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**IS LENIN
WITH US?**

Харьков
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Foreword to 2017 Edition

It has been ten years since the first publication of the article “Lenin is with Us”, ten years of still young but rapid and stormy history of independent Ukraine...

Ukraine has gone through two Maidans that have twice adjusted the vector of its development, its path: independence, freedom, and European liberal values. Four years ago, Ukraine settled down to a course of building a democratic society, making a hard reset of the state system and reforming all state institutes, and completing the foundation stage, which is overcoming the complex of “less value” compared to Imperial Russia and breaking off the Soviet communist heritage...

The Ukrainians give up the communist names of their cities and streets, remove monuments to communist leaders from their central squares and false legends about their life and work from history textbooks replacing them with facts and documents. History is a science about ambiguity of an individual’s role in history... And it’s up to each particular person to answer the question if the greatness of

the goal justifies the ignobility, meanness and cruelty of the methods used to achieve it...

So, ten years later, with three thousand monuments demolished in Ukraine, I publish this article again, this time with a question mark in the title: Is Lenin with Us?

I have complimented the original text with the internet epistolary, debate and discussions the article inspired in forums in 2007.

I have also extended this edition to include the “Lenin-fall” chronicles of 2014 and the contemporary (2017) opinions of well-known Ukrainian publicists, historians and politicians.

Having read the entire collection, both direct Lenin’s quotations and different opinions from 2007 and 2017, I believe you will answer the question: “Is Lenin with us?”, for yourselves. And what is he: a symbol of the great communist idea, or the embodiment of monstrous atrocities? Should we remember? Can we forgive?

It has been a hundred years, which is a reasonable time to evaluate and draw conclusions, formulate the moral imperative of the historical memory, shake off the hassle of the Soviet propaganda about the “most humane of people” and consciously get rid of the “specter of communism” and its idols. We have had enough of “specters haunting Europe”; it’s high time we went ahead!

Author

LENIN IS WITH US*

“For a Soviet citizen, Lenin sounds like
subway or sausage”
(attributed to Joseph Brodsky)



* Published in electronic form:
July 12, 2007 at www.avakov.com
July 13, 2007 at www.mediaport.ua
July 24, 2007 at <http://Pravda.com.ua>

*Аваков А. Ленин с нами / Арсен Аваков. —
Харьков: Золотые страницы, 2008. — 99 с.: ил.*

I had a five in Marxist-Leninist Ethics at the institute. And I had a five in History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), of course. I wrote my end-of-year paper on the topic: “Lenin’s style of work”.

Essentially, I am just like most of you, I come from the ALREADY distant socialist past, similarly prejudiced and brainwashed... As they would say at the time with a smile: an “homo sovieticus”.



Time went by: perestroika, glasnost, total free information collapse, economic meltdown... Old concepts of idols of the communist epoch quickly fade away into the time long gone...

They were replaced with something different: disappointment over the deceived sincere and romantic, naive adolescent ideas ...

Even now, when discovering the facts that reveal a new face of the old “heroes-Leninists”, I actually find myself thinking: NO, NO! This is not my Lenin, mine was different, very positive! Dzerzhinsky, too... and Kirov...

NO, NO! The “homo sovieticus” in me is writhing in agony, suffering under the weight of the documents and facts we had no idea existed. But what I thought was different! And I believed! I HAD NO IDEA!

We WERE NOT to know. We had “FAITH” imposed on us, which, if taken out of the quotation marks, turns from a high spiritual feeling into evil propaganda.

And there are those who are still confined to those quotation marks. So, I do not blame them for continuing to have “faith”. It will be extremely difficult for them to believe in something DIFFERENT. It is not easy to break the views on history, events, individuals that were shaped for decades, and to overcome the ideology implanted in us by our teachers and favorite TV anchors for years.

This text contains a lot of quotation marks, but they are a form of documented proof of the quoted text rather than a means to redefine the written word.

Quotations. Facts.

I am convinced that many will find the quotations cited to be shocking. Yet, facts, which flabbergasted me, a man grown up and developed under the influence of THAT time, are a “stubborn” thing, as the man in the title used to say.

* * *

Let me start harshly. As an old “Soviet” acquaintance. Here are a few theses that have become an axiom for me. They are what I proceed from in my reflections.

FIRST. In fact, Lenin was the main mastermind of the mass terror raging in the USSR in the XIX century.

As a rule, the main ordering parties do not execute killings themselves. They usually implant their ideas in the executors, corrupt them, and recruit followers from all the diverse strata of society, primarily from among the fragile young souls. And the ordering parties act, be it by pen or by axe, by giving commands at the foot of the gallows or by orchestrating mass shootings...

— Where do such horrific charges come from? What evil slander to spread on the vozhd (leader) of the world proletariat!” a Soviet citizen will exclaim.

Now is the time to start sharing the sources with the reader.

“...1) You need to hang (hang without fail, so that the public sees) at least