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### **Writing Lenin by and for the Nenets**

As generally well known, the Nenets literature was created in the ideologically fervent 1920s and 30s. The aims of the project were moving between sincere will to produce literature (and progress) in Nenets and interests in introducing Soviet ideology for the northern peoples. Consequently, the centrality of writing in Nenets was soon placed by concerns over writing in ways that were plausible for the Nenets as a Soviet nationality: the Russian language rode over the Nenets, but those themes of Nenets oral tradition, which happened to be ideologically suitable for the regime, were still emphasized.

One of the themes that was not only suitable but also compulsory for Soviet literatures, was the figure of Lenin. The Nenets writers have creatively written the figure and the myth of Lenin in their own terms using the structures and motives of their own oral tradition. This has been done by Nikolai Vilka in 1930s and later also by Ivan Istomin. Both have used Tundra Nenets and Russian in their texts or narratives.

This paper discusses the figure of Lenin in early Nenets literature, and the linguistic as well as narrative means by which the figure was told by Vilka and Istomin. The aim of the paper is also to ponder the ways in which the writers conceptualized the relationship between Tundra Nenets and Russian, and the difference between folklore and literature.