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LENIN'S BOLSHEVISM AS A CULTURE IN THE MAKING

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I.

We have his word for it, in "Left-Wing" Communism: An Infantile Disorder (1920), that Bolshevism arose in 1903 "as a current of political thought and as a political party."[2] The apparent reference was to the conflict over paragraph one of the Party Rules at the Russian Social Democratic Worker Party's constitutive Second Congress, in the aftermath of which the term "Bolshevism" began to be used for the faction that Lenin led and the party concept that it represented. But Lenin's account of Bolshevism's origin leaves out the part he himself played in originating the current of thought and founding the party. If 1903 was the year of Bolshevism's birth as a current and a movement, the act of conception took place in 1902 in Lenin's mind as expressed in What Is To Be Done?, which formulated the "hard" concept of party membership that caused the contention at the Second Congress and the resulting division of the Russian Social Democrats between Lenin-supporting "Bolsheviks" and Martov-supporting "Mensheviks."

In appearance a treatise on how to make a revolution, especially under the then prevailing police-state conditions of Russia, the pamphlet advanced the thesis that the right kind of revolutionary party organization was a necessity in order that a mass revolutionary movement might develop and a revolution occur. It should be small in numbers and composed chiefly of full-time professional revolutionaries thoroughly versed in Marxist theory, totally dedicated to the

party's goal of realizing the Marxist revolutionary project, and so skilled in the art of conspiration, of underground political activity, that they could evade the Okhrana's equally skilled effort to detect and apprehend them. They would work in small groups under centralized direction of the party's leadership, developing the revolutionary mass movement under party guidance which would eventually sweep away the Tsarist autocracy.

All this underlay Lenin's Archimedean metaphor, "Give us an organization of revolutionaries, and we will overturn Russia!"[3] Revolutions do not simply come, he was contending, they have to be made, and the making requires a properly constituted and functioning organization of revolutionaries. Marx proclaimed the inevitable and imminent coming of the world proletarian socialist revolution. Lenin saw that the coming was neither inevitable nor necessarily imminent. For him--and this was a basic idea underlying the charter document of his Bolshevism, although nowhere did he formulate it in just these words--there was no revolution outside the party. Nulla salus extra ecclesiam.

So strong was his emphasis upon the organizational theme, so much was his treatise concerned with the organizational requisites for the revolutionary taking of political power, that it has been seen by some as in essence a prospectus for Bolshevism as a power-oriented "organizational weapon." Such was the thesis of a book of that title, which argued that "Bolshevism calls for the continuous conquest of power through full use of the potentialities of organization," and that "It

is Lenin, not Marx, who is communism's special hero, for it was Lenin's form of organization, with its implications for strategy, that gave birth to communism as a distinct trend within Marxism."[4] Again, Merle Fainsod saw in What Is To Be Done? the main vehicle of "the organizational concepts of Lenin" and "the seminal source of the organizational philosophy of Bolshevism."[5] True enough, but how adequate? I wish to argue that to reduce Lenin's Bolshevism to the striving for total party power through organization, and What Is To Be Done? to organizational philosophy, is to miss its essential meaning as the document that prefigured the appearance in Russia after 1917 of the Soviet culture, in other words, as a new sociopolitical world in the making.

Marx had seen in the modern proletariat a revolutionary class, a "dehumanization which is conscious of itself as a dehumanization and hence abolishes itself."[6] From the start a revolutionary class "in itself," its destiny was to become a revolutionary class also "for itself," in consciousness. This must come about owing to the developmental dynamics of the capitalist production process. To the proof of this proposition Marx devoted Capital. He was mistaken in the belief that the proletariat was inherently a revolutionary class and must necessarily become more and more revolutionized by capitalism's inner laws. Upon that fact--whether or not he realized it was that--Lenin based Bolshevism. It rested upon the sound but radically un-Marxist (in the Marx-Engels sense) proposition, for which he could and did cite Karl Kautsky as authority: "The history of all countries shows that the working class, exclusively by its

own effort, is able to develop only trade union consciousness, i.e., the conviction that it is necessary to combine in unions, fight the employers, and strive to compel the government to pass necessary labour legislation, etc."[7]

Revolutionary consciousness, on the other hand, comprised understanding of Marxist theory, belief in the need for and desirability of a socialist revolution, commitment to the Marxist revolutionary project. Initially the prerogative of an educated minority, it could be brought to workers only "from without," by the efforts of the revolutionary Social Democrats as an organized body of the elect, the "conscious" ones. The mission of the revolutionary party was to propagate political (i.e., revolutionary) consciousness among the working class, which was spontaneously awakening to the need for a struggle but on its own, spontaneously, would not acquire political consciousness of the Social Democratic kind. Thus, Lenin was laying the foundation of a party of missionaries engaged in propagating the Marxist faith.

To grasp his Bolshevism as a mental structure, it is of utmost importance to see that he was concerned to spread revolutionary political consciousness not simply among the workers as a class but among--in his own words, repeated over and over in What Is To Be Done?--"all classes." The argument by which he sought to establish the necessity of an all-class approach was a tortured one:

> Class political consciousness can be brought to the workers only from without, that is, only from outside the economic struggle, from outside the sphere of relations between

> workers and employers. The sphere from which alone it is possible to obtain this knowledge is the sphere of relationships of all classes and strata to the state and the government, the sphere of the interrelations between all classes. For that reason, the reply to the question as to what must be done to bring political knowledge to the workers cannot be merely the answer with which, in the majority of cases, the practical workers, especially those inclined toward Economism, mostly content themselves, namely: "To go among the workers." To bring political consciousness to the workers, the Social Democrats must go among all classes of the population; they must dispatch units of their army in all directions.[8]

On this shaky logical basis, Lenin kept stressing the theme of "all classes" and "all strata." "We must 'go among all classes of the population' as theoreticians, as propagandists, as agitators, and as organizers .... The principal thing, of course, is propaganda and agitation among all strata of the people."[9]

Never before, it seems, had such an explicitly "all-class" approach been promoted by a Marxist revolutionary; never had Marxism's proletarian class emphasis been accompanied by and overlaid with such a concern to draw elements of all strata into the movement. Very likely this gave expression to the narodnik revolutionary outlook that Lenin had imbibed, as he showed at various points in What Is To Be Done?, from those Russian revolutionaries of the sixties and seventies whom he so greatly admired. For all his doctrinaire Marxism and insistence that class struggle is a motor force of history, he was bound to oppose the idea of a separate proletarian class culture. His "all-class"

Bolshevism would make this Marxist narodnik the principled foe of the proletkul't that he became. His anti-proletkul't resolution of 1920[10] was prefigured in What Is To Be Done?

However weak the Marxist logic of going among "all classes," the real basis for doing so was strong. Lenin was sensitively aware of the discontents and grievances that many individuals in all strata of Russian society harbored against the Tsarist order. Although the working class was, as he said, the "ideal audience" for the Social Democratic political pedagogues, being most of all in need of the "political knowledge" that they had to impart, there were millions of working peasants and artisans who "would always listen eagerly" to the party agitators' political exposures of Russian conditions. There were aroused university students, unhappy zemstvo employees, outraged members of religious sects, and mistreated teachers, all of whom must be made conscious of the meaning of such facts of Russian life as "the brutal treatment of the people by the police, the persecution of religious sects, the flogging of peasants, the outrageous censorship, the torture of soldiers, the persecution of the most innocent cultural undertakings, etc." Especially could their indignation be aroused if news about these matters were brought to them vividly and regularly by an all-Russian party paper, smuggled in from abroad, which would function as a "collective propagandist and collective agitator."[11]

The organizational concepts of What Is To Be Done? belong in the frame of this reasoning about the teaching of anti-regime

political consciousness as the prime function of the revolutionary party, its way of preparing for the eventual overthrow of the Tsarist state by mass revolutionary action under the party's guidance. The revolutionaries would form a sort of brotherhood (an "order of sword-bearers," the impressionistic Stalin would later call it) functioning conspiratorially and under centralized leadership as Marxist-trained political tutors of large numbers of non-party people receptive to their message. Their medium of operation would be worker study-circles, trade unions and other local groups, in which they would form nuclei of revolutionary consciousness--party cells. Here Lenin drew upon his own experience of underground propaganda work as one of the organizers in 1895 of the short-lived St. Petersburg Union of Struggle for the Liberation of the Working Class, and upon the larger experience of "the magnificent organization that the revolutionaries had in the seventies, and that should serve us all as a model..."[12] The all-Russian party paper, drawing its material from revolutionaries working in these clandestine circles and being distributed by them, would constitute an organizational training-ground in revolutionary work.

Such was Lenin's plan for an organization that "will combine, in one general assault, all the manifestations of political opposition, protest, and indignation, an organization that will consist of professional revolutionaries and be led by the real political leaders of the entire people."[13] He admitted that the plan was at best, so far, a "dream," but invoked the authority of Pisarev for the idea that "The rift between dream and reality causes no

harm if only the person dreaming believes seriously in his dream, if he attentively observes life, compares his observations with his castles in the air, and if, generally speaking, he works conscientiously for the achievement of his fantasies."[14]

To understand Lenin's political fantasy in its totality, it is important to visualize that he saw in his mind's eye not merely the militant organization of professional revolutionaries of which he spoke, but the party-led popular movement "of the entire people." The "dream" was by no means simply a party dream although it centered in the party as the vanguard of conscious revolutionaries acting as teachers and organizers of a much larger mass following in the movement. The dream was a vision of an anti-state popular Russia raised up by propaganda and agitation as a vast army of fighters against the official Russia headed by the Tsar; and of this other, popular Russia as an all-class counter-community of the estranged, a mass of people trained to revolutionary consciousness by its party tutors and dedicated to the goal of a revolution that would rid Russia of its "shame and curse," as Lenin called the autocracy.

Of course, the dream was not realized, despite Lenin's determined, persistent efforts in the ensuing fifteen years to make it come true. His fantasy-picture of a collective of like-minded revolutionaries functioning harmoniously in a centralized organization remained just that. For the actual Bolshevik party as it evolved under Lenin was and remained a faction-ridden grouping of ever disputatious Russian revolutionaries. Nor did he realize his dream of forming under the party's leadership a great popular

following that could and would destroy the Tsarist order in a victorious mass revolution and thereby become "the vanguard of the international revolutionary proletariat,"[15] making Russia the spearhead of world revolution. Prior to 1917, the party acquired nothing like a mass popular following.

Yet it was this party that managed to take over and hold onto political power in the new Time of Troubles unleashed by the World War. That momentous turn of historical circumstance gave Lenin the opportunity to attempt, from positions of power, from above, to translate his old dream into sociopolitical reality. Then it turned out that what in fact he had done, albeit unwittingly, in What Is To Be Done? was to sketch out the prospectus for a new culture: the tutelary party-state that he sought to construct and set on its course during his few remaining years.

II.

Is the rise of the Bolshevik party-state, the single-party system, to be explained as a consequence of the adversities experienced by the fledgling revolutionary regime in the time of the Civil War when it was beset by hostile forces? In The Revolution Betrayed, Trotsky argued that such was the case. During the Civil War, he wrote, the (socialist) opposition parties were forbidden one after another. "This measure, obviously in conflict with the spirit of Soviet democracy, the leaders of Bolshevism regarded not as a principal, but as an episodic act of

self-defense."[16] Citing that statement as his authority, Isaac Deutscher later reformulated the argument in more forceful terms: "The idea that a single party should rule the Soviets was not at all inherent in the Bolshevik programme. Still less so was the idea that only a single party should be allowed to exist."[17]

A Bolshevik only from 1917 and a unique political personality among Bolshevik leaders thereafter, Trotsky was a dubious source of authoritative testimony on this critically important point. Whether or not the idea that "a single party should rule" inhered in the Bolshevik party's programmatic declarations, it was present in the Bolshevism that prevailed in history, namely, Lenin's. When he wrote The State and Revolution while in hiding during the summer of 1917, seeking to show the Marxist propriety of seizing power by violent means and establishing a "dictatorship of the proletariat," Lenin revealed in a single lapidary sentence that his Bolshevism envisaged the dictatorship as a party-state: "By educating the workers' party, Marxism educates the vanguard of the proletariat, capable of assuming power and leading the whole people to socialism, of directing and organizing the new system, of being the teacher, the guide, the leader of all the working and exploited people in organizing their social life without the bourgeoisie and against the bourgeoisie."[18] On this crucial point, the treatise, which was largely a tissue of quotations from Marx and Engels, made no reference to those authority figures. There was none to make. It was not classical Marxism but Lenin's Bolshevism that conceived the proletarian dictatorship as a state in which one party would have the mission

to "lead the whole people to socialism" as their teacher, leader and guide.

We have Lenin's further, later testimony to the fact that the party-state as a system had been latent in his Bolshevism from the start. In 1920, when the system was in its third year, he described in "Left-Wing" Communism how it worked. After observing that "No important political or organizational question is decided by any state institution in our republic without the guidance of the Party's Central Committee," he explained by the example of the trade unions, as formally non-party bodies with a mass membership at that time of over four million, that Communists made up the directing bodies of the vast majority of the unions and carried out the directives of the party in their trade-union activity. There were other mass organizations under party leadership, such as the non-party worker and peasant conferences, he went on, as well as the soviets and their congresses. Then he continued:

> Such is the general mechanism of the proletarian state power viewed "from above," from the standpoint of the practical implementation of the dictatorship. We hope that the reader will understand why the Russian Bolshevik, who has known this mechanism for twenty-five years and seen it develop out of small, illegal and underground circles, cannot help regarding all this talk about "from above" or "from below," about the dictatorship of leaders or the dictatorship of the masses, etc., as ridiculous and childish nonsense, something like discussing whether a man's left leg or right arm is of greater use to him.[19]

In Lenin's mind, the Soviet system of rule by the Communist Party

was not a post-revolutionary innovation, and not (as Trotsky said) "in conflict with the spirit of Soviet democracy." It was, rather, the institutionalization in power of a set of party-mass relationships that originated in the party's pre-history, in the experience of the underground circles in which he had been active around 1895 in St. Petersburg. The party-state of 1920 was the party-led movement of the early years in open ascendancy as a sociopolitical formation in Russia.

As such it was, in one very important aspect, a system of power, as Lenin was frank to acknowledge when he wrote here: "Without close contacts with the trade unions, and without their energetic support and devoted efforts, not only in economic, but also in military affairs, it would of course have been impossible for us to govern the country and to maintain the dictatorship for two and a half months, let alone two and a half years."[20] In practice, he went on, these contacts call for propaganda, agitation and frequent conferences with influential trade union workers, and also for "a determined struggle against the Mensheviks, who still have a certain though very small following to whom they teach all kinds of counter-revolutionary machinations, ranging from an ideological defense of (bourgeois) democracy and the preaching that the trade unions should be "independent" (independent of proletarian state power!) to sabotage of proletarian discipline, etc., etc."[21]

Lenin's arrogation of all power to the Bolsheviks in the new Russia, his resolute orientation on making the Soviet state a Bolshevik-ruled party-state, is not to be explained by

an urge to power for power's sake, but by an urge to power for the sake of leadership of the society by the sole political force (as he saw it) in possession of the Marxist truth as guidance for politics. The one-party system appeared a legitimate political formation on account of the teaching role that Lenin considered the party to be uniquely qualified to play. The party-state in all its spheres was to be a tutelary state, with the party as political pedagogue in non-party organizations such as the trade unions. "The conquest of political power by the proletariat is a gigantic forward step for the proletariat as a class, and the party must more than ever and in a new way, not only in the old way, educate and guide the trade unions, at the same time not forgetting that they are and will long remain an indispensable 'school of communism' and a preparatory school in which to train the proletarians to exercise their dictatorship, an indispensable organization of the workers for the gradual transfer of the management of the whole economic life of the country to the working class (and not to the separate trades), and later to all the working people."[22]

Viewing matters so, Lenin was bound to take the position that he did in the trade-union controversy of 1920-1921. He could not accept the view of the Workers' Opposition that the workers, through their unions, should take over management of the economy without a long preparatory period during which they would be "schools of communism" in which the party would be teacher. That was "a deviation towards syndicalism and

anarchism," as he put it, for "Marxism teaches...that only the political party of the working class, i.e., the Communist Party, is capable of uniting, training and organizing a vanguard of the proletariat and of the whole mass of the working people that alone will be capable of withstanding the inevitable petty-bourgeois vacillations of this mass and the inevitable traditions and relapses of narrow craft unionism or craft prejudices among the proletariat, and of guiding all the united activities of the whole of the proletariat, i.e., of leading it politically, and through it, the whole mass of the working people."[23] One can imagine the scathing comment that a resurrected Marx would have made about the failure of his disciple from the Volga to understand some fundamentals of what "Marxism teaches."

In Lenin's Bolshevism, however, the workers after the revolution required party tutelage. Responding to Trotsky's platform for statification of the trade unions, he said that "this is not a state organization, not an organization for coercion, it is an educational organization, an organization for enlistment, for training, it is a school, a school of administration, a school of management, a school of communism."[24] The local soviets, too, were, in Lenin's eyes, fundamentally a school, a training-ground: "Only in the soviets does the mass of exploited people really learn, not from books but from their own practical experience, how to construct socialism, how to create a new public discipline, a free union of free workers."[25] Indeed, all the non-party mass organizations of the Soviet system were conceived as party-taught, party-led, and party-

organized schools in a tutelary state, Lenin's pedagogical polity.

III.

Thus Lenin's Bolshevism remained in power essentially what it had been from the start, an orientation on party tutelage of a popular movement toward a revolutionary goal. The goal having been attained in a negative way--the destruction of the Tsarist order--it now turned into the goal of constructing a socialist society in a new Russia defined officially as soviet in its political organization but not yet socialist as a society.

Socialism connoted a highly cultured society. In the heady atmosphere of 1917, when he was obsessed with the need to nerve the party leadership for a seizure of power in what he sensed was but an interregnum, Lenin had conjured up, perhaps in his own mind as well as in others, a vision of Russia as ripe for early, indeed virtually immediate socialist transformation.[26] By 1919-1920, he took a much longer view. The transformation of Soviet Russia into a socialist country would be the work of a generation, if not more. Consequently, Lenin's Bolshevik Marxism came to make provision for a "transition period" not envisaged in classical Marxism, a post-revolutionary period of transition to socialism. What was to be done under these conditions was what had seemed to him in 1902 the thing needing to be done: the organization of revolutionaries, as a vanguard, as organized Marxist consciousness, must assume a

tutelary role of leadership of the entire people, excluding interference by other parties misguided in their socialism, specifically the Mensheviks. So, the concept of a movement remained central in Lenin's Bolshevism. He saw the new society of the Soviet but not-yet-socialist republic as a society in movement save that now it was a constructive movement for the creation of socialism and ultimately communism. Such a thought had been in his mind, anticipatorily, before the taking of power. He had written in The State and Revolution that "only socialism will be the beginning of a rapid, genuine, truly mass forward movement, embracing first the majority and then the whole of the population, in all spheres of public and private life."[27]

A locus classicus of his subsequent thinking along these lines is his speech of October 2, 1920 to the Third All-Russia Congress of the Young Communist League. To build communism (he could just as well have said socialism) involved a lengthy learning process, he argued; it meant first of all, "learning communism." This was not at all a matter simply of mastering Marxist theory, nor was it a matter of acquiring a "proletarian culture" in a class sense of the term. For "only a precise knowledge and transformation of the culture created by the entire development of mankind will enable us to create a proletarian culture." Learning communism meant, moreover, acquiring the skills needed for the economic revival of Russia along modern technical lines, on the basis of electrification, for which purpose mass literacy and technical knowledge were requisite. Hence the Young Communist League must become

fundamentally a teaching organization, from whose practical activity any worker "can see that they are really people who are showing him the right road." In conclusion, Lenin said that the generation of people now at the age of fifty (he was fifty then) could not expect to see a communist society. "But the generation of those who are now fifteen will see a communist society, and will itself build this society. This generation should know that the entire purpose of their lives is to build a communist society."[28]

A human society is not merely a large collection of people living in an organized way on a certain territory and interacting with one another on the basis of some institutionalized division of functions. Such a grouping of people does not form what may properly be called a "community" or "society" without a sense of common involvement in a meaningful enterprise, some consciousness of kind transcending, though probably including, a common language. This may be called the society's sustaining myth. In a certain sense the myth is the society; or to put it otherwise, the society has its real existence in its members' minds. Lenin, despite the opposition he had shown in the inter-Bolshevik controversies of earlier years to the ideas of Bogdanov, Lunacharsky and others concerning a "usable myth" for socialism,[29] was himself engaged here in an historic act of mythologizing. He was putting into words the central, sustaining myth of Soviet society, laying the foundation of Soviet Communism as a culture. In the Leninist canon, to be a Soviet citizen was to be a member of a goal-oriented all-Russian

collective of builders of socialism and communism.

There were different grades of membership. To belong to the Communist Party or the Young Communist League was, by his definition, to be a conscious builder, one dedicated to the collective purpose as a personal life-purpose. It was to be a member of the leadership cohort in the constructive movement for the post-revolutionary transformation of the society into a socialist one. As Lenin put it to the Communist Youth League, "You must be foremost among the millions of builders of a communist society in whose ranks every young man and young woman should be. You will not build a communist society unless you enlist the mass of young workers and peasants in the work of building communism.[30] Enlisting was basically an educational enterprise: the transmitting of literacy, technical skills and above all political consciousness, including dedication to the goal, to millions of not-yet-conscious builders of the new society.

As an heir of the nineteenth-century Russian Westerners, Lenin considered the learning of Western ways, the adoption of the organizational and technological achievements of what to him were the more cultured countries, to be a most important part of the learning process comprised in the building of communism. Thus his enthusiasm for the adoption of America's "Taylorism" in Soviet Russia. Thus his injunction, at the very time when Germany imposed a "Tilsit peace" on Russia at Brest-Litovsk, to learn from the Germans. "Yes, learn from the Germans! History is moving in zigzags and by roundabout ways. It so

happens that it is the Germans who now personify, besides a brutal imperialism, the principle of discipline, organization, harmonious cooperation on the basis of modern machine industry, and strict accounting and control. And that is just what we are lacking. That is just what we must learn."[31]

Toward the end, he decided that learning to work cooperatively was the crux of socialism's construction in Russia. He elaborated this theme in "On Cooperation," one of the set of last articles that constituted his valedictory to the party and country. Going back to the "old cooperators" (he mentioned Robert Owen in this connection but might just as well have chosen Fourier, whose projected phalansteres excited the imagination of Lenin's old idol Chernyshevsky), he proposed that "the system of civilized cooperators is the system of socialism." To enlist the whole population of Russia in cooperative societies was thus the main content of the building of socialism. State financial backing for cooperatives would be one way of doing so, but chiefly it was a problem of educational work, of "culturalizing" (kul'turnichestvo). A whole historical epoch, comprising one or two decades at a minimum, would be needed to carry out the "cultural revolution" needed in order to educate the Russian peasant to the advantages of the cooperative way: "But the organization of the entire peasantry in cooperative societies presupposes a standard of culture among the peasants (precisely among the peasants as the overwhelming mass) that cannot, in fact, be achieved without a cultural revolution.... This cultural revolution would now suffice to make our country

a completely socialist country; but it presents immense difficulties of a purely cultural (for we are illiterate) and material character (for to be cultured we must achieve a certain development of the material means of production, must have a certain material base)."[32]

Such was Lenin's final word on what it would mean to build a socialist society. His heavy emphasis upon "educational work" as a long-range process of persuasion in the setting of a party-led movement of the entire people to socialism was in keeping with his Bolshevism's master-theme, enunciated over twenty years before. It was still a matter of "consciousness" overcoming popular "spontaneity" by a pedagogical process. Now it had reached the point of conceptualizing Soviet Russia as the scene of a culture-building culture. Needless to add, the program for a cultural revolution presented in "On Cooperation" had nothing to do with the politico-cultural witch hunt that Stalin sponsored under the name of "cultural revolution" in 1928-1931. That episode in the later history of Soviet Russia had as little claim to being the cultural revolution conceived by Lenin as Stalin's terroristic collectivization of the peasants had to being the "cooperating of Russia" envisaged by Lenin.

When Soviet studies emerged as a branch of academic scholarship in the 1940's and after, it became customary to treat Soviet Communism as, in essence, a system of power, or total power. How Russia Is Ruled, by Merle Fainsod, stands as a monument to that understanding of the object of study, but it is

only one of many. Although it had come or was coming true at the time when these works appeared, the image of the object as a system of power was wanting in historical accuracy. Soviet communism had been designed by its principal founder as in essence a new culture containing within itself a system of party-state power. From Lenin's movement "dream" of 1902 to his post-revolutionary dream of a society in party-led movement toward socialism and communism there was a straight line of continuity. Both before and after 1917, he and others tried to translate the dream into sociopolitical reality. The conquest of real political power in the Revolution made a huge difference by creating all sorts of possibilities for success in the culture-building effort that had not existed before 1917. Nevertheless, the venture was showing itself to be beset with enormous difficulties while Lenin still lived, and the appearance in the year of his death of Stalin's Foundations of Leninism, where the mass organizations that Lenin conceived as "schools of communism" were characterized mechanistically as "transmission belts" of party rule, was a symptom of a process then in full swing: the conversion of the tutelary state designed but at most only partially realized under Lenin into the system of total power that Soviet Communism finally became.

There was a fundamental flaw in Lenin's design for a tutelary state in a culture-building culture, one that he might have foreseen but seemingly did not. The organization of professional revolutionaries imbued with Marxist consciousness was bound to turn into what it did become and would have become in

time even if a Stalin had not sharply accelerated the process by murder and repression of old revolutionaries: an organization of professional party-state functionaries mouthing Marxist-Leninist ritual language and imbued with a spirit of self-seeking. Then the party-state would be confronted with the dilemma inherent in its self-proclaimed role as a political mentor of the masses: what ground do the party-state monopolists of power have for asserting the continuing legitimacy of their tenure as political teachers when their pupils the people have reached maturity at graduation time? The dilemma has now taken on real political life in Poland, and must one day do so in Russia. Whether it succeeds or whether it fails, and in Russia it failed, a culture-building culture is condemned to impermanence.

NOTES

1. Kenelm Burridge, New Heaven New Earth: A Study of Millenarian Activities (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), p. 9. For a most illuminating study of early Christianity in these terms, see John G. Gager, Kingdom and Community: The Social World of Early Christianity (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1975).

2. The Lenin Anthology, ed. Robert C. Tucker (New York: W. W. Norton, 1975), p. 553. See also his statement (ibid., p. 554) that "...Bolshevism arose in 1903 on a very firm foundation of Marxist theory."

3. What Is To Be Done?, in The Lenin Anthology, p. 79.

4. Philip Selznick, The Organizational Weapon: A Study of Bolshevik Strategy and Tactics (New York: McGraw Hill, 1952), pp. 17, 41.

5. Merle Fainsod, How Russia Is Ruled, revised ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1963), p. 39.

6. Marx and Engels, The Holy Family: A Critique of Critical Criticism (1845), The Marx-Engels Reader, ed. Robert C. Tucker, Second edition (New York: W. W. Norton, 1978), p. 132.

7. What Is To Be Done?, in The Lenin Anthology, p. 24. For Lenin's citation of Kautsky's statement of 1901 denying that socialist consciousness is the necessary result of the proletarian class struggle, and wrongly asserting that this denial was in accord with Marx's position, see ibid., p. 28.

8. Ibid., p. 50.

9. Ibid., p. 52.

10. For the resolution's text, see ibid., pp. 675-676.

11. Ibid., pp. 43, 55, 102.

12. Ibid., 85. The reference, he explained, was to the Zemlia i Volia.

13. Ibid., p. 60.

14. Ibid., p. 106.

15. Ibid., p. 22.

16. Leon Trotsky, The Revolution Betrayed (New York: The Pathfinder Press, 1972), p. 96. The book originally appeared in 1937.

17. Isaac Deutscher, Stalin: A Political Biography, Second ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 224.

18. The State and Revolution, in The Lenin Anthology, p. 328.

19. "Left-Wing" Communism, in The Lenin Anthology, pp. 553, 572-573. First italics added.

20. Ibid., pp. 572-573.

21. Ibid., p. 573.

22. Ibid., pp. 574-575.

23. "Draft Resolution on the Syndicalist and Anarchist Deviation in our Party," in ibid., pp. 497-498.

24. "O professional'nykh soiuzakh, o tekushchem momente i ob oshibkakh t. Trotskogo," V. I. Lenin, Polnoe sobranie sochineniia, 5th ed. (Moscow, 1963), Vol. 42, p. 203.

25. "Tezisy po II kongressu Kommunisticheskogo Internatsionala," in ibid., Vol. 41, pp. 187-188.

26. See especially his essay "Can the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?" (September 1917), where he wrote: "The big banks are the 'state apparatus' which we need to bring about socialism, and which we take ready-made from capitalism; our task here is merely to lop off what capitalistically mutilates this excellent apparatus, to make it even bigger, even more democratic, even more comprehensive. Quantity will be transformed into quality. A single State Bank... will constitute as much as nine-tenths of the socialist apparatus." The Lenin Anthology, p. 401.

27. Ibid., p. 382.

28. "The Tasks of the Youth Leagues," in The Lenin Anthology, pp. 664, 666, 673, 674.

29. For the use of this phrase and a discussion of "collectivism" as socialist myth, see Robert C. Williams, "Collective Immortality: The Syndicalist Origins of Proletarian Culture, 1905-1910," The Slavic Review, Vol. 39, No. 4 (September 1918), pp. 392-395.

30. The Lenin Anthology, p. 667.

31. "The Chief Task of Our Day" (1918), in ibid., pp. 436-437.

32. Ibid., pp. 710-713.