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Vladimir Lenin on Oblomov

Javed Akhter¹, Faria Saeed², Shumaila Abdullah³, Khair Muhammad⁴, Saleem Uddin⁵

ABSTRACT

This research paper tends to highlight Vladimir Lenin's views about work and indolence. Therefore, he admires work, action and revolution, which are characteristics of the proletarians, and condemns lethargy, inertia, indolence, indecision and procrastination, which are peculiar to the surf-owning and land-owning feudal nobility. Vladimir Lenin condemns Ivan Goncharov's most famous character Oblomov frequently in his speeches and writings. Oblomov was representative the surf-owning and land-owning feudal nobility of the nineteenth-century Tsarist Russian social formation. In fact, Oblomov like other literary types have definite historical roots, which are closely related to the way of life of a particular class. In this manner, his class nature or Oblomovism typifies the sloth of the surf-owning and land-owning nobility. These traits of Oblomov have not become out-dated but the class they typify has become something of the past. Vladimir Lenin pays full attention to the lasting and broad-scale implications of Oblomov's character, which crosses the limits of the social milieu and historical age, picking up the penetrating insight into the class nature of Oblomov's character. Vladimir Lenin highlights the continuing relevance of Oblomov's character in his own times, criticising Oblomov and Oblomovism and identifies his political rivals and enemies around him with Oblomov.

Keywords: Indecision, Inertia, Oblomov, Oblomovism, Procrastination, Revolution.

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¹ Department of English Literature and Linguistics, University of Balochistan Quetta Balochistan Pakistan. Email: sangatjavedakhtar@gmail.com

² Department of English Literature and Linguistics, University of Balochistan Quetta Balochistan Pakistan. Email: fariask63@gmail.com

³ Department of English Literature and Linguistics, University of Balochistan Quetta Balochistan Pakistan. Email: Shumaila_abdullah914@yahoo.com

⁴ Department of English Literature and Linguistics, University of Balochistan Quetta Balochistan Pakistan. Email: Khairefroze@gmail.com

⁵ Department of English Literature and Linguistics, University of Balochistan Quetta Balochistan Pakistan.

1.0 Introduction

Vladimir Lenin was a great political figure of the twentieth century, whose writings cover a vast range of subjects: politics, economics, philosophy, culture, literature and arts. His views on art and literature contain a logical system of principles and laws of Marxist-Leninist theory of aesthetics. His Marxist-Leninist theory of aesthetics is based upon his principles of theory of reflection, which is a reliable compass to proceed by in the intricate problems of aesthetic production of art and literature. His articles and occasional statements on Pisarev, Alexander Herzen, Saltykov-Shehedrin, Ivan Turgenev, Gleb Uspensky, Chernyshevsky, Dobrolyubov, Ivan Goncharov, Chekhov, Leo Tolstoy, Maxim Gorky and many others are great contribution and best examples of Marxist criticism. It is noteworthy that Lenin's Marxist literary criticism cannot be understood without understanding his general basic Marxist views on the development of human social formation as a whole. Therefore, his Marxist-Leninist theory of aesthetics is deeply rooted in his philosophical, historical and political theory of Marxist dialectical and historical materialism. Vladimir Lenin possessed a taste for aesthetics. He was ardent reader of fiction and poetry. He was fond of opera, music and theatre. He read the books of Alexander Pushkin, Ivan Turgenev, Gogol, Saltykov-Shehedrin, Ivan Goncharov, Ivan Turgenev, Lermontov, Pisarev, Nikolai Chernyshevsky, Chekhov, Leo Tolstoy and many others. His favourite authors were Alexander Pushkin, Nekrasov, Gogol, Nikolai Chernyshevsky, Chekhov, Leo Tolstoy, Mrs Stove Beecher, Goethe, Heine, Victor Hugo, Emile Zola, Jack London, Upton Sinclair, Anatole France, Henri Barbusse, Anderson Nexo, Bernard Shaw and Maxim Gorky. The frequent literary references in his political and philosophical writings show his great interest in literature and arts. He used literary types to compare them with his political enemies. For example, he identified such negative and flawed characters as Judas, Balalaikin, Voroshilov, Penochkin, Lackey, Charlatan, Petrushkn, Nozdriev, Ippolit Ippolitych Ryzhitsky and many others with his political enemies, criticising them for their hypocrisy and callousness.

Oblomov is one of such negative and flawed characters with whom Vladimir compared Mensheviks, Cadets, social revolutionaries, Black hundreds, feudal lords and bourgeoisie to denounce them, exposing their indolence, indecision, and procrastination. In fact, Oblomov is a famous character of Ivan Goncharov's novel of the same name, who typifies stagnant routine, inertia, indecision, procrastination and sloth of apathy of the serf-owning and land-owning feudal nobility of the mid-nineteenth century Tsarist Russia. Its producer Ivan Goncharov was one of the great realist novelists of the nineteenth century Russia, who depicted Oblomov in such a realistic manner that he has become immortal, passing into the Russian as well as other European languages. Therefore, Oblomov becomes immortal, universal and memorable literary type in Russian Literature as Tartuffe in French literature and Pecksniff in English literature. Oblomov has not suddenly come down in Russian literature but in fact, he is developed form and culmination of the gentry hero familiar to us already from such types as Alexander Pushkin's Onegin and Mikhail Lermontov's Pechorin. He bears universal attributes, which place him alongside such universally recognizable types as Hamlet, Don Quixote and Don Juan. In this regard, Oblomov is the first example of large-scale artistic portraiture in Russian Literature. His characterization is assumed to mean not only the relationship of the characters to the land-owning and serf-owning feudal social formation of Tsarist Russia, but relating as nearly as feasible of the totality of a character's experience, from boyhood to death.

In this way, Ivan Goncharov places Oblomov in the squalid setting of his apartment in Westernized imperial capital of Tsarist Russia St Petersburg, where at the opening of the novel he spends a whole day in a shlafrok dressing-gown, rejecting the overtures of the visitors from the cold outside world or quarrelling with his serf Zakhar. He possesses three hundred serfs in his county estates of Oblomovka. In fact, he is principally such kind of lethargic person who, shortly roused from his dressing-gown torpor by the attraction of the novel's heroine, Olga Sergievna. Subsequently, he spends an enchanted summer in gentle courtship of her (part 11 and 111 of the novel), only to retreat again into his dressing-gown existence when the cold winter season approaches. However, there are the lovingly designed vistas of 'Oblomov's Dream' or the chorus-like commentaries of the novel's 'positive' hero, Schtoltz, beyond this principally static and fluidly episodic twofold portraiture, which provides perspective of time and meaning to

Oblomov's characterization. This universal flawed character succeeded in getting the attention of Vladimir Lenin, who condemned this character in his speeches and writings. This research study focuses on how Vladimir Lenin understood, identified and compared the character of Oblomov with his political enemies and intellectuals of the land-owning and serf-owning feudal class and used to brand them Oblomov and denounce them for their Oblomov-like traits and characteristics.

1.01 Research objective

The research objectives of this study are as follows:

1. The objective of the present research is to highlight Vladimir Lenin's critical ideas about Ivan Goncharov's most famous character Oblomov frequently in his speeches and writings because of possessing the traits and habits of the serf-owning and land-owning feudal nobility of the nineteenth-century Tsarist Russian social formation.
2. To highlight Vladimir Lenin's ideas about the characteristics of Oblomov's character such as indolence, indecision and procrastination
3. To show Vladimir Lenin's way of comparing Oblomov with his political rivals, feudal lords, bourgeoisie

1.02 Research Questions/ Hypothesis

The paper concentrates on the following research questions:

1. Why did Vladimir Lenin criticise Oblomov and Oblomovism?
2. How did Vladimir Lenin identify and compare Oblomov with his political rivals?

Significance and Scope of Research

The research paper will contribute extensively in understanding Vladimir Lenin's views about Oblomov through the Marxist hermeneutics in the light of the socio-economic ethos of the historical era to which Oblomov belong. The study corresponds to relatively an unexplored field on the subject, because no such type of worthwhile research study on the subject exists in this regard. Therefore, the present study will be an addition and contribution in this sphere. It explores an important problematical issue of research. It is very important to note that this study is not based upon the textual study of Ivan Goncharov's novel "Oblomov", but it is only a research study of Vladimir Lenin's ideas about the typical literary character Oblomov. The findings and suggestions for further study may be utilized by the research scholars on the subject.

1.03 Research Methodology

The study is narrative research and follows descriptive-cum analytical method, in this research, the instruments of collecting data may be the calculation of databases and computer networks. In this regard, the researcher has collected data based on qualitative descriptive method, content analysis, and library method. The results show that even though Oblomov is universal literary character and Oblomov, he possesses striking similarities to the people whom Vladimir compares with him as well as the people around us because of possessing the traits such as procrastination, irresolution and indecision. The textual references are given as evidence to support the argument of this research. The key concepts of Marxist hermeneutics as well as indecision, sluggishness, inability and procrastination of Oblomov's character are discussed in this research. Marxist hermeneutics of studying the critical views of Vladimir Lenin's about the famous literary character of Oblomov is an important ingredient of this research. Relevant citations, quotations, and extracts in the text of this paper in general and the list of references in particular, have been followed in accordance with APA (American Psychological Association) style from the primary and secondary data on the subject of this research. The list of the cited sources is given under the heading of References at the end of this research paper.

2.0 Literature review

Much has been, still is and always will be written on Vladimir Lenin's aesthetic credo, and his keen interest in aesthetics and his Marxist-Leninist theory of aesthetics. There are many books on the subject. Nevertheless, Vladimir Lenin's views on aesthetics are found in a collection entitled "V.I. Lenin on Literature and Art" (Moscow, 1978) and there are other collections such as "Reminiscences about Vladimir Ilyich Lenin" (Moscow, 1957) "Reminiscences of Lenin by His Relatives" (Moscow, 1964), "The Live Lenin" (1965), from which his Marxist-Leninist theory of aesthetics may be derived in full length. In addition, the most famous British female sculptor Clare Sheridan wrote a book entitled "Naked Truth" (New York, 1928) in which she recorded Vladimir Lenin's views of art. K. Krupskaya, Vladimir Lenin's wife wrote a book entitled "Memories of Lenin" (Allahabad, 1930) in which following four essays shed light on Lenin's Marxist-Leninist theory of aesthetics:

- I. "Lenin's Method of Work"
- II. "Lenin on How to Write for the Masses"
- III. "Lenin and Chernyshevsky"
- IV. "The Kind of Fiction that Pleas'd Ilyich".

Similarly, A. V. Lunacharsky wrote an essay entitled "For the Centenary of Alexandrinsky Theatre" (1932) in which he highlighted Vladimir Lenin's views on theatre and theatrical production. A. V. Lunacharsky also wrote another essay entitled "Lenin and the Arts" in which he elaborated Vladimir Lenin's engagement in aesthetic activities and discussions, highlighting his Marxist-Leninist theory of aesthetics in detail. Mikhail Lifshitz also highlighted Vladimir Lenin's Marxist-Leninist theory of aesthetics, criticising A. A. Smirnov's book "William Shakespeare: A Marxist Interpretation" (Moscow, 1936) for vulgar materialist distortion of Vladimir Lenin's theory of reflection in his shorter book "Literature and Marxism: A Controversy" (New York, 1938). Clara Zetkin's conversation with Vladimir Lenin on literature and art is recorded in her book "On Lenin" (Moscow, 1925), which is also incorporated in her another book entitled "My Recollections of Lenin" (Moscow, 1956). This conversation is very interesting and important on Leninist aesthetics in many respects, covering Vladimir Lenin's views on aesthetics in detail. In addition, N. Valentinov's book "Encounters with Lenin" (London, 1968) also discloses many phases of Vladimir Lenin's great interest in Nikolai Chernyshevsky, and problems of art and literature. V. D. Bonch-Bruyevch wrote an essay entitled "Lenin on Books and Writers" in which he recorded Vladimir Lenin's view on different books and writers in detailed. N. Valentinov's other book "The Early Years of Lenin" (Michigan, 1969) also provides interesting and useful material on the subject, but in these books, the author's Menshevik biased stance destroys much of their usefulness. Moreover, Isaac Deutscher described early life of young Vladimir Lenin (Vologda) and his taste for arts and literature in his shorter book "Lenin's Childhood" (Oxford, 1970). Tamara Deutscher in her book "Not by Politics Alone" ((London, 1973) concentrates on aesthetic and cultural phases of Vladimir Lenin's Life. F. D. Klingender in his shorter book "Marxism and Modern Art: An Approach to Social Realism" (Klingender, 1975) described Vladimir Lenin's Marxist-Leninist theory of aesthetics, which is very interesting, comprehensive and exhaustive study of Vladimir Lenin's theory and method of reflection in aesthetics. The other best book on Vladimir Lenin's Marxist-Leninist theory of aesthetics is none other than Vladimir Shcherbina's book "Lenin and Problems of Literature" (Moscow, 1974), in which Vladimir Shcherbina discussed the different phases of Vladimir Lenin's aesthetic credo, active participation in discussions of art and literature and other domains of aesthetics and Marxist-Leninist theory of aesthetics. Biographies of Vladimir Lenin are legion but some biographies shed light on his aesthetic credo and Marxist-Leninist theory of aesthetics. Maria Prilezhayeva in her book entitled "V.I. Lenin: The Story of His Life" (Moscow, 1978) recorded many events which show Vladimir zeal for literature and arts. Robert Service in his book "Lenin: A Biography" (London, 2000) described Vladimir Lenin's taste for classics, literature and arts. There is also a very useful material on Vladimir Lenin's great interest in art and literature in Christopher Read's book "Lenin: A Revolutionary Life" (London and New York, 2005).

Moreover, the French Marxist critic Pierre Macherey discussed Vladimir Lenin's Marxist-Leninist theory of aesthetics in detail with a special reference to Vladimir Lenin's master-text of Marxist-Leninist criticism, "The Articles on Leo Tolstoy" in an essay entitled "Lenin, Critic of Tolstoy" in his book "A

Theory of Literary Production” (London, 1978). He states, “Thus Lenin’s contribution to Marxist aesthetics was intimately connected with the elaboration of a scientific socialism” (Macherey, Pierre, 1978, p. 107). Furthermore, Pierre Macherey and Etienne Balibar discussed Vladimir Lenin’s Marxist-Leninist theory of aesthetics in their essay entitled “Literature as an Ideological Form” (1978) that Vladimir Lenin’s reflection theory has for so long underpinned most of the vulgar materialist and the empiricist misreading of Marxism. In fact, perceptions, images, representations and concepts (the results of previous practices) are fractured reflections of the real, fractured not identical, not mimesis (one to one correspondence). According to Dominique Lecourt, there is not one but two propositions in Vladimir Lenin’s epistemological theory of reflection as outlined in his book “Materialism and Empirio-Criticism”. The first proposition of reflection theory is that thought does reflect an existent reality; and the second is that reflection should not be seen as mirroring. The reflection Vladimir Lenin talked about, according to Dominique Lecourt is a reflection without a mirror. (Lecourt, Dominique, cited in Macherey and Balibar, 1978, p. 5). It is because, as Pierre Macherey pointed out, quoting Vladimir Lenin initially, “We can hardly call a “mirror” that which does not give a precise reflection of the world”. Thus, the mirror is only superficially a mirror, or at least it reflects in its own special way...In effect, the relationship between the mirror and what it reflects (the historical reality) is partial, the mirror selects, it does not reflect everything. The selection itself is not fortuitous, it is symptomatic; it can tell us about the nature of the mirror (Macherey, P., 1978, p. 120). In short, Pierre Macherey, Étienne Balibar and Dominique Lecourt pointed out that it was a reflection without a mirror. (Lecourt, Dominique, cited in Macherey and Balibar, 1978, Pp. 105-135). As Vladimir Lenin stated, “a mirror which does not reflect things correctly could hardly be called a mirror. For Vladimir Lenin, thought and real were irreducible; they were separate sites of practice and should not be confused (Dutton, Michael and Paul Healy, 2001, pp. 28-29).

Similarly, the British Marxist critic Terry Eagleton also wrote on Vladimir Lenin’s Marxist-Leninist theory of aesthetics in his book “Marxism and Literary Criticism” (London, 1992). In his another book entitled “Criticism and Ideology” (London, 1992), Terry Eagleton also discussed Vladimir Lenin’s theory of Marxist-Leninist aesthetics in detail. Some Marxist critics used Vladimir Lenin’s article “Party Organisation and Part Literature” to imply to literature and arts. In this way, they distorted Vladimir Lenin’s Marxist-Leninist theory of aesthetics. “In 1960, however, an unknown letter of Krupskaya’s was published in “Druzhba Narodov” (1960, No. 4) in which she declared that Vladimir Lenin had not meant this essay to apply to literature as fine art. Thus, it seems likely that Vladimir Lenin made a similar distinction (Berger, John, 1969, p. 54). Ernest Fischer quoted this letter in his book “Art and Ideology” (New York, 1960) and discussed the issue raised by it in relation with art and ideology at a great length. Terry Eagleton also expressed the same thoughts about this article of Vladimir Lenin in his book “Marxism and Literary Criticism” (Terry, Eagleton, 1992, Pp. 40-41). However, the article is of general significance and not deals with literature and arts, but it was aiming against the anarchic trends and manners of Ernst Mach, Julius Martov, Axelrod, Leon Trotsky, Potresov, Parvus and Plekhanov. These books and dissertations on Vladimir Lenin’s Marxist-Leninist theory of aesthetics are very important, interesting and thought provoking in many respects but the topic “Lenin on Oblomov” on which the present research paper is going to discuss is missing in them and still is untapped and untouched in the research on Vladimir Lenin’s Marxist-Leninist theory of aesthetics. Therefore, the present research paper tends to concentrate on this untapped and untouched topic of Leninist aesthetics.

3.0 Debate and discussion

Vladimir Lenin’s school education was based upon Greek and Latin classics. He studied the books of Homer, Xenophon, Livy, Herodotus, Thucydides, Demosthenes and Cicero in his school. His zeal for Latin was such that he provided his elder sister Anna with coaching on the more difficult elements of Grammar. His most favourite and cherished novel in his childhood before he turned to the Russian literary classics was the American female novelist Harriet Beecher Stowe’s “Uncle Tom’s Cabin”, which was given pride of place in his room. This novel is based upon the story of a Negro slave’s attempt to flee the cruelties of a cotton plantation in South America. However, books were his consolation and he began to study many

classics of Russian literature. He studied Alexander Pushkin, Nekrasov, Ivan Turgenev, Gogol, Ivan Goncharov, Gleb Uspensky, Anton Chekhov, and Leo Tolstoy. Later the French novelist Emile Zola fired his imagination and became his one of the lifelong heroes, who in 1898 was to make a stirring literary defence of Alfred Dreyfus, the unfortunate Jewish officer in the French armed forces. Vladimir Lenin kept Emile Zola's photograph in his album. Chernyshevsky had captivated him with his revolutionary and progressive ideas and revolutionary characters, new people such as Vera Pavlovna, Lopukov, Kirsanov and above all proto-revolutionary hero Rekhmetov in "What is to be Done?" and Volgin, the hero of "The Prologue". He also kept Chernyshevsky's photograph in his album.

Describing the aesthetic activities, views and interests of Vladimir Lenin in aesthetic activities, Terry Eagleton stated, "And the celebrated master-text of his aesthetics-the articles on Tolstoy-is alert enough to the complex articulations of the aesthetic and ideological. Yet for all that, Lenin's aesthetic predilections ran remarkably parallel to his theoretical priorities. One might say of Lenin (to draw an incongruous parallel) as one might say of Samuel Johnson, that for him personally the problem of relation between aesthetic and ideological did not, since he was for the most part simply incapable of enjoying art, which he found theoretically unsympathetic. One has only to review a selection of his favourite authors-Chernyshevsky, Gorky, Rolland, Barbusse, Sinclair, Wells, Shaw-to take the point of his self-confessed incomprehension of less socially conscious literature. The point should be taken with care: the man, who admired Turgenev and Chekhov, defended the heritage of traditional culture against Bogdanov and Futurists, personally initiated and supervised the ninety-volume edition of Tolstoy's works and encouraged the dissemination of cheap editions of the classics to the masses was the very reverse of philistine. Yet when Lenin is called upon to analyse the specificity of aesthetic in Tolstoy's fiction, he is ready..." (Eagleton, 1992, pp. 173-174).

Nevertheless, frequent literary references and characters in Vladimir's political, publicist and philosophical writings show his mastery on literature and arts. In this regard, his statements about typicality are of great significance in understanding social as well as literary types. For him production of types in literature is one of the ways to bring out vividly the basic and definite determinant qualities of social classes and phenomena. Fulfilling his wish for Gogolian caricature, Vladimir Lenin used the complex dialectical nature of the relationship between a phenomenon and its essence to comprehend a type because a type is the dialectical synthesis of essence and phenomena. For this reason, he advised Lunacharsky to write an essay on polemical devices resorted to by "vulgarises" working on the shelf of the Menshevik "Iskra" newspaper: "Pillory them for their paltry method of warfare. Make them into a type" (Lenin, 1965, Vol. 34, p.335).

Vladimir Lenin's words underline the effective forcefulness of typification serves to assimilate and synthesise the essence of phenomena, serving to accentuate the unique capacity in which literature and publicist writing perform to promote human comprehension of real world. Therefore, Vladimir Lenin reinterpreted classical literary types and revealed their validity and social impact in new dialectical materialist terms. For Vladimir Lenin a literary type only emerges because of broad generalisations drawn from socio-economic life and by no means can it be reduced to an amalgam of characteristics and traits drawn from separate individuals. However, typicality is judged, above all, by the profundity with which the given work of literature reflects the inner meaning and primary aspects of events, the prospects of social development and the concrete historical features of a literary type. In this manner, Vladimir Lenin calls for presentation to the core of phenomena, for analysis of their most essential aspects and main traits. Drawing the character sketch of deceased Count Heyden, Vladimir Lenin stated about the true essence of his character in his essay "What is Characteristic and Typical of Heyden's Political Activities?" "In their time Nekrasov and Saltykov taught Russian society to see through the outward gloss and varnish of the feudal landlord's education the predatory interests that lay beneath it; they taught it to hate the hypocrisy and callousness of such types" (Lenin, 1970, Vol. 13, pp. 54-55).

In this way, Vladimir Lenin used literary characters to expose hypocrisy and callousness of the Menshevik, feudal nobility and bourgeoisie. He used to compare the character of Oblomov with the reductionist

Menshevik leaders, Socialist Revolutionaries, Cadets (leaders of Party of Constitutional Democrats), Black Hundreds, feudal nobility and bourgeoisie. Ivan Goncharov depicted the character of Oblomov to highlight the impulse for change in the coercive Tsarist Russian social formation of the nineteenth century, which occurred among the sections of the land-owning and serf-owning feudal nobility since the beginning of the nineteenth century, the defeated Decembrist movement of 1825 was also an expression of this impulse. This impulse held less appeal for them as soon as it began to acquire the revolutionary characteristics, which led Nikolai Chernyshevsky, Belinsky and Nikolai Dobrolyubov, as spokespersons of the revolutionary *raznochintsy*, to proclaim, no matter how circumspectly for fear of the censorship, the cause of a peasant revolution and the role of the revolutionary *raznochintsy* as its leaders. In this way, Nikolai Dobrolyubov's review of Oblomov entitled "What is Oblomovism?" was one of the shots fired in an incipient internecine warfare between the 'fathers' and 'sons', between the older liberal-inclined intelligentsia, who came almost entirely from the land-owning and serf-owning feudal nobility, and the younger radical intelligentsia, the revolutionary *raznochintsy* drawn from among the less privileged elements of the feudal Tsarist Russian social formation.

In 1902, Vladimir Lenin wrote an eminently political treatise entitled "What is to be Done? His answer to the question was Socialist revolution. Socialist revolution used to activate the masses of proletarians and peasants and decapitate Oblomoves of the land-owning and serf-owning nobility. In fact, Oblomov is the portrait of the hero epitomized the indolence, stagnation, procrastination and indecision of the land-owning and serf-owning feudal nobility. He is coddled in his ST Petersburg apartment by ineptly devoted serf Zakhar and the self-illusion of his patrician idleness, sloth, procrastination and indecision. Oblomov is in fact, a masterly study of a syndrome, "The Disease of Oblomovka" (Goncharov, 1915, p.231); "the all-prevalent malady of Oblomovka" (Goncharov, 1915, p.101); "the Disease of Oblomovka" and the apathetic malady, of Oblomovka, (Goncharov, 1915, p.248). Symptoms of this syndrome felt by Ivan Goncharov, diagnosed by Nikolai Dobrolyubov as Oblomovism, and prescribed and injected by Nikolai Chernyshevsky by his utopian socialist injection of anti-Oblomovism but all in vain. At last, Vladimir Lenin operated the Russian social formation to remove this syndrome from it by the Bolshevik Revolution. In this regards, Oblomov is an anti-revolutionist person and Oblomovism is an anti-revolutionary tendency, syndrome and a remnant of feudalism. The germs of Oblomovism remain as remnants of feudalism in the new Socialist social formation of Soviet Russia. For this reason, Vladimir Lenin condemned Oblomov and Oblomovism repeatedly in his writings and speeches, comparing his contemporary the reductionist Menshevik leaders, Cadets, social revolutionaries with him because of their inertia, procrastination and irresolution. Oblomov and Oblomovism both in Vladimir Lenin's opinion are product and one of the remnants of feudalism and would be out of place in the Socialist formation of Soviet Russia.

Therefore, Vladimir concentrated, for example, on the continuing relevance of the character of Oblomov in his times. In fact, the central character in the novel of that name by I. Goncharov is clearly a product of the socio-economic conditions of the mid-nineteenth century Tsarist Russia and he was typified the class character of serf-owning and land-owning feudal nobility. In this way, Oblomov was the personification of routine, stagnation, inertia, and the sloth of the serf-owning and land-owning feudal class. However, Oblomov's traits and characteristics have not become out-dated once the class they typify has been out-dated. Vladimir Lenin used this character to denounce his political enemies, feudal lords and bourgeoisie. In this way, he invited attention to the lasting and broad-scale implications of the character of Oblomov, which is a universal and existed far beyond the limits of time and space and his socio-economic milieu and age. In his famous essay "Party Organisation and Party Literature", Vladimir Lenin stated, "Publishing and distributing centres, bookshops and reading-rooms, libraries and similar establishments—must all be under party control. The organised socialist proletariat must keep an eye on all this work, supervise it in its entirety, and, from beginning to end, without any exception, infuse into it the life-stream of the living proletarian cause, thereby cutting the ground from under the old, semi-Oblomov, semi-shopkeeper Russian principle: the writer does the writing, the reader does the reading" (Lenin, 1965, Vol. 10, p.223).

Similarly, on another occasion, Vladimir wrote to denote Oblomov's character, "The sacred truth! This is precisely the case. It is because religious "delusions" are so widespread among the masses that the

Stakhoviches and the Oblomovs, and all our capitalists who live by the labour of the masses, and even Moskovskiye Vedomosti itself, “sleep peacefully” (Lenin, 1933, p. 56). Vladimir further condemned Oblomov, “The question arises whether any Social-Democrat will doubt that in this “pure” case the expropriation of the corresponding part of the landlords’ land in favour of the peasants is wholly natural, desirable, and achievable. This expropriation will rouse Oblomov from his slumber and force him to introduce more advanced methods of farming on his smaller estate; this expropriation will undermine (I will not say destroy, but precisely undermine) the labour- rent system, encourage the spirit of independence and democracy among the peasantry, raise their standard of living, and give a powerful impulse to the further development of money economy and capitalist progress in agriculture” (Lenin, 1978, p. 130).

Vladimir Lenin knew well the fact that the leisure, laziness, and indolence of Oblomov or Oblomovism reduced human being into an animal. Nevertheless, on the contrary, labour and work transform the great apes and monkeys into Homo sapiens. However, labour not only makes the hands able to work but also makes the development of the economic productive system. “Hands are not only organs of labour but a product of labour” (Marx and Engels, 1975, p. 453). In this manner, Vladimir Lenin used the character of Oblomov on many occasions, seeming to find Oblomov syndrome still prevalent in the social formation of Socialist Soviet Russia.

In his report on The International and Domestic Situation of the Soviet Republic (March 6, 1922), commenting on Mayakovsky, Vladimir Lenin stated that, “I am not an admirer of his poetical talent, although I admit that I am not a competent judge. But I have not for a long time read anything on politics and administration with so much pleasure as I read this. In his poem, he derides this meeting habit, and taunts the Communists with incessantly sitting at meetings. I am not sure about the poetry; but as for the politics, I vouch for their absolute correctness. We are indeed in the position, and it must be said that it is a very absurd position, of people sitting endlessly at meetings, setting up commissions and drawing up plans without end. There was a character who typified Russian life—Oblomov. He was always lolling on his bed and mentally drawing up schemes. That was a long time ago. Russia has experienced three revolutions, but the Oblomovs have survived, for there were Oblomovs not only among the landowners but also among the peasants; not only among the peasants, but among the intellectuals too; and not only among the intellectuals, but also among the workers and Communists. To test men and verify what has actually been done— this, this again this alone is now the main feature of all our activities, of our whole policy. It is enough to watch us at our meetings, at work on commissions, to be able to say that the old Oblomov has remained, and for a long while yet he will have to be washed, cleaned, shaken and thrashed if something is to come of him” (Lenin, 1970, p.223).

4.0 Conclusion

The present research study attempted to concentrate on how Vladimir Lenin used to identify the character of Oblomov with his political enemies, feudal lords, Mensheviks, and bourgeois intelligentsia of his time and denounce them in this way for possessing Oblomovism. However, at the end of this research study, the noticeable point is that in fact, Vladimir Lenin considered Oblomovism of Oblomov as a social syndrome and one of the remnants of feudalism and he wanted to remove it from the newly establishing Soviet social formation of socialism because he believed in dignity of work and human labour. That is why he struggled hard to remove this syndrome of Oblomovism of the land-owning and serf-owning feudal nobility from Socialist Soviet Russia because he did not like Oblomov-like human characters of the land owing and serfs owning that were living by the labour of the proletarians and peasants. On the contrary, he respected the masses of the proletarians, peasants and other working people. The research study not only highlighted Vladimir Lenin’s attitude towards labour but it also presented his Marxist-Leninist theory of typification, which is closely connected with his Marxist-Leninist theory of aesthetics and Dialectical-Historical materialism. In this way, the study hopes to contribute at a great length to the subject.

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