-five percent in the last five years. The Moscow Tribune, November 22, 1994

Everywhere, Lenin's image stares out at consumers. His face appears on T-shirts, crowned by a familiar set of rabbit ears or encased between the golden arches of "McLenin's". Like toy soldiers, his busts line table after table and can be fetched for less than the price of a Big Mac at the nation's new capitalist Mecca. Beautiful silk flags and banners with his image emblazoned on them flap loudly in the wind, week after week, as few people, western or Russian, want to take Lenin home with them. Lenin's books, the bibles of communism, fare just as poorly. One salesman of Lenin texts, clearly frustrated with the lack of interest that people expressed in his material one October day, held aloft a volume of Lenin's Polnoe sobranie sochinenii and enticed buyers by shouting: "Get your Lenin books here! See why our country is so fucked up!". This innovative merchant at Izmailovskii Park was not the only dealer in Lenin to experience frustration. In November 1994, a complete set of fifty-five volumes of the fifth edition of Lenin's works sold for a mere fifteen dollars at the Pushkinskaia bookstore near the Kremlin. In contrast, a single issue of Cosmopolitan fetched more than eight dollars.

The above examples demonstrate how dramatically the priorities of Russians have changed in recent years. Capitalism rules in Moscow and in Russia as a whole. A quick trip to the Olympic complex near Sparrow Hills, formerly Lenin Hills, provides the most graphic example of this. In front of the Olympic stadium and beneath the watchful eye of a massive

statue of Lenin, tens of thousands of merchants and consumers gather daily to engage in capitalist exchange (Illustration 22). Lenin's mummy would surely roll over in its sarcophagus if it saw the line of women's underwear that was frequently tied to the base of his monument.

The irreverence accorded Lenin by many today, begs the question: did people ever really worship Lenin and buy into the myths of his cult? or did the population simply pay lip service to the Lenin cult so as to avoid incurring the suspicion or wrath of the Communist Party? This is a very difficult question for a historian to answer, for it demands that one depart somewhat from the familiar ground of facts and events, and foray into the realm of psychological conjecture. It is a difficult thing to say what people thought. With this disclaimer made, it is possible to conclude that the masses truly did buy into Lenin's cult myths. Lenin was a welcome father figure who embodied all things noble.

As explained by Robert McNeal,

The mythological Lenin [was] all things to all men. To the Party member he [was], of course, the founder of the Bolshevik state. To the soldier, he [was] the founder of the Red Army (so it [was] said). To the intellectual he [was] the brilliant and versatile scholar with an appreciation of all the arts. To the industrial worker, he [was] the advocate of electrification and shorter working hours. To the peasant, he [was] the champion against the landlords and the architect of a workers' and peasants' dictatorship. To the patriot he [was] an outstanding Russian who saved his country from foreign invasion ...To the schoolchild, he [was] the benevolent

'uncle'...⁴

Staggering attendance figures at Lenin museums, though somewhat deceptive owing to excursions organized by the Communist Party, also testify to the respect people felt for Lenin. Throughout the Soviet era, all the major cult sites to Lenin were hives of activity.

Many people today deny that they ever worshipped Lenin and partake in virulent Lenin-bashing to demonstrate their opposition to the cult. It is likely that for a high percentage of these people, however, disdain for Lenin is a facade designed to hide their embarrassment or disillusionment. That this is the case for at least some Russians, was demonstrated by a successful young construction worker, Zhenia, in St. Petersburg on the seventy-seventh anniversary of the October Revolution. Zhenia spent the entire day trying to convince his Canadian friends that he had never bowed before Lenin. Why, he asked, would anyone worship a man who strangled rabbits (!?). However, as the night wore on and Zhenia's tongue was loosened by vodka, his anti-Leninist facade came down. He revealed that he had been a Pioneer leader, orchestrated a Lenin evening in his school, and made a special pilgrimage to Moscow to see the mummy of Lenin when he was fifteen. Zhenia even went so far as to invoke the prayer of the Lenin cult, "If only Lenin had lived a little longer..."

4. McNeal, p. 69

Russian journalist Maria Rozonova agrees that more people revered Lenin than currently own up to it. When discussing the claims by many that there had never been genuine cult worship of Lenin, she asked: "but if there was nothing, if there was not a saint for millions of contemporaries who were filled with belief, hope and love for the words 'Lenin' and 'revolution', then where did children get such strange names as Vladlen (Vladimir Lenin), Vili (Vladimir Ilich) and Marlen (Marx-Lenin) ...?".⁵

More concrete evidence that cult worship of Lenin abounded in Soviet Russia are the admissions of prominent academicians and intellectuals that they were disciples of Lenin. Most notably, Dmitri Volkogonov, the heretic who unmasked Lenin, admitted to his fellow Russians that he had been a faithful Leninist before learning the truth about Lenin. Shamelessly, Volkogonov confessed that he had remained committed to Lenin despite the fact that "Lenin's regime" executed his father as an "enemy of the people" and condemned his mother to servitude in the Gulag.⁶ Not excusing himself, Volkogonov insisted that "many people, hypnotized by the sheer scale of [Lenin's] greatness, believed in the holiness of the Bolshevik leader".⁷

There are several reasons why the cult of Lenin faltered

5. Novoe vremia, 1993, No. 31, p. 50

6. "How a True Leninist Exposed the "Anti-Christ'" in The Moscow Times. January 25, 1995

7. Volkogonov, Lenin. p. 328

and collapsed in Soviet Russia. First of all, as was argued in the foregoing pages, the failure of the Soviet state's monopoly over information resulted in the exhumation of the historical Lenin and led people to question the omnipotence of Lenin. Lenin's cult myths, though constructed solidly, collapsed like a house of cards when the media was able to present accurate scientific and historical information about Lenin.

Secondly, the failure of the Soviet system and the mass exodus from the Communist Party undermined the foundations of the Lenin cult.⁸ As was argued above, the cult of Lenin had been intimately connected with the Party and the regime for seven decades and could not disentangle itself when the Soviet ship began to go down. Lenin was the father of the Soviet Union and the Russian Communist Party. When the Soviet system failed, people directed a considerable amount of their bitterness towards Lenin and blamed him for their tragic lives.

Boredom was a major contributor to the decline of the Lenin cult. The Soviet people had been bombarded incessantly with Lenin propaganda since the dawn of Soviet time. Year after year, the Party propaganda machine force-fed the population sickening doses of Lenin. From infancy to senility, there was no escaping Lenin. All year long, but especially on the occasion of important Soviet or Lenin anniversaries, the image and words of the nation's founding father were

8. By September 1991, only 2.3 percent of the population fully trusted the CPSU. Izvestiia, October 1, 1991

The collapse of the cult of Lenin does not mean that Lenin will fade from the collective memory and cease to play a role in Russia. Many people continue to place a great deal of faith in Lenin's ideology, as evidenced by the fact that the Communist Party remains the largest single party in the former Soviet Union today. Despite Lenin's fall from grace, communists continue to rally beneath the banner of Lenin. At the 3rd Congress of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (CPRF), held in January 1995, Party leader Gennady Zyuganov insisted that Lenin still has significance today. From beneath a massive bust of Lenin, Zyuganov told the more than 300 delegates gathered in Moscow's House of Unions that the Communist Party programme "is a confident look to the future of Russia and of all humanity".¹¹ (Illustration 18)

The cult of Lenin no longer functions in Soviet Russia, but it is still a highly visible part of society. Tens of thousands of monuments to the vozhd of the revolution remain. Many remain simply because no one has bothered to take them down. Others, like a mural of Lenin on the wall of a toy factory at Zagorsk, are no longer maintained and will eventually fall to ruin (Illustration 21). Still others, are actually being restored and cared for, saved by their artistic and historical value and nothing more.

Artistic and historic value will not save Lenin's mummy. More than sixty percent of Russians believe that it is time to

11. The Moscow Tribune. January 24, 1995

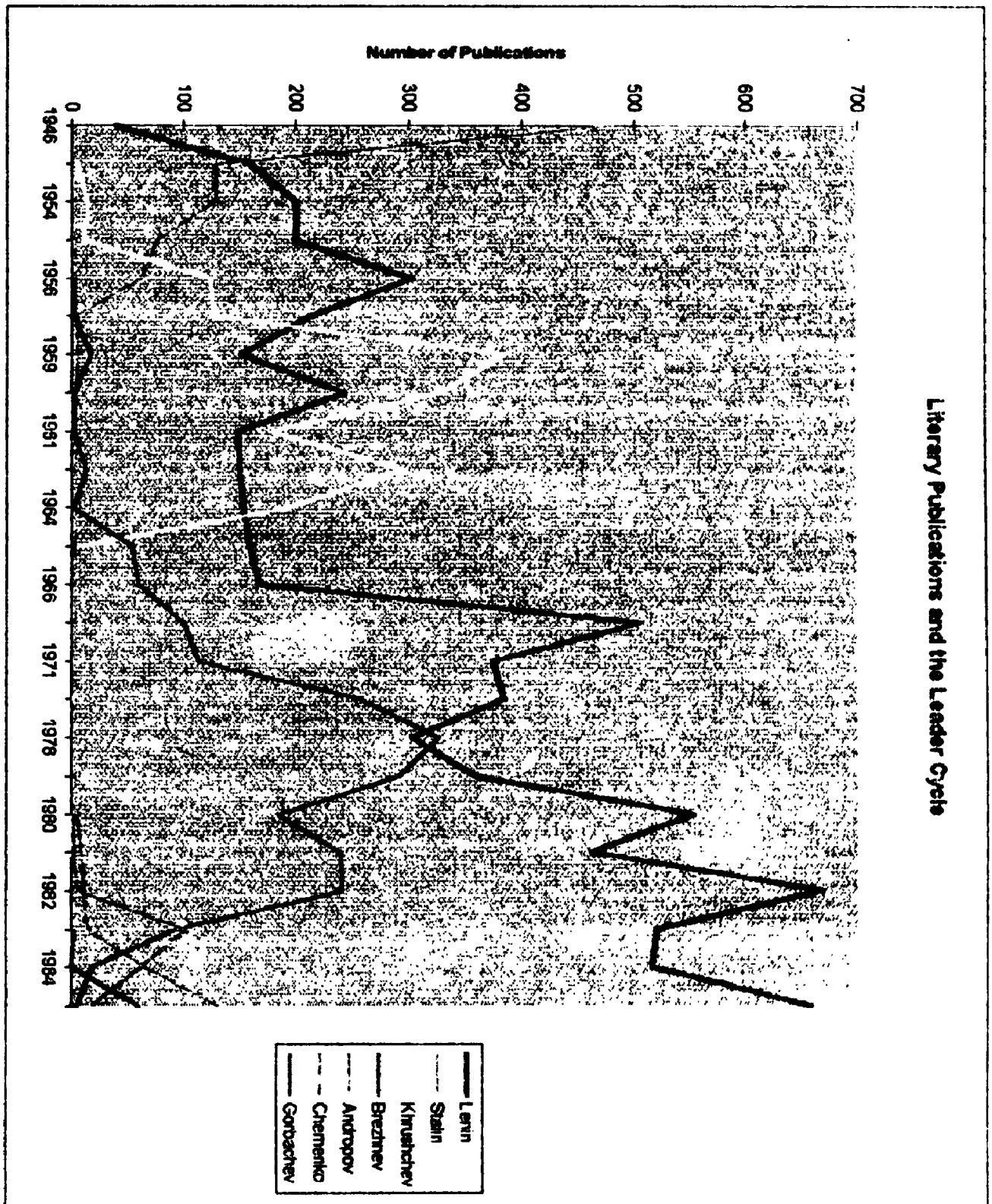
bury Lenin, an act which many believe will put an end to the "misfortunes" that continue to plague the nation. Soon, probably within the next year, the doors of the mausoleum will close for the last time and Lenin will finally be laid to rest. But for now, he remains in his familiar position on Red Square, resting in the bowels of the golden calf that has been his home for the last seventy-one years. His mausoleum, located at the very heart of Russia, no longer represents eternity and immortality, two qualities its architects meant to imply. Rather, Lenin's tomb is a relic of a bygone era. Like the pyramids of Egypt or the Acropolis in Athens, it is a symbol of the hopes and ambitions of a proud race of people who thought they would rule the world forever, but were wrong.¹² Like the monument to Ramses II in Shelley's poem Ozymandius, Lenin's mausoleum has survived his empire. It stands like a silent sentinel, a message etched on its edifice as clearly as that on the base of the statue of Ramses II - I am Lenin, king of kings. Look on my works, ye mighty, and despair.

12. Significantly, when the Russian leaders climbed atop the mausoleum on May 9, 1995 to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of V-E Day, Lenin's name was covered up.

Appendix I

The Leader Cycle and Soviet Publications
Number of Titles by Soviet Leaders

Year	Lenin	Stalin	Khrushchev	Brezhnev	Andropov	Chernenko	Gorbachev
1946	39	480					
1953	160	128	5				
1954	201	128	14				
1955	200	76	11				
1956	302	62	124	2			
1957	213	4	126	2			
1959	151	4	385	17			
1960	243	5	328	2			
1961	148	2	178	1			
1962	150		294	13			
1964	153		192	2			
1965	159		6	54			
1966	168			60			
1970	507			100			
1971	374			113			
1974	384			256			
1978	302	2		326			
1979	359			291			
1980	553			184	1		
1981	461			239	1		
1982	668			240	6		
1983	520			92	102		
1984	515			18	61		
1985	657	1		5	18		
1986							60



Source: Korsch, Table D

Appendix II

The information presented in the following three sets of graphs was gathered at Moscow's kindergarten 958 and primary school 109 on February 10, 1995. The findings illustrate how dramatically the Lenin cult has been purged from primary curriculum in the former Soviet Union.

The children in the classes ranged from four to eleven years of age. The male/ female ratio was approximately 50:50. Class sizes varied from 11 to 27 students. The chart below provides specific class size information.


School/ Class	Number of Students/Age
Kindergarten 958/ 2B	11 / 4
Kindergarten. 958/ 3G	15 / 5
Primary School 109/ 3A	26 / 8-9
Primary School 109/ 4A	27 / 9-10
Primary School 109/ 5B	22 / 10-11

Appendix B: Question One

[A portrait of Lenin was displayed and the children were asked]


"Do You Know Who This Man Is?"

958/ 2B




Yes
 No

958/ 3G




Yes
 No

109/ 3A



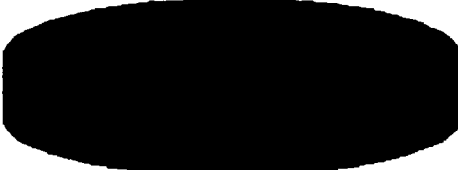
Yes
 No

109/ 4A



Yes
 No

109/ 5B




Yes
 No

Appendix B: Question Two


"Did You Ever Learn About Lenin In Class?"

958/ 2B




Yes
 No

958/ 3G




Yes
 No

109/ 3A




Yes
 No

109/ 4A



Yes
 No

109/ 5B



Yes
 No

Appendix B: Question Three

"Was Lenin A Good Man and Do You Admire Him?"

958/ 2B

None of the children recognized Lenin from his photograph; therefore, this question did not apply to this class

958/ 3G



Yes
 No

109/ 3A



Yes
 No

109/ 4A



Yes
 No

109/ 5B



Yes
 No

List of Illustrations

- 1 & 2. Lenin statue in Moscow State University Library, Hall of Journalists.
3. Political Poster. G. Klutsis, 1935.
4. Political Poster, "Leningrad". A. Vasil'ev, 1944.
5. Political Poster, "Lenin Lives!". V. Ivanov, 1967.
6. Political Poster, "School". M. Mkrtch'yan, 1988.
7. Political Poster, "The Hand of Lenin". A. Refregier, 1967.
8. Photograph of Lenin and Stalin at Gorki.
9. Photograph of Lenin at Gorki, 1923.
10. Political Poster. E Tsvik, 1990.
11. Lenin Statue in the Kremlin, Moscow.
12. The Fence erected around the Statue.
- 13 & 14. Lenin's Death Train Pavilion, Moscow.
15. Demonstrators in Front of the Central Lenin Museum, Moscow. February, 1992.
16. The vacant parking lot at the Lenin museum at Gorki. February, 1995.
17. Grid map of Lenin's mummy.
18. Russian Communist Party leader Gennady Zyuganov. January 1995.
19. "I will be an Octobrist of Lenin!". Unenthusiastic children at a communist demonstration in Moscow. February 1992.
20. A young anti-communist demonstrator at a communist demonstration in Moscow. March 1992.
21. Decaying Lenin mural in Zagorsk.
22. Lenin amongst the capitalists. Olympic complex, Moscow.
23. Lenin look-alike Alexander Koklenkov.
24. Red Square on the seventy-first anniversary of Lenin's death.

Photograph and Illustration sources

- Author's personal collection: 1, 2, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24
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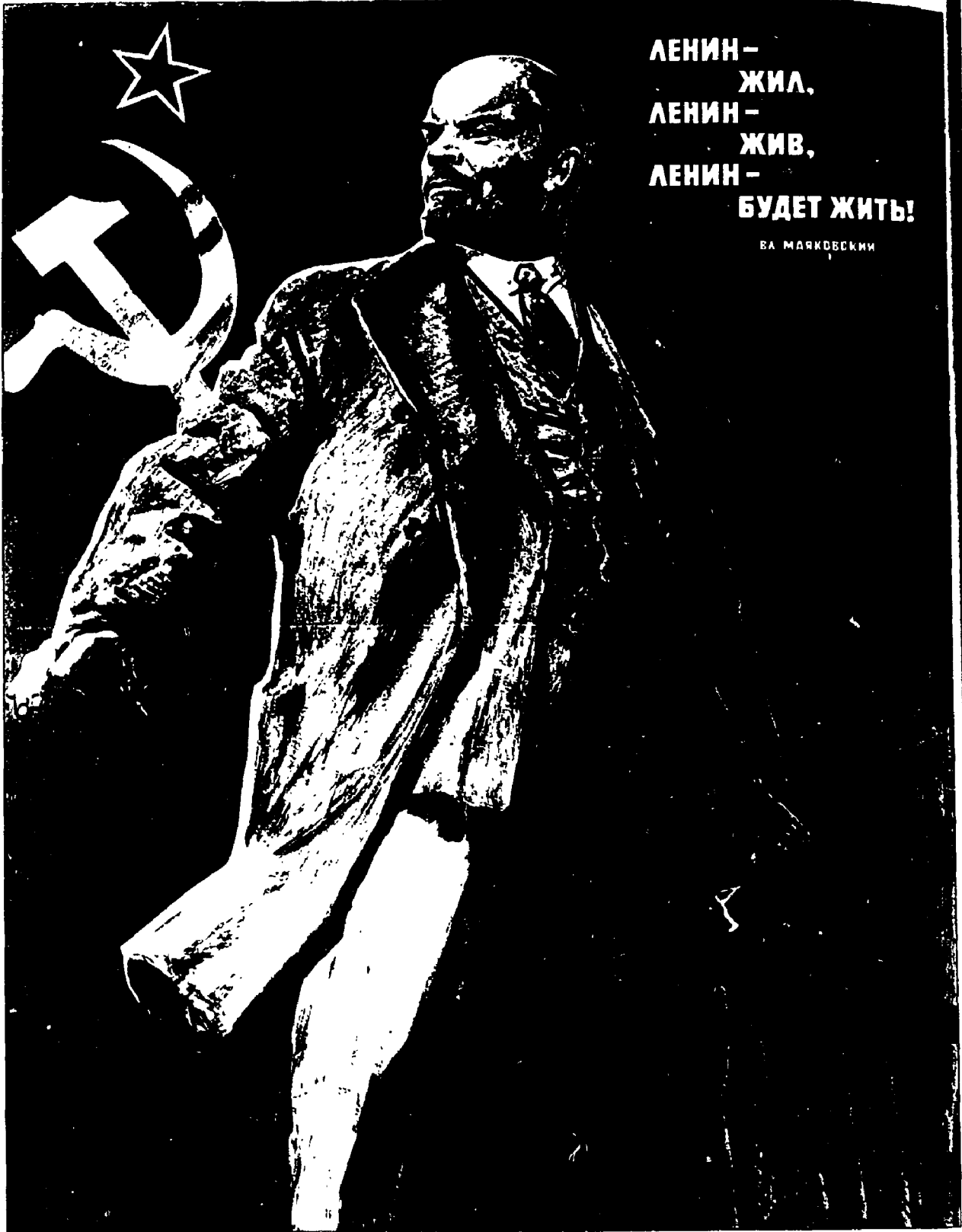


ДА ЗДРАВСТВУЕТ РАБОЧЕ-КРЕСТЬЯНСКАЯ КРАСНАЯ АРМИЯ —
ВЕРНЫМ СТРАЖ СОВЕТСКИХ ГРАНИЦ!



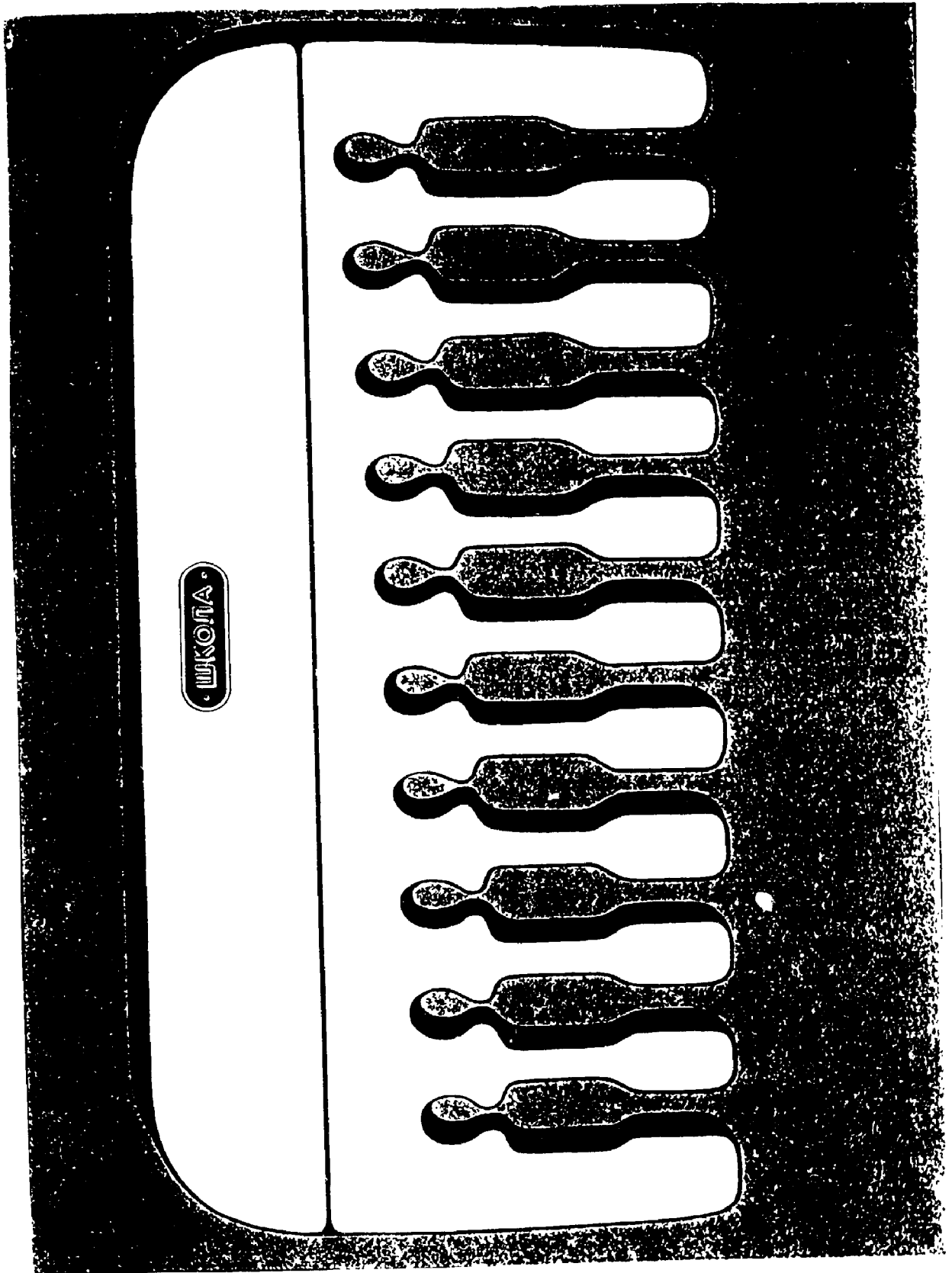
**ПОД ЗНАМЕНОМ ЛЕНИНА-ВПЕРЕД ЗА РОДИНУ,
ЗА НАШУ ПОБЕДУ!**

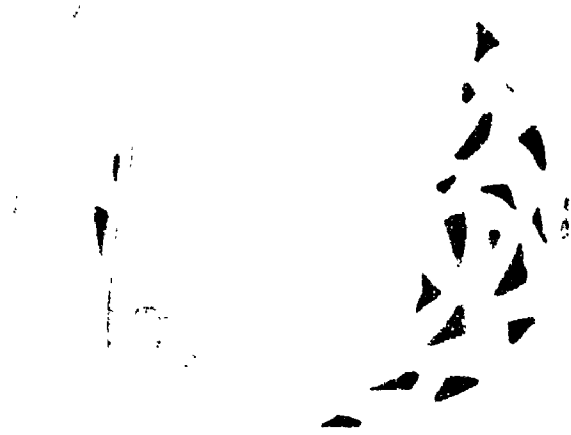
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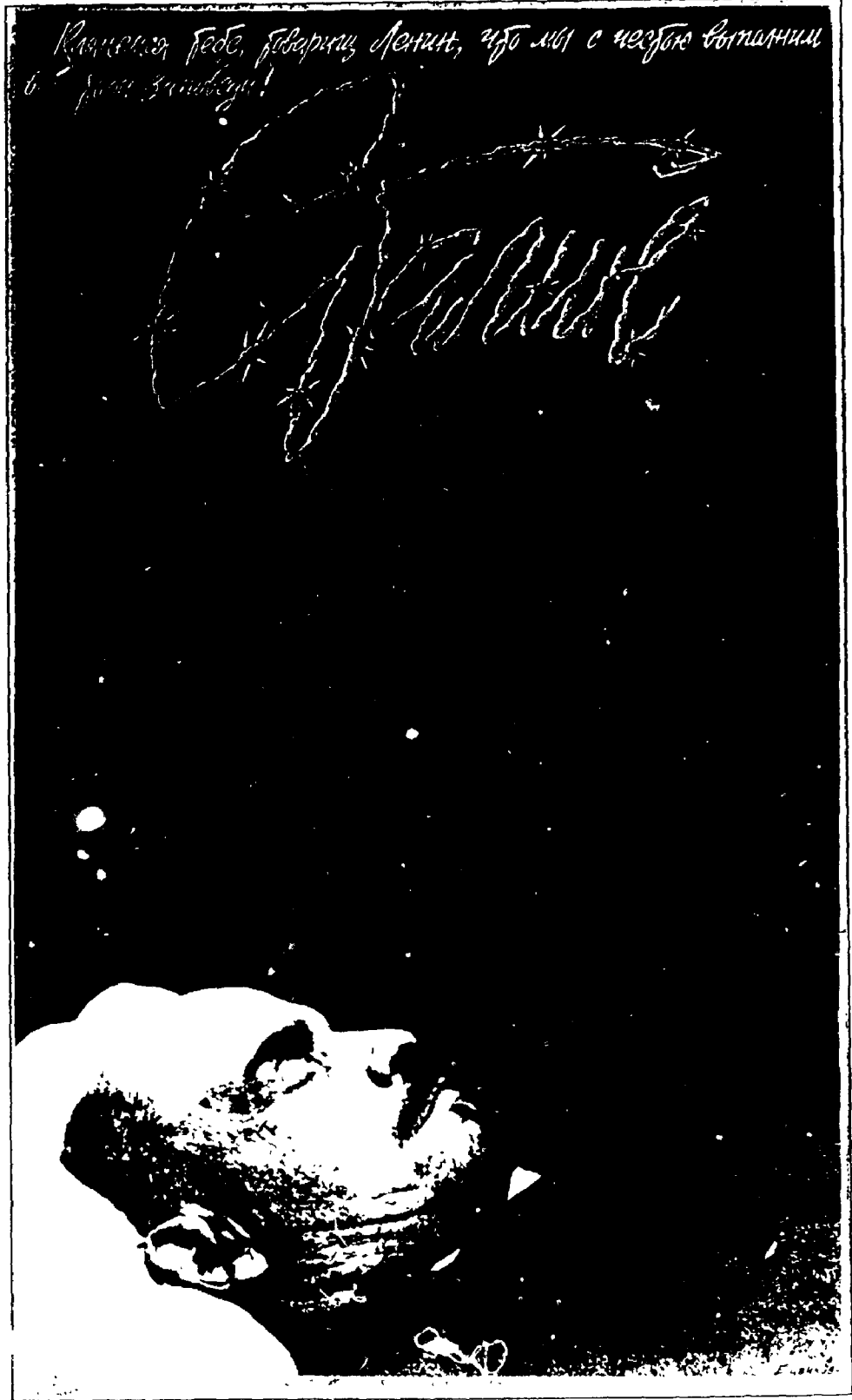
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БУДЕТ ЖИТЬ!

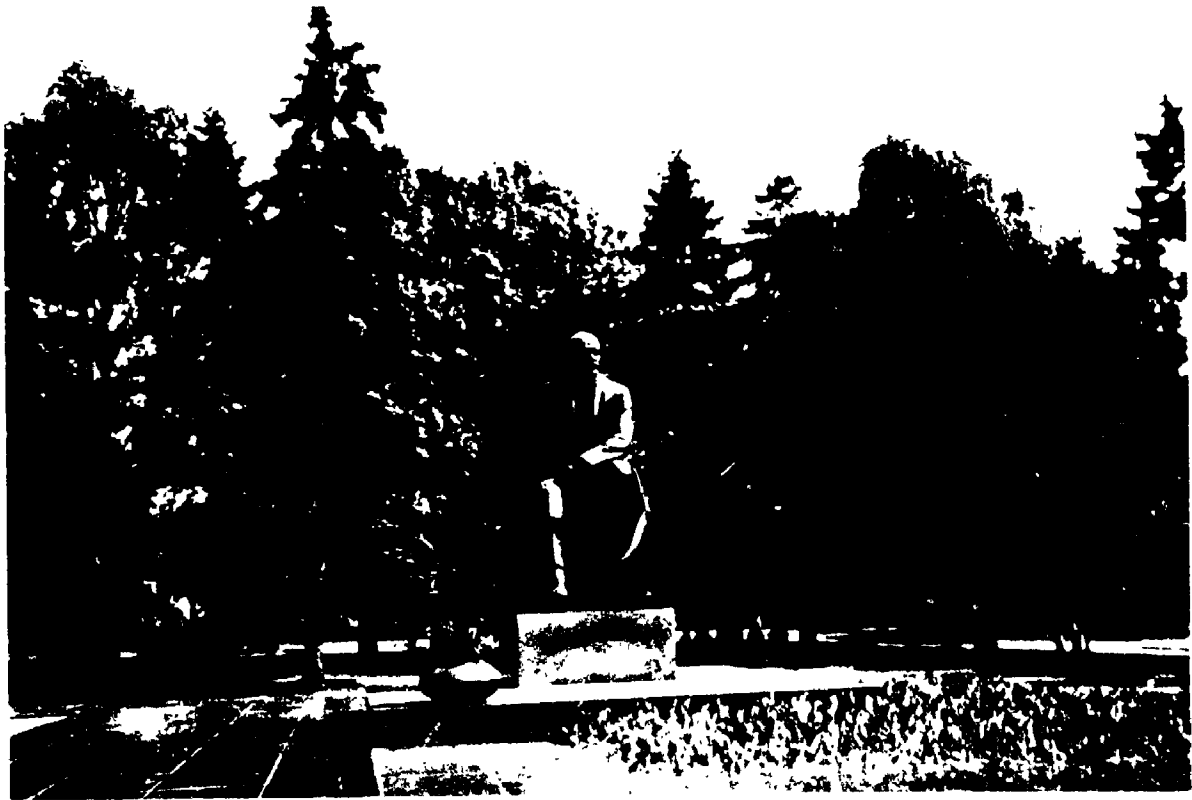
ВА МАРКОВСКИИ



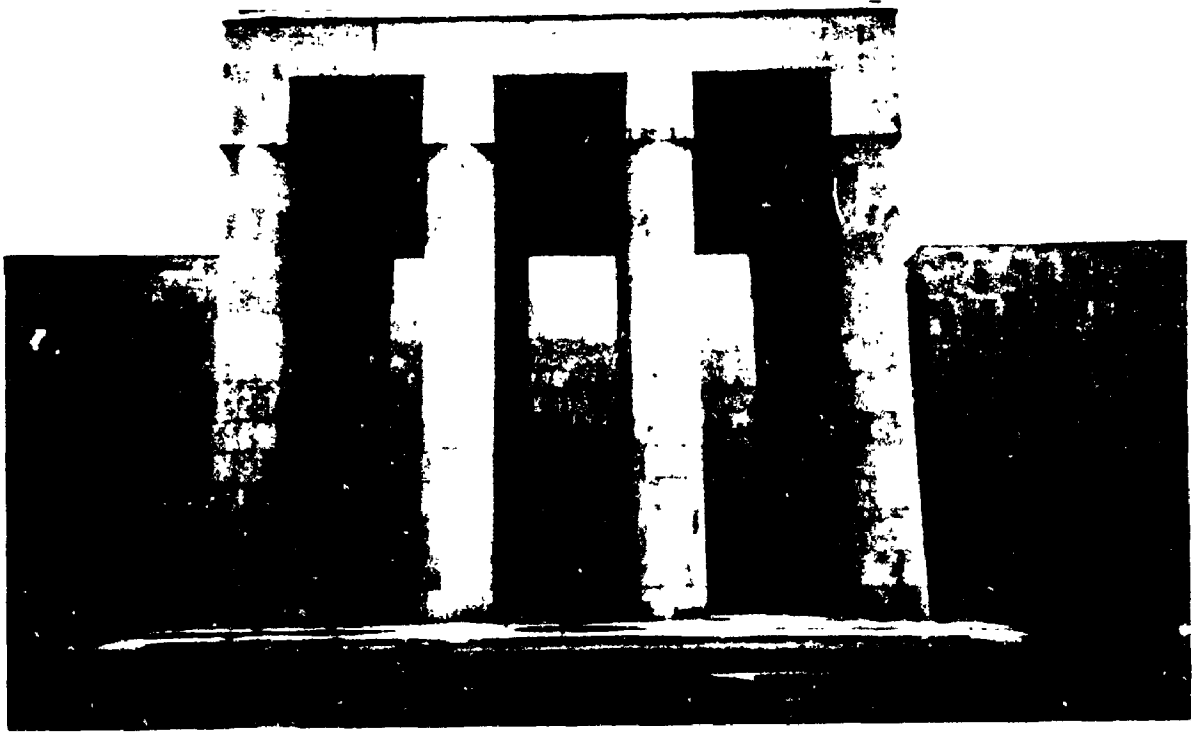


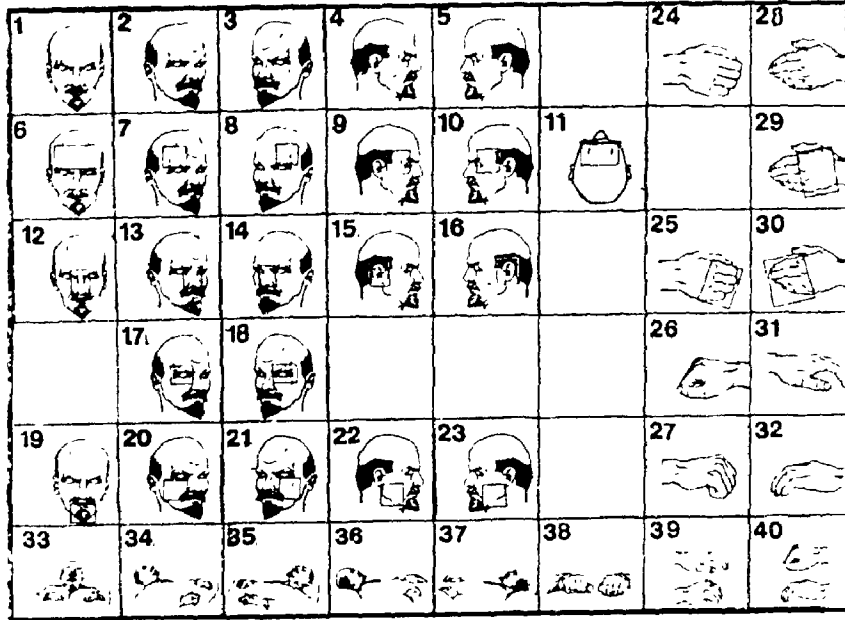




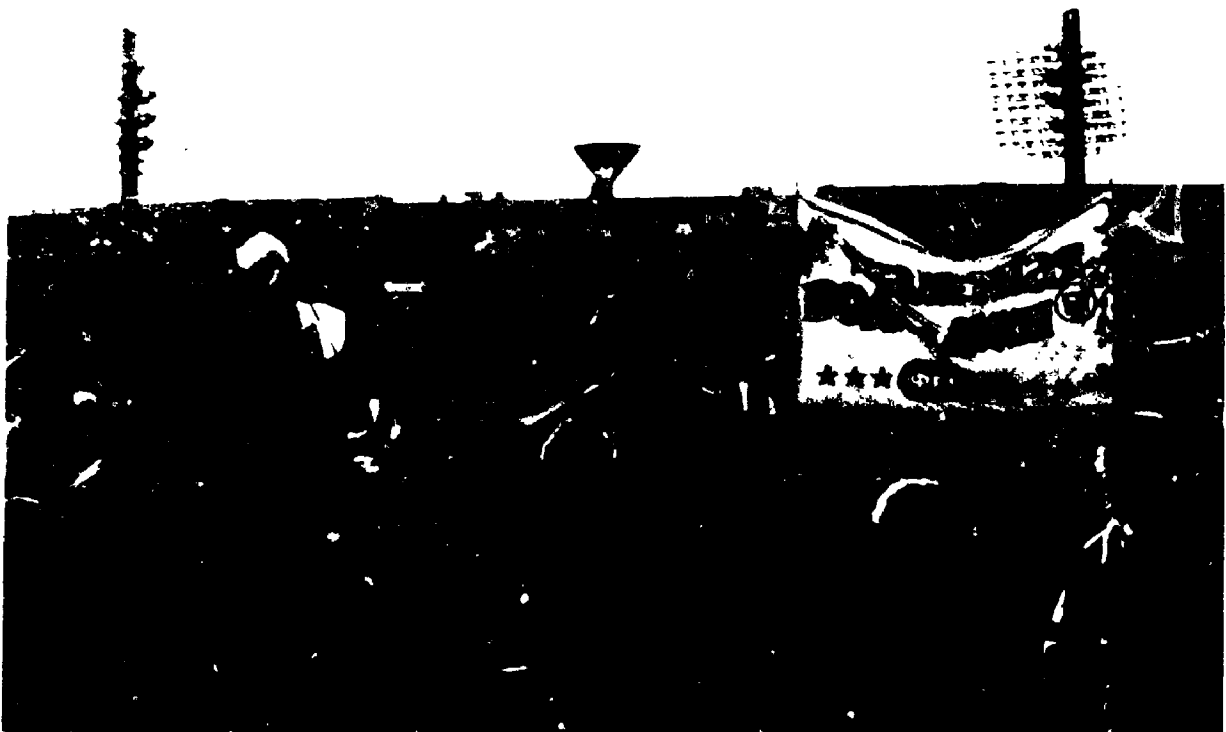


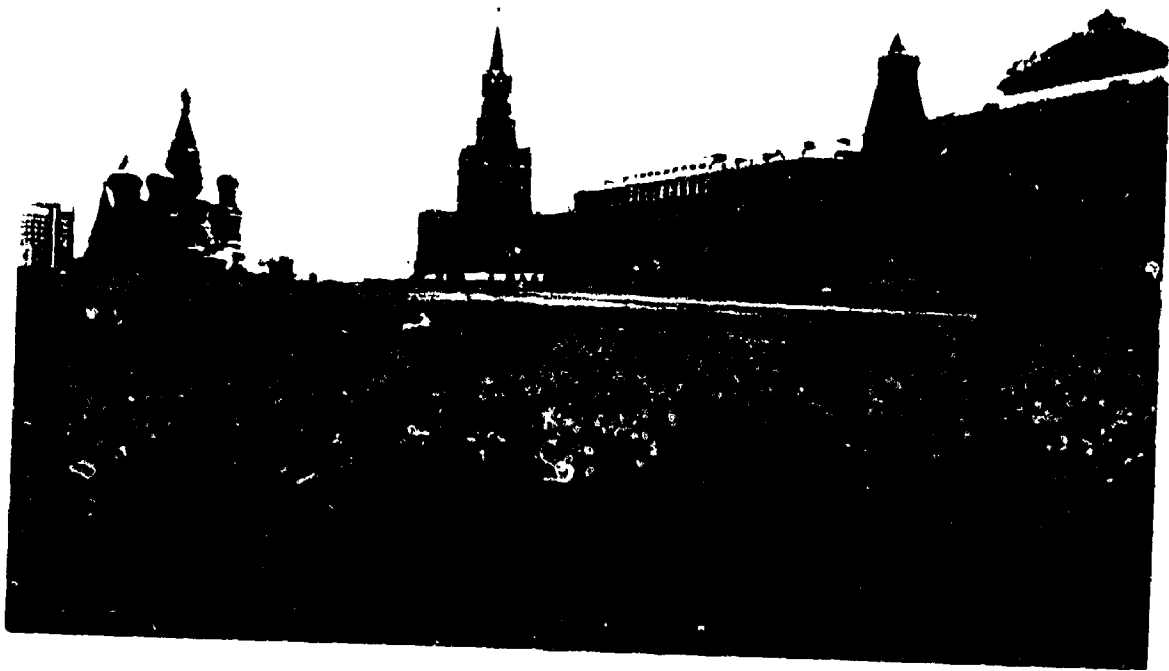












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