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Lenin in 2020: history politics in Putin's Russia

Abstract. *The article analyses the historical policy of the Russian Federation and its modern memorial culture areas. The study applies the case studies methodology, i.e., «study of individual cases», «analysis of a single case». The object of study is a socio-political situation associated with the 150th anniversary of V.I. Lenin. An analysis examines the transformation of the contradictory Leninist image in the Russian Federation and the attitude of various social and power structures, based on specific sociological surveys. A thorough study of empirical material allowed us to analyze the basic functions of the historical policy of the Russian Federation at the present stage. It became possible to analyze the interaction and mutual influence of the corporation of professional historians and Russian power structures, the behavior of state and public actors in the process of forming and implementing historical politics and memorial culture. The goal and objectives of the elites and other social strata in the implemented historical policy may coincide, partially correlate or contradict, but in the “Lenin case”, the situation was complicated by the absence of a scientifically defined object of this policy. Both the authorities and society expressed their attitude not to the existing V.I. Ulyanov (Lenin), but to those legendary (or mythical) images that were created in different periods with completely different goals.*

Keywords: *Lenin; Anniversary; Historical Politics; Memorial Culture; Mausoleum; Russian Federation.*

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Introduction

The Lenin cult began to form in the Soviet Union immediately after the death of «vozhd» based on the myth of Lenin. “There was Lenin as a real person and politician, but there were also images of Lenin that were created at different stages... After the death of Lenin in 1924, a kind of “*leninakultostroy*” began, where different Bolshevik leaders pursuing their own interests and their own agendas painted a portrait of Lenin that was beneficial to them - such a portrait against which they would look like the adherents

of a great cause” [1]. In a figurative expression, “Lenin became a pop-cultural icon immediately after his death, without any time delay” [2].

However, a lack of demand for Lenin in the historical policy of the post-Soviet states became obvious on the 150th anniversary since the birth of Vladimir Ilyich. It is necessary to take into account the authoritarian nature of most post-Soviet regimes when the historical policy of the state is determined by the will and desire of the leaders and power elites. The goals and objectives of the elites and social strata in the implemented historical policy can fully or partially coincide or

they can be in conflict, but in the “case of Lenin” (using *case studies methodology*), the situation is made more complicated due to the absence of a scientifically defined object of this policy. Neither the authorities nor the society expresses their attitude towards the real V.I. Ulyanov [3], but to those legendary (or mythical)¹ images that were created in various periods of time with completely different goals.

O. Malinova, the author of the monograph “*Actual Past: The Symbolic Politics of the Power Elite and the Dilemmas of Russian Identity*” [4] notes that “recently, the authorities have been very active in taking on historical memory, our past, and doing so in pursuit of certain ideological purposes. Historians often complain that politics that invades the field of history is bad because by doing so, history turns out to be an object of ideological interpretation and malicious political use. History should be left to historians. This position, of course, has a right to exist, but I will try to argue with it. My book is about how the past (more precisely, its projection into the present in the form of history and memory) is an extremely important object of symbolic politics, indispensable in contemporary, modern, and post-modern societies. Therefore, politicians cannot but work with the past, they, in fact, must do it” [ibid.]. Acknowledging the need for the participation of ruling structures in shaping the policy of historical memory, it seems important to consider the socio-political component of the Lenin anniversary of 2020.

Methodology

The article uses case study methodology, in particular, “study of individual cases” and “analysis of a single case”. The object of study is a socio-political situation associated with the 150th anniversary of V.I. Lenin. Through a detailed

¹ We differentiate between the «myth» as a story that reproduces people’s ideas about the world and a person’s place in it, and the «legend» as an unreliable story about the facts of reality, which is based on real historical events.

Historian A.I. Nemirovsky wrote that “by its very essence, a myth is one of the forms of history, and this is perhaps its main difference from a fairy tale (Nemirovskiy A. (2020) *Mifi i istoriya*. Available at <https://history.wikireading.ru/8601>. Accessed 16 april 2021.).

description of the “case of the anniversary”, building upon an array of sociological data and official statements, it became possible to analyze the peculiarities of interaction and mutual influence of professional historians and the Russian authorities, the behavior of state and public actors in the process of formation and implementation of historical politics and memorial culture. The case study of the Lenin anniversary, conducted through a thorough analysis of empirical material, collected from the official websites and news digests, made it possible to contribute to an understanding of the basic functions of the current historical policy of the Russian Federation.

The image of Lenin in the interpretation of political actors

The attitude of communist organizations and power institutions towards Lenin as a historical figure was predictably different in the Russian Federation. Vladimir Putin had previously spoken critically about Leninist ideas and actions. Thus, at a meeting of the Council on Science and Education in 2016, the Russian president picked on a famous quote by Boris Pasternak who said that Lenin “controlled the flow of thought and thus the whole country”. V. Putin came with a rather sharp statement that “to control the flow of thought is right. However, it is also important that this thought leads to the desired result, and not like that of Vladimir Ilyich. The idea itself was correct. Ultimately, this thought led to nothing but the collapse of the Soviet Union. He had many similar thoughts, i.e. autonomy and so on – which laid a nuclear bomb under the building, which is called “Russia”, and it exploded later. And we didn’t need the world revolution” [5].

In December 2019, at a press conference, Vladimir Putin stated: “Lenin was not a statesman, but a revolutionary... He did not create a federation, but a confederation giving the right of each ethnic group to leave the state, but the territories were divided inappropriately, and this can still be felt. Stalin opposed such a division but ultimately had to accept it... In Soviet times, Ukraine received primordial Russian lands based

on a strange formulation of doing it 'for the sake of increasing the share of the proletariat'. As soon as the party began to shatter, the country began to fall apart. This legacy of Lenin makes itself felt even now" [6].

The chairman of the Central Committee of the "Communist Party of Russia" Maksim Suraikin did not agree: "For real communists, Lenin is sacred, therefore we do not agree with Vladimir Vladimirovich [Putin. – V.M., L.D.-H.]. It is clear that Vladimir Vladimirovich has a different position and it seems to him that if we went along the Stalinist path and created a unitary state, there would be no prerequisites for the collapse. But I think that when the state... is destroyed by external forces and internal enemies, the state structure does not make a great difference. A vivid example is that of Ukraine which is a unitary state. Therefore, Vladimir Vladimirovich incriminates this mistake to Lenin. He seems to have his own opinion on this issue, but to my mind, he is mistaken" [7].

The chairman of the Central Committee of the Communist Party Gennadiy Zyuganov also acknowledged the merits of Lenin as a politician and a statesman. "Lenin was a brilliant politician... Lenin was the most talented statesman. He managed to gather the empire, which had collapsed and burned down in the First World War, at the congress peacefully and democratically. He united it not based on Russian nationalism and imperial great power but based on the ideas of labor, justice, and friendship of peoples. And the country, like a Phoenix bird, was reborn in the new form of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics" [8]. G. Zyuganov did not withhold his admiration of Lenin, calling him "a great intellectual of the proletarian type" [9], "the greatest man on the planet after Jesus Christ, the prophet Mohammed and Buddha" [10], "the advocate of the best traditions of the sovereignty of thousand years' old Russia" [11].

The image of Lenin as a "gatherer of the Russian lands" was also put forward by the deputy chairman of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation Dmitriy Novikov at the plenary meeting of the State Duma: "The collapse of the country was not Lenin's fault when Finland, Ukraine, and

even Siberia announced their independence. At that fateful time, only the Bolsheviks proposed a recovery program. It was only them who turned out to be able to save the crumbling Russia. To save and restore" [12].

A sense of ambiguity and political competition could be felt during the debate between the Communists and the authorities. When the "Communists of Russia" suggested that references to the historical role of Vladimir Lenin be included in the Constitution, the chairman of the Communist Party G. Zyuganov not only opposed the idea but attacked his rival party: "There are no such communists, these are false communists, this is the invention of the party in power. They have nothing to do with the Communists" [13]. He acted in a truly Leninist way because Vladimir Ilyich was also known for being intolerant towards competitors in the socialist and communist milieu and was ready to «dissociate» with everyone who did not agree to submit to his will and the party's (and later the state's) power.

On April 21, 2020, the All-Union Internet gala meeting dedicated to the 150th anniversary of V.I. Lenin was held, and on April 22, the representatives of the Communist Party laid flowers at the mausoleum on Red Square. The event was held in accordance with sanitary and epidemiological requirements [14]. The meeting was conducted via videoconference and was opened by the Chairman of the Communist Party Central Committee, the head of the Communist Party faction in the State Duma G. Zyuganov. The main thesis voiced by the speaker was that 'Lenin was able to save and restore the Russian statehood'. Also, in contrast to the assessment of the president of the Russian Federation, he emphasized that 'Lenin turned out to be an unrivalled politician'. The leaders of Ukrainian and Belarusian communist organizations also showed their solidarity in praising Lenin². For

² We also note that the Donbass Post State Enterprise of the unrecognized Donetsk People's Republic (DPR) on its official Facebook page announced the release of a new state postage mark dedicated to the anniversary of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin and "convincingly asencouraged collectors to make pre-orders" (Ukraine.ru (2020) Pochta Donbassa vypustila marku v chest' 150-letiya Lenina. 15 april. Available at <https://ukraina.ru/sn/20200415/1027414124.html>. Accessed 15 april 2021.).

example, Pyotr Simonenko emphasized: "Ukraine as a state became possible thanks to Vladimir Ilyich". He also "spoke about the difficulties of the Ukrainian Communist Party in the conditions of fascization and the spread of bourgeois ideology in the masses, moral and physical terror against the Communists"³. Aleksei Sokol thanked the Chairman of the Central Committee of the Communist Party for preparing theoretical materials on the anniversary of V.I. Lenin, and "noted the role of Lenin in the formation and development of Belarusian statehood, economic and social power of the republic" [15].

Defending its position of "opposition" in the structure of the Russian government, the Communist Party occasionally expresses a critical attitude towards the Kremlin. The Lenin anniversary turned out to be another convenient occasion for this. "In the 1980s, the traitors and destroyers came to power. Guided by despicable goals, they began to destroy the gains of October. The Soviet Union was destroyed, bloody conflicts broke out on its wreckages. Tens of millions of people plunged into poverty. Russia began to be ruled by people who cynically traded its interests. The government is not going to abandon the destructive liberal course. It generously spills with populist slogans, but only worsens the situation of the working people. This takes place under the conditions of an aggressive offensive of imperialism, the crimes of which fully confirm the characteristics given to it by Lenin [16].

The Russian Communists declared "the comprehensive renewal of the Leninist heritage" [17] as their most important task in the year of Lenin's anniversary. What is the relevance of Lenin then? Why is his image becoming undesirable for the authorities and more and more popular for society? S. Zizek provided a complex answer to the problematic question: "The first reaction of

the public to the idea of Lenin's relevance is, of course, an outburst of sarcastic laughter. Marx is all right today, even on Wall Street, there are people who love him: Marx, the poet of goods, who gave a perfect description of the dynamics of capitalism, Marx, who depicted the alienation and reification of our daily lives. But Lenin! No! Are you seriously talking about this?! Does not Lenin represent the complete failure of the implementation of Marxism in practice, the colossal catastrophe that marked the entire world politics in the twentieth century, an experiment with real socialism, which culminated in an economically ineffective dictatorship?..

To repeat Lenin means to see the difference between what Lenin actually did and the field of possibilities that he opened... To repeat Lenin means not to repeat what Lenin did, but what he failed to do, his missed opportunities" [18, p. 5, 252].

It is unlikely that the majority of people who positively assess Lenin in the opinion polls formulate their attitude towards him in such a sophisticated manner. But the awareness of 'missed opportunities' is present, determining the attitude towards current politicians and historical figures.

The image of Lenin and Russian society

"The situation in the country has changed since 1991, but the myth of Lenin, although transformed, continues to influence the consciousness of new generations. It is extremely important to understand why Lenin is still interesting and how a real person dissolved into a fairy tale", notes Sergey Firsov, the author of the monograph "*Lenin. Creation of a myth*" [19].

According to Boris Kolonitsky, the negative attitude of Russian authorities towards Lenin is associated not with value categories, but with political pragmatism. He believes that it is not about "Putin being an intellectual who wants to say exactly what happened in the past. Putin is pragmatic... His constant task is to create the widest possible coalition all the time. It seems to him that a particular version of the memory of the Second World War contributes to the creation

³ Since May 2015, a law "On the Condemnation of the Communist and Nazi Regimes" has been in effect in Ukraine, which prohibits the propaganda of Soviet symbols. Within the framework of the law on decommunization in Ukraine, 52 thousand toponyms were renamed. According to the head of the public organization «Svitanok» Vadim Pozdnyakov, the last monument to Vladimir Lenin was demolished in Ukraine in January 2021 (Vzglyad (2021) Na Ukraine snesli posledniy pamyatnik Leninu. 27 january. Available at <https://vz.ru/news/2021/1/27/1082286.html>. Accessed 28 january 2021.).

of a coalition, and the memory of the revolution and civil war is a problematic instrument" [20].

M. Zygar believes that to the Russian authorities the image of Stalin seems to be a better bet. "Roughly speaking, Lenin is the man who destroyed the empire, and Stalin created the empire. From the point of view of people for whom empire, national pride, and superpower are important values, such a perception is understandable. From the point of view of these people, the revolution is bad. But this is not a common point of view, in my opinion, this particular group of our population does not constitute the majority" [21].

Opinion polls confirm M. Zygar's arguments. In 2016, for the first time in the post-Soviet period of Russian history, a positive perception of Lenin exceeded 50%; thus, the proportion of citizens who positively assess the role of Vladimir Lenin in history has grown from 40% to 53% over the past 10 years [22].

In 2017, only 14% of citizens supported the demolition of monuments to Vladimir Lenin in Russia (in 2020 even less - 7%) [23]. It is noteworthy that museums associated with the name of the "leader of the world's proletariat" are undergoing a renaissance. In the last 2-3 years, the number of visitors has been constantly increasing both in the Lenin Hills, the Ulyanovsk Lenin Memorial and in Razliv [24].

The role of Lenin in history was assessed positively by 57% of respondents. The number of respondents positively evaluating the role of Lenin in history has grown steadily. In 2006, those who called it 'completely positive' constituted 11% and those evaluating it as 'positive' - 29%, in 2016 the numbers were 13% and 40% correspondently, and 15% and 41% during the last survey respectively. 17% believed that Lenin played a 'rather negative' role in the history of the country, and 5% - that his role was 'sharply negative'; 23% did not know what to answer [25].

A study of the public sentiment was conducted by sociologists of the Russian Academy of National Economy and Public Administration in spring 2019. A senior research associate and the head of the research group Anastasiya Nikolskaya commented its results: "Do you know

who people most value now? Lenin! And when asked why they answer that he managed to break the system. He managed to inspire the masses. But among today's opposition, they don't see a new Lenin" [26].

According to the opinion poll conducted by the Public Opinion Foundation (Фонд общественного мнения, ФОМ), 56% of the Russian citizens in 2020 considered the role of Vladimir Ulyanov [23] in the Russian history as positive and 20% as negative. The Foundation conducts such surveys on a regular basis, and the survey in 2020 was scheduled specifically to April 22, when the 150th anniversary of the birth of Vladimir Lenin was celebrated. The survey from 2020 allowed us to choose a specific explanation of what exactly was understood by the positive or negative role of Lenin in the history of Russia. The first place among the positive answers (9%) is that 'he made a revolution and destroyed the capitalist system', among the negative ones (5%) - 'great sacrifices, terror and the destruction of the nation' [23].

According to the data from the Russian Public Opinion Research Center (VTsIOM), more than 60% of Russians in 2017 supported the idea of burying Lenin's body which is in the Mausoleum on Red Square in Moscow, and half of them believed that this should be done immediately [28].

The "body" of Lenin⁴

Opinion polls show a significant part of the Russian citizens considering it possible and necessary to rebury the body of Lenin,

⁴ We use the term the «body» of Lenin, although we are aware that only medical specialists can give an exact physiological definition to an object that has been in the Mausoleum for more than 90 years. As a rule, routine prophylaxis in the mausoleum is carried out two years. Specialists from the All-Russian Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants work with Lenin's embalmed body (Interfax (2020) V FSO rasskazali, pochemu zakrylysa mavzolej Lenina. 18 march. Available at <https://www.interfax.ru/moscow/699769>. Accessed 22 april 2020.).

V. Putin compared Lenin in the mausoleum with the relics of saints, and the head of the Human Rights Council under the President of the Russian Federation Mikhail Fedotov said that the body should be treated like the mummy of a pharaoh (Interfax (2018) Putin sravnil telo Lenina v mavzolee s moschami svyatyh. 14 january. Available at <https://www.interfax.ru/russia/595344>. Accessed 22 april 2020).

the discussions on this topic occasionally arise among the Russian political elite.

In April 2017, a group of State Duma representatives tried to introduce a bill with a proposal on a legal mechanism for the burial of Lenin. Vladimir Sysoev, a member of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR) and one of the proponents of this initiative said: "In the year of the centenary of the revolution it is necessary to pay tribute to this man who was once baptized and deserves to be buried" [28]. The bill suggested that the order, terms, and place of the reburial of the remains of Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov (Lenin) are to be determined by the government of the Russian Federation. The explanatory note indicated that this issue arose as far back as the 1980s and since then, a discussion has been erupting in Russian society almost every year. The bill had no deadlines for reburial, which, according to the authors, made it possible to consider the political situation and social moods, as well as to create a legal framework for the subsequent reburial of not only Lenin's body but also of other famous historical figures. According to the MP, the impetus for proposing the draft law was given by the poll by Levada Center, according to which more than half of Russians believed that Lenin's body should be buried. However, the leaders of the "United Russia" faction insisted on withdrawing the signatures of their party members. State Duma Speaker Vyacheslav Volodin approved the withdrawal of signatures, referring to the position of the "moral leader" of the party V. Putin, who emphasizes the need for consensus in society: "We must be guided by the position of the person who created the party" [29].

Proposals for reburial continued to be put forward. For example, a member of the State Duma from the LDPR Ivan Sukharev sent a request to the speaker of the Federation Council Valentina Matvienko calling to consider the de-installation of the Lenin Mausoleum on Red Square [30]. Vladimir Petrov, a deputy of the Legislative Assembly of the Leningrad Region, proposed to bury the *vozhd'* (leader), having arranged a farewell mourning procession on the 100th anniversary of his death in 2024 [31]. It

is difficult to determine what really pushes the MPs to put forward such initiatives: the desire for publicity in the political field or sincere adherence to the mood of the society. It seems to us that the situation should be evaluated not only by the actions of individual MPs but also by taking into consideration the realities of the political system.

The Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (ROCA) called on to say goodbye to the symbols of atheism and remove Lenin's body from the Red Square. "We urge to remove from the central square of the country the body of the person who is associated with the formation of the atheistic power, which condemned millions of lives as a sacrifice to its ideology," said the message of the Bishops' Council of ROCA [32]. "One of the symbols of the reconciliation of the Russian people with the Lord could be the liberation of the Red Square from the remains of the main persecutor and tormentor of the 20th century and the crushing of the monuments erected to him. These are all symbols of the misfortune, tragedy, and collapse of our God-given country. The same should be done with the names of cities, regions, streets, which to this day are deprived of their historical names" [33].

The position of the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) was presented by the first deputy chairman of the Synodic Department for the Relations of the Russian Orthodox Church with the society and media, Advisor to the State Duma Speaker Aleksander Schipkov. He said that Lenin's body should be buried, but at present, this could undermine the "national consensus established after Crimea had joined Russia... Let's have a 5-10 years' moratorium. If we do not bury him, then our children will do it... He must be buried for sure" [34]. The head of the Department for External Church Relations (DECR) of the Moscow Patriarchate, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk noted that Lenin's body should have been buried immediately after the collapse of the USSR. "When the monument to Dzerzhinsky was removed from Dzerzhinsky Square, it was also necessary to remove Lenin's body from the mausoleum" [35]⁵.

⁵ An interesting aspect related to the idea of reburial in the 1990s was disclosed in an interview to the magazine «Historian and ex-Prime-Minister of Russia Sergei Stepashin. He said

Metropolitan Hilarion gave a tough assessment of the Soviet memorial policy: "Streets and squares cannot be named after executioners. The names of terrorists and revolutionaries should not be perpetuated in our cities. Monuments to these people should not stand in our squares. The mummified bodies of these people should not be put on public display" [ibid]. But he also emphasized that regarding the issue of reburial it is necessary to wait for "the consent in the society ... Nobody is now interested in disturbing the old wounds in order to excite our society, in order to provoke a split" [36].

The reaction of the communists to the still cautious position of the ROC was expectedly sharp. M. Suraikin said that Lenin, according to Christian traditions, was buried two meters below the ground and would outlive the Russian Orthodox Church itself. According to him, Lenin's body will remain in the mausoleum forever, while the existence of the church is a matter of time [37].

In August 2020, the Union of Architects of Russia announced a competition for the best concept of the Mausoleum without the body of Vladimir Lenin. The organizers said that Lenin's body contradicts modern ideas about memory and is a violation of the Russian Orthodox tradition. At the same time, the building of the Mausoleum is under the protection of UNESCO and provides a harmonious connection with the Kremlin. According to their initiative, the Mausoleum should become a branch of the

that in 1998 the Russian President Boris Yeltsin instructed him to demolish the mausoleum of Vladimir Lenin. «Boris Nikolayevich instructed me to demolish the mausoleum ... Yeltsin said: «Sergei Vadimovich, I decided - we are demolishing Lenin's mausoleum. «I answered:» Well, well, what does the Ministry of Internal Affairs have to do with it? «He clarified that the Ministry of Internal Affairs must ensure order.» Well, «I said,» I understood the task, I am a minister and must follow the orders of the supreme commander. The only thing, Boris Nikolayevich, I do not guarantee that after this act I will remain a minister and you will remain a president, «Stepashin noted, adding that he began to convince Yeltsin that the mausoleum should not be demolished». From a Christian perspective, of course, Lenin's corpse cannot be displayed. It is a sin. But now it is not the time to clean up the mausoleum, there is no need to. Is he bothering you, or what? «Yeltsin grumbled, but he heard my arguments,» Stepashin said (Interfax (2017d) Stepashin rasskazal o prikaze Elcina snesti mavzolej Lenina. 26 april. Available at <https://www.interfax.ru/russia/560086>. Accessed 22 april 2020.).

State Museum of Architecture and contain an exposition about the history of the design of the Mausoleum building and its plywood, wood, and granite versions [38]. However, this attempt by the Union of Architects to hold a competition for the new use of the Lenin Mausoleum building on Red Square in Moscow ended in failure. "A certain part of the society took the very idea of it really negatively", said the President of the Union Nikolai Shumakov. "In order not to cause further negativity, we decided to surrender our positions". When a journalist asked which part of the society he was talking about, N. Shumakov said: "About the most aggressive, the most militant. We received virtually no support, no positive feedback. "About the most aggressive and combatant one. We received virtually no support, no positive feedback" [39].

There are of course political organizations in Russia that firmly deny the very possibility of reburial of the 'body of Lenin'. Thus, the leader of the Communist Party Gennady Zyuganov promised that his party would not allow the burial of the body of Vladimir Lenin [40]. But Lenin remains in the mausoleum, not because of the "firmness" of the Communists. The position of the "Russian leader" is decisive. V. Putin said that Lenin should not be taken out of the mausoleum. According to him, "it is better not to get into the topic of the reburial of Lenin's body. We need to go forward and "develop actively" [41]. The memorial policy is implemented precisely as a political action that does not depend on decorative structures and organizations. Memorial decisions are made by those authorities and people who make all other political decisions.

It is clear that there is no simple answer about the fate of the necropolis on the Red Square. The head of the international committee of the Federation Council Konstantin Kosachev believes that all burials should be moved from there. "This should not be about individuals, because in this case each time there will inevitably be a split in the society in favor of or against certain decisions, but consensus will never arise ... Once and for all, let us transfer the entire necropolis, regardless the attitude to certain personalities and

- which is fundamentally important - with all the appropriate honors, from Red Square to another no less worthy, but a more suitable place" [42]. The head of the Russian Archive Andrey Artizov also agrees that "it is not appropriate when the dead are lying in the center of the capital of a modern European state. In a place where ceremonial events, military parades, public festivals are regularly held, where an ice rink is installed in winter... Needless to say, the combination is strange. At the same time, any sudden movements can only do harm. Representatives of the older generation also need to be spared, having pity for their feelings. Due to age, most veterans are not able to critically evaluate the facts that have become public in recent decades. And they will perceive the reburial of Lenin tragically" [43].

But aren't the "representatives of the older generation" get already offended by what was done by one of the main Russian propaganda channels "Russia Today" on the eve of Lenin's anniversary? Quoting the channel's website: "April 22 marks the 150th anniversary of the birth of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. The leader of the world's proletariat will have to celebrate the anniversary in splendid isolation - in connection with the spread of the coronavirus, everyone went to self-isolation in Russia. What would Vladimir Ilyich Lenin's birthday look like now? Nowadays Moscow, the regime of self-isolation, the Lenin Mausoleum" [44, 45]. While watching the video and photos on the webpage, it is important to pay attention to the name of the installations: "Ilyich and Coronavirus: Lenin and Cake", "Ilyich and Coronavirus: Lenin in the Mausoleum". Would not an honorary burial have been a more worthy and preferable option for those who want to cherish the memory of Lenin rather than "dances on the bones" and travesty of his image?

Conclusion

Most modern states have gone through a period of revolutions in their history. The images of revolutionary figures are firmly entrenched in the pantheon of national symbols. It is impossible to imagine the history of France without Robespierre or the history of England without

Cromwell. But the real question is not whether revolutionaries can be removed from history, but why should they be removed? The image of Lenin has become one of the main symbols of Russia, he is known throughout the world, and he really influenced the development of the world's civilization. Regardless of the attitude of the current regime, the image of Russia is impossible without the image of Lenin, and Russian reality continues to be largely determined by Leninist decisions and actions carried out a century ago⁶.

Today's attitude to the image of Lenin and his legacy is formed primarily by power structures. "The excitement around the statements of the top officials about the distant past does not portray the intellectual and political culture of Russia in the best way" [4]. Both the guild of historians and the society are more likely to be objects than subjects of historical politics. Even in the anniversary year, a serious scientific audit of the image of Lenin was not carried out.

Actors of historical politics can either approve of or censure the 'fiery revolutionary', the 'cruel dictator', the 'good grandfather' (although, according to modern concepts, Lenin passed away far from old age), the 'militant atheist', the 'founding father', 'the man who planted the bomb under the Russian state' etc. In practice, everyone chooses for himself a Leninist myth (or legend), which s/he considers being defining and defends (subverts) the image of Lenin generated by this myth (legend). The symbolic policy towards the 'villain' cannot correspond to the symbolization of the 'hero'. When the need for some practical actions related to the memory of Lenin arises (his monuments, toponymical names, mausoleum), a public consensus is impossible, because different social strata and groups determine their actions in relation to different symbols and myths.

⁶ This image both inside and outside Russia has tended to be demonized. According to the Danish historian Mette Skak, the murder of the Tsarist family, the brutal persecution of the church and the believers as well as the creation of a state repression apparatus, partly by setting up the first Soviet secret police in December 1917, and partly by opening up the use of concentration camps as a prelude to the GULAG's administration's endless archipelago of labor camps are among the reasons of primarily negative associations caused by the image of Lenin (Skak, Mette (2020) Om Subovs Ruslandshistorie for det 20.århundrede. Nordisk Østforum 34, 244–263.).

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В.И. Ленин 2020: Путиннің Ресейдегі тарих саясаты

Аңдатпа. Ресей Федерациясының Тарихи саясаты және оның мемориалдық мәдениеттің қазіргі бағыттары талданады. Зерттеуде case studies әдіснамасы қолданылады, яғни «жеке жағдайларды зерттеу», «бір жағдайды талдау». Зерттеу нысаны-В. И. Лениннің туғанына 150 жыл толуына байланысты әлеуметтік-саяси жағдай. Ресей Федерациясындағы қарама-қайшылықты лениндік қоғамның өзгеруі және оған нақты әлеуметтік сауалнамалар негізінде әртүрлі әлеуметтік және билік құрылымдарының қатынасы талданады. Эмпирикалық материалды мұқият зерттеу қазіргі кезеңдегі Ресей Федерациясының Тарихи саясатының негізгі функцияларын талдауға мүмкіндік берді.

Кәсіби тарихшылар корпорациясы мен Ресейдің билік құрылымдарының өзара әрекеттесуі мен өзара әсерін, Тарихи саясат пен мемориалдық мәдениетті қалыптастыру және жүзеге асыру процесінде мемлекет пен қоғам қайраткерлерінің мінез-құлқын талдауға мүмкіндік туды. Жүргізіліп жатқан тарихи саясаттағы элиталар мен басқа да әлеуметтік топтардың мақсаты мен міндеттері бір-біріне сәйкес келуі, ішінара сәйкес келуі немесе қайшы келуі мүмкін, бірақ «Ленин ісінде» жағдай осы саясаттың ғылыми анықталған объектісінің әсерінен қиындады. Билік те, қоғам да қазіргі В. И. - ге емес, өз көзқарасын білдірді. Ульяновқа (жалқаулық) және әртүрлі кезеңдерде мүлдем басқа мақсаттарда жасалған аңызға айналған (немесе мифтік) суреттерге.

Түйін сөздер: Ленин; мерейтой; Тарихи саясат; естелік мәдениет; кесене; Ресей Федерациясы

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Ленин в 2020 году: политика истории в путинской России

Аннотация. В статье анализируются историческая политика Российской Федерации и современные направления ее мемориальной культуры. В исследовании применяется методология case studies, т.е. «изучение отдельных случаев», «анализ одного случая». Объектом исследования является социально-политическая ситуация, связанная со 150-летием со дня рождения В.И. Ленина. В статье анализируется трансформация противоречивого ленинского образа в Российской Федерации и отношение к нему различных социальных и властных структур на основе конкретных социологических опросов. Тщательное изучение эмпирического материала позволило проанализировать основные функции исторической политики Российской Федерации на современном этапе.

Стало возможным проанализировать взаимодействие и взаимовлияние корпорации профессиональных историков и российских властных структур, поведение государственных и общественных деятелей в процессе формирования и реализации исторической политики и мемориальной культуры. Цель и задачи элит и других социальных слоев в проводимой исторической политике могут совпадать, частично коррелировать или противоречить друг другу, но в «деле Ленина» ситуация осложнялась отсутствием научно определенного объекта этой политики. И власть, и общество выражали свое отношение не к существующему В.И. Ульянову (Ленину), а к тем легендарным (или мифическим) образам, которые создавались в разные периоды с совершенно разными целями.

Ключевые слова: Ленин; юбилей; историческая политика; мемориальная культура; мавзолей; Российская Федерация.

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