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Flappers and Foxtrotters

Soviet Youth in the "Roaring Twenties"

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> A cartoon in the Soviet satirical magazine *Bich* [Rowdy] showed a young couple dressed in flapper fashions dancing the Charleston. One asks the other: "So Vasia, what class do you consider yourself coming from?" Vasia responds, "frankly speaking, the *dance class!*"[1]

With the introduction of the New Economic Policy in March 1921, cities such as Moscow and Leningrad appeared to change overnight. Expensive food and clothing stores, flashy nightclubs, gambling casinos, and other manifestations of the changing economic climate resurfaced for the first time since the war. William Reswick, a Russian who had emigrated to the United States before the revolution and returned as a journalist during the Civil War, wrote that as he made the rounds of Moscow, he was astonished by the great change that the NEP, a comparatively free economy, had wrought in a matter of nine months or so. "It was a change from a state verging on coma to a life of cheer and rapidly growing vigor."[2] The *New York Times* Moscow correspondent Walter Duranty also marveled at the changes. As War Communism came to an end, Moscow

> was a doleful city...ill-dressed inhabitants drifted aimlessly through the streets. Almost all the stores were shut, with boarded-up or broken windows. Here and there a listless crowd waited at the door of some state or co-operative supply depot. The buildings lacked paint and plaster and the only means of transport for the public were decrepit hacks or filthy street cars.

By 1923, according to Duranty, old residents agreed that Moscow was "not much different from pre-war days."[3] The stores were well stocked with expensive fruits from the Crimea and wines from Georgia, far beyond the price range of most residents but satisfying the urges of the new entrepreneur. Restaurants and gambling establishments reopened, for wealthy patrons in evening suits. NEPmen with money

to spare threw extravagant dinner parties with tables "laden with platters of caviar, wild game, suckling pigs, and many bottles of vodka and Caucasian wine."[4]

Although the New Economic Policy and the legalization of private business were introduced by the Bolsheviks in order to rescue a floundering Soviet economy, there were many who only just tolerated NEP and NEPmen as a necessary, but temporary, evil.[5] Private trade in food and clothing restored a population on the brink of death, but some communists wondered if the price was too high. They worried about what Ilya Ehrenburg called the sinister "grimaces of NEP," the dirty underbelly of a society feverishly trading, eating, and drinking as a kind of last lurid display of material consumption before the crackdown.[6] "We wanted to remain a party of poor people," wrote Soviet sympathizer Victor Serge,

> but money very gradually became most important. Money rots everything—and yet it also makes life spring forth everywhere. In less than five years, freedom of trade had accomplished miracles. There is no more starvation; an extraordinary zest for life rises up, carrying us along, but the worst of it is we feel we are rapidly being swept down hill. Our country is a great convalescent body, but on this body whose flesh is our flesh we see the blotches spreading.[7]

The excesses of private NEP were all the more challenging as the 1920s was a period of great concentration on the transformation of everyday behavior and belief. Although the Civil War had solidified the Bolsheviks' political control over the country, the biggest task was understood to still lie ahead—that of transforming "bourgeois" culture and social relations into new socialist forms of behavior and belief. The New Economic Policy signalled a change from the dictatorial, class warfare policies of War Communism as the Bolsheviks turned away from the military construction of a socialist state towards the educational creation of a new communist society.

Party leaders and Komsomol activists were particularly concerned about the younger generation during NEP. Soviet youth were considered one of the most vital

targets in the struggle for social transformation and cultural construction. They held out great promise as that element of the population which could grow up free from the cultural corruption of pre-revolutionary Russia. At the same time, the relatively relaxed cultural borders of NEP permitted an influx of mass media images from the West that showed young people what their European counterparts were doing, dancing, and wearing.[8] This fostered a kind of cultural schizophrenia: on the one hand, educators and propagandists told young men and women that a good communist should spend his or her time in the Komsomol club, reading books about Lenin and watching movies about the revolution and Civil War; on the other, the same economic necessities that forced the adoption of the NEP allowed "bourgeois" capitalists and "bourgeois" culture to continue to function within the Soviet Union. In this environment, complete adherence to Bolshevik models of appropriate communist behavior and recreation required an extraordinary degree of internal motivation and discipline.

One of the most visible, and to many Bolsheviks most problematic, expressions of cultural resistance were those Soviet youth who adopted the flapper fashions of Paris and New York and danced to the seductive rhythms of American jazz. These young people resisted the serious and sometimes puritanical images of Bolshevik ideology and culture in favor of playful forms of entertainment and personal expression that studiously avoided politics. This article explores the multiple meanings, both personal and political, of flapper fashions and dance, both for youth and for the Bolsheviks. What did young people like to do with their free time? What kind of clothes did they like to wear? What were their favorite dances? And what does this tell us about the difficulty of creating cultural hegemony?[9]

First, however, I would like to put these questions into a larger context by looking briefly at Bolshevik conceptions of ideal youth culture and everyday life. An essential attribute of the Bolsheviks' ideology in the 1920s was the degree to which they tried to secure and incorporate every aspect of human practice and experience. Entire areas of youths' everyday behavior, manners, language, dress, and sexual relations were taken out of the private realm and became a part of public political

discourse. Unlike the period of the Civil War when a good communist was defined by his revolutionary enthusiasm, or the 1930s when a communist was largely defined by his attitude towards work, in the 1920's what was essential was one's everyday behavior. Young people were the ideal subject for this preoccupation with *byt* as the daily lives of youth were understood to be "greatly more mobile than those of the older generation."[10] "Our younger generation is the generation whose historical function is to ensure a revolution in daily life," wrote Vera Ketlinskaia and Vladimir Slepkov.[11] As Komsomol moralists Dmitriev and Galin wrote, "We no longer consider only the Komsomol member who works and studies well as a good *komsomolets*, but also he who is able to live correctly."[12] As this citation suggests, the preoccupation with daily life was present in the Komsomol as well as the party, although it took different forms, reflected in "official" Komsomol culture as a scout-like devotion to cleanliness, politeness, punctuality, and discipline, and among the Komsomol enthusiasts as an angry condemnation of anything that reeked to them of the old order and of pre-revolutionary "bourgeois" traditions.

It was not just the Bolsheviks and the Komsomol members who were interested in patterns of daily life and youth. Although this article is principally concerned with Bolshevik-youth relations, it should be noted that many of those writing about youth cultures were not necessarily party members but educators, sociologists, and ethnographers. Most of them were, however, affiliated with institutes under the direction of the Commissariat of Education (Narkompros) or of the Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD). Like the early American sociologists and criminologists of deviancy in Chicago, Soviet scholars in the 1910s and especially the 1920s began to make a "scientific" study of youth cultures using questionnaires, interviews, and participant observation. Time budget studies were popular, as Komsomol and party leaders sought to achieve the "perfect balance" between work and leisure. In general, scholars were especially alert in this period to questions of everyday life. According to Natali'ia Lebina, of 117 studies of working class youth in the period from 1917 to 1927, 34 were on problems of everyday life. In the close to twenty

years from 1938 to 1957, in contrast, there was not a single study on everyday life among youth.[13]

For many the preoccupation with questions of daily life reflected the deep attention to culture as an integral aspect of the revolutionary process. The effort to define new rules of behavior and "communist" conduct was also evidence of an anxiety about the social and cultural instabilities of this period. When communists lived side-by-side with "bourgeois intellectuals" or "decadent" NEPmen, as they did in the 1920s, guidelines on behavior, dress, and language were felt necessary to distinguish communist from non-communist. Indeed, the Bolsheviks' preoccupation with every aspect of individual behavior and belief left little ideological room for alternative forms of expression. As they tried to destroy all forms of "residual" meaning and value (to use Raymond William's terminology) and to extend their penetration of popular culture, aspects of everyday experience that in other societies might be largely ignored or assigned to the private sphere were in Soviet society seen as signs of deviance and opposition.[14] The politization of personal, family, or even biological issues was particularly obvious in the Bolsheviks' treatment of the younger generation. Much of the behavior that modern-day scholars or psychologists might attribute to adolescent efforts to establish self-identity was interpreted by the Bolsheviks as a sign of political "deviance" or "hooliganism."

This makes definitions of "communist" culture sound clearer than they were however. In fact, although many agreed about the importance of daily life, there was enormous disagreement about how best to establish the new communist culture, and even more fundamentally, how to define this culture. What was appropriate behavior for the new generation? Could a communist culture emerge from the socioeconomic struggle or was it necessary to establish prescriptive rules of behavior from above? Who determined what was "communist" and what was not? As William Rosenberg describes in *Bolshevik Visions*, in attempting to answer these questions about culture the Bolsheviks were caught between an ethical relativism stemming from Marxist materialism, according to which it "made no sense to prescribe transcendent ethical

absolutes," and the "insistence both of the moral superiority of Bolshevik rule, and of discernible principles of communist ethics."[15]

Although there were great debates over what exactly was meant by "communist" forms of everyday life, or "communist" morality, it was generally agreed that this did not mean the "unenlightened" and "frivolous" low culture associated with the popular traditions of the masses in the minds of many Bolshevik intellectuals. The working class was thought all too vulnerable to "bourgeois" culture as well as to "uncivilized" and undisciplined behavior such as the "vulgar" speech criticized by Trotsky in *Problems of Everyday Life* or the complaints about working class dress and working conditions made by Commissar of Health Nikolai Semashko.[16]

The major method of erasing all vestiges of a bourgeois life style and values among young people was to be the Komsomol clubs, including political cells, drama groups and sports clubs. Through its organizations in factories and schools, the Komsomol agitated against "hooliganish" activities such as drinking, smoking, and dancing. In place of "popular" activities associated with the proletariat, the Komsomol tried to introduce "rational" activities, such as museum excursions, political cells, and agit-prop drama groups, which were intended to contribute to the improvement of society rather than the simple "unhealthy" entertainment of the individual. These efforts were aimed in particular at the large number of unemployed working class youth who had finished primary school but had not yet started work or an apprenticeship at a factory school. In 1923, there were one million urban youth between the ages of 14 and 17 who were without work and not in school, and these were largely abandoned to the entertainment and adventures of the street.[17]

How successful were the efforts to transform Russian youth culture and create new forms of everyday life? It is clear that many ambitious young men and women enthusiastically committed themselves to the optimistic programs of the communist party. By mid-decade, close to half of all proletarian youth nationwide had joined the Komsomol, and dreams of a new communist future influenced the kind of life they imagined for themselves, the kinds of jobs they wanted, and their attitudes

towards entertainment, dress, gender, and politics.[18] Many, perhaps the majority, of Soviet youth did not fully embrace communism and its ideals, but those who did experienced the revolution and the struggle of civil war with a great sense of personal involvement and commitment. As one young woman wrote about the Soviet republic:

> Everything happened before our eyes, filling our childhood and youth. We felt like victors—begging, hungry, but victorious....Whatever new dangers threatened us, we felt our power, the power of our revolutionary country.[19]

Debates about Dancing the Foxtrot

There were, however, many young people who resisted Bolshevik ideology and culture and flocked instead to forms of entertainment that were opposed to Bolshevik ideals. Of particular concern to moralists was dancing. A visitor to Moscow in the early 1920s noted the raging popularity of the foxtrot:

> From ballet dancers to former princesses, former manufacturers' daughters to former janitors' daughters, every girl in Moscow has one great social ambition—to learn the foxtrot. From former grand dukes' sons to shop workers, every sprightly young man in Moscow wants to learn to foxtrot—as the sure way to the heart of his *galoubushka* [darling].[20]

To the dismay of Bolshevik moralists, dancing seemed to take place everywhere: in restaurants, in clubs, in schools, on the street, and in reformatories. "So far the only place where they don't dance the foxtrot," wrote one worried observer, "is on streetcars and in cemeteries."[21] The foxtrot was not the only popular dance. Young women students practiced the tango with their girlfriends in dormitory kitchens as they sang the latest Argentinean dance tunes.[22] By the mid-1920s, the latest dances

had even spread to the countryside: "If five years ago not many rural youth were able to dance the cracovienne and the polka...in 1924 they are already dancing the tango, the pas de quatre...and so on."[23]

According to the journalist Edwin Hullinger, the foxtrot was first brought to Moscow and Leningrad by the "fifty fox trotting college boys" working for the American Relief Administration:

> Along with the grain for the starving and food packages, the young American Relief workers brought the fox-trot to Russia. They found an entire city waiting to receive it. And during their spare hours these young philanthropists could easily have kept themselves busy (and many did) introducing ballet dancers or princesses, as the case may be, to the mystic steps and rhythm of Broadway.[24]

In *Red and Hot. The Fate of Jazz in the Soviet Union*, historian S. Frederick Starr describes how the Charleston came to Moscow in 1926, only months after it had been introduced in Paris, via a variety revue act called *The Chocolate Kiddies*. "It began with the latest dances executed by high stepping babes dressed in above-the-knee flapper skirts and their Harlem swells decked out in tuxedos."[25] As concerned Bolsheviks denounced the decadent influences of Western bourgeois culture, eager members of the younger generation flocked to dance the foxtrot and the black bottom to the tunes of traveling American jazz bands. Capitalizing on this appeal, Soviet dance acts and jazz bands advertised their acts as "American."[26] As had been true in the pre-revolutionary period, Western culture continued to symbolize modernity and sophistication.[27]

For many young people, the vibrant new dances and the lighthearted quality of the new "bourgeois" amusements were an antidote to the traumas of war and revolution and the post-revolutionary problems of poor housing, hunger, and juvenile unemployment. As one young woman told Edwin Hullinger, "I am trying to live on the surface of life...I have been in the depths for five years. Now I am going to be superficial. It hurts less."[28] The changing mood accompanying the introduction of

NEP was captured in N. Ognyov's novel, *The Diary of a Communist Undergraduate*, in which a young bohemian says to the worried student hero Kostya,

> I suppose you think that dancing is unworthy of a revolutionary. This isn't the time to bother about such things. The time of military communism is over. We're living in the N.E.P. age. We've got to learn commerce among other things. So, while we're at it, why not learn dancing, too?[29]

Many of the most popular new dances among young people were conspicuously sensual. This was particularly true of the tango, which emerged from the bawdyhouses of Buenos Aires to take Europe, America, and Soviet Russia by storm. The tango and other popular new dances rejected the distant and formalized steps of the pre-revolutionary figure dances in favor of expressive movements and closer contact between men and women. In the tango, for example, "the male [*kavaler*] bent his partner in two, untwisted her like a top...and threw her towards the floor..."[30] The openly sexual and slightly "sinful" elements of these dances were reflected in their lyrics as well as their motions. One of the most popular tangos among Moscow students, *Under the Sultry Skies of Argentina,* evoked the hothouse atmosphere of Latin America in which a young man and woman fell in love and danced in a bar to the "wild and raging" tune of the "teasing tango."[31] Even the titles of some of the most popular tangos suggested something dark and vaguely illicit: *Tango of Death, Opium Tango, Hashish Tango, Tango of Love, Exotic Tango, Tango of Ecstasy, Tango of Oblivion,* and *Melancholy Tango.*[32] These exotic dances embodied changing sexual mores in which young men and women felt freer to explore and express their sexual natures outside of the marriage bond. In part this reflected a post-war, European-wide rejection of the sober and self-controlled respectability so common to the Victorian era. The new dances also gave a playful, public expression to post-revolutionary concepts of "sexual liberation," "free love," and the demise of "bourgeois" marriage.

Before the explosion of "bourgeois" behavior and culture in 1921, there had been few places for young people to meet and dance. Emma Goldman described the shocked expression of one Bolshevik official during the Civil War when she asked him "if the young people could not occasionally meet for a dance free from Communist supervision." "Dance halls are gathering places for counter-revolutionists," he responded; "we closed them."[33] However, with the introduction of NEP, dance halls, cabarets, and even private dance studios reopened. Young people from the former upper classes danced at the newly opened foreign missions in Moscow. In the winter of 1922, the British mission held regular dances on Sunday afternoons and occasional Saturday evenings. The Polish delegation held "elaborate balls," at which, according to one observer, "in her pre-war dress, many a young woman who would have been making her debut at the Court save for the accident of the Revolution, looked as charming and pretty as if just home from college."[34]

Some young people danced and drank in cafes and cabarets. One cafe near Petrovka street in Moscow served fine wines and was elegantly decorated with lush green palms. Patrons dressed in evening suits, and "obsequious waiters [said] 'please, sir' as in the days of the Empire."[35] At the famous "Eldorado" in Leningrad, patrons listened to "the wild caress of a jazz band," and when they finally stumbled from the restaurant at two in the morning, they could hail a cab with a fancy horse-drawn carriage to take them home. According to one worried Bolshevik, some parts of Leningrad were so full of fancy cabarets and cafes that they were starting to resemble New York's Seventh Avenue.[36]

Those who could not afford to go to restaurants or cabarets went to dance halls like the one run by a club right near Red Square. Although the members had adopted the name of a famous pre-revolutionary club for the Moscow elite (the "Yacht Club"), most of them were trades people, and many "wore communist pins in their buttonholes." Instead of caviar and champagne, the club served sandwiches and ice cream in the intermissions.[37] Other young people danced at small parties held in their apartments or the apartments of friends. They gathered in tiny rooms,

pushing the furniture to one side, or simply dancing around the tables and chairs while the latest tangos from Paris played on the gramophone, or, if there was a piano, someone pounded out the foxtrot. Popular novels from the 1920s described the lively atmosphere of these parties, where young men and women drank vodka and ate whatever poor appetizers of cabbage salad or cold fish their host could provide.[38]

Many Bolsheviks were threatened and confused by the younger generation's enthusiasm for the new kinds of dancing. They were ill-equipped to deal with an expression of popular culture that appeared to contradict their own images of how young people should be spending their leisure time. "We will always speak out against dancing as an abnormal, unnecessary and even harmful kind of entertainment," A. Stratonistkii wrote.[39] "What kind of youth is especially attracted to 'gypsy romances'?," asked another worried communist.

> Philistines. There are certain kinds of youth, even among the working class, who squander everything on "gypsy songs." These are dandies...with bows, with fashionable boots, wearing the latest outfits over dirty underwear...dancing "American" dances and having only one wish—to find "a good fiancée." These youth stay away from social work, from the active work of the Komsomol, and from the interests of socialist construction.[40]

Instead of dancing, argued delegates to the second Komsomol congress in 1919, the Komsomol should encourage "reasonable diversions" such as going to the theater and to museums, and inspecting factories.[41]

The expressive, unreserved, and passionate nature of the foxtrot and the tango also provoked a second, more basic fear in Bolshevik moralists centered around the "uncivilized" and overly erotic nature of these new dances. The very nature of the dances, their close physical contact and strange, jerky movements suggested a loss of control and "the abandonment of civilized restraint."[42] This attitude is evident in Lidin's description of the Charleston as a kind of uncontrollable seizure: "The two

girls, linked together, began to twitch their legs as though palsied, and to stamp convulsively in one spot, their knees knocking, and their calves slanting outwards."[43] The provocative and "forbidden" forms of these "decadent" dances appeared to violate basic norms of respectable behavior and were seen as the first step on a slippery slope leading to complete irrationality and immorality, including a rise in drinking at clubs, "petit-bourgeois [*meshchanskoi*] psychology and alienation from the masses," and, most importantly, "improper relations between the sexes" based on physical attraction rather than comradeship.[44] If youth insisted on dancing, argued some youth activists, then the Komsomol should come up with "dances for the masses" as a healthy form of relaxation that developed physical ability and encouraged a sense of the collective.[45]

Not everyone agreed that building socialism and dancing the foxtrot were incompatible. In a period when definitions of socialism and socialist behavior were still hotly contested and openly debated, a minority of educators and Komsomol club leaders argued the impracticality and even undesirability of insisting that ideology and popular culture were mutually exclusive. "Which is better," wrote Komsomol activist A. Mil'chakov, "to contemplate a semi-deserted club" or to bring youth into the club by granting them the same right to have a good time as they enjoy outside the club? "There is only one answer," said Mil'chakov; "it is better to let youth have fun in the club under our direction and with our help."[46] For some Komsomol leaders, this even meant allowing dancing. It was clear that enthusiasm for dancing was "in certain circumstances a petit bourgeois throwback," wrote one Komsomol correspondent, but

> dancing...tinsel, performances, and games are all a part of the life of working class youth, and to simply deny this will accomplish nothing. On the contrary, it is precisely with their support that youth's class consciousness will be illuminated and their revolutionary spirit secured.[47]

Indeed, whether they liked it or not, dancing remained one of the most popular activities in factory and Komsomol clubs. "We have already regulated the problem of dancing and proved its harm, but we see that some elements still continue to shake their legs," complained Komsomol activist Vladimir Kuzmin.[48] A survey of 332 youth in the Vyborg Raion of Leningrad (almost 90 percent of whom were in the Komsomol) found that 77 percent liked dancing, 70 percent said they danced whenever possible, and 11 percent admitted they had taken dance classes.[49] Dancing was so popular that some Komsomol clubs relented and incorporated dancing into their regular programs. In 1922 there were reports of Komsomol groups dedicated entirely to teaching popular dances like the waltz. In Odessa, a group of young people threatened to leave the organization altogether when the local Komsomol committee tried to close down a dance class.[50] Some factory clubs even sponsored dances for young people, and posters and placards advertising them were plastered on the walls of trade union and factory clubs:

DIAMOND EVENING BALL

Extraordinary concert
Foxtrot 'til morning...
Amazing program with wine
and
Dancing between the tables....[51]

Soviet Flappers

Almost as important to worried Bolshevik moralists as young people's choice of leisure activities were their dress and appearance. In this period of transition and great cultural confusion, appearance was used as a quick indicator of character and political affiliation. According to Soviet Commissar of Health, Nikolai Semashko, the simple, hygienic dress of the revolutionary should be functional (allowing for the

proper regulation of body temperature), neat and clean. He condemned any interest in "bourgeois" fashion, which he saw as too extravagant, elegant, and Western.[52] Komsomol enthusiasts took a different approach, advocating a kind of severe cultural asceticism and criticizing even the most minimal adherence to traditional standards of cleanliness and neatness, such as a necktie or clean blouse, as unrevolutionary. They accused working class leaders who wore ties of "careerism" and argued that girls who had long hair were "undemocratic."[53] In both cases, the symbolic language of attire and appearance helped define who was a communist and who was not.

However, the flurry of fashionable Western images from Hollywood movie productions encouraged some young people to forgo the advice of Bolshevik moralists and Komsomol enthusiasts, and imitate the sophisticated dress and dance of the American movie star. Young women wasted their salaries on movies, silk stockings, and fashionable skirts, "cutting back on everything else so that they can 'look like their screen heroes'," wrote Bolshevik moralist Ivan Bobryshev.[54] In contrast to the rough-and-ready young working class revolutionary who wore a leather jacket, shock boots, and a worker's cap, fashion-conscious young women and men in Moscow and Leningrad imitated their Western counterparts. Women wore bright red lipstick and narrow-toed high-heel shoes, bobbed their hair, and shortened their skirts. Young men wore ties and tight double-breasted jackets.

Much of the urban population's information on the latest styles did not come directly from Western Europe but from Russian fashion magazines, which provided European images for the Russian reader. Two popular examples were *Mody* [Fashions] and *Mody sezona* [Fashions of the Season], both of which were published monthly in Moscow. *Mody*, which appeared between 1924 and 1929, had a circulation of close to 14,000. *Mody sezona* was even more popular; circulation figures reached 25,000 copies in 1928. These numbers are impressive as the magazines were quite expensive—*Mody* cost one ruble fifty kopeks an issue. That the Bolsheviks criticized much of Western fashion but permitted Russian fashion magazines to be published is a vivid example of the kinds of cultural conflicts that flourished during NEP.

Other than the quality of paper and printing, there was little to differentiate these magazines from equivalent fashion magazines in the West. The modern young flappers shown in the pages of *Mody sezona* wore short dresses that fell just below the knees and close-fitting clothes set with ribbon or rhinestones. As pictured in these pages, the adventurous and independent young woman of the post-war years had a busy social life, and needed the right kind of clothing for every occasion. In summer 1928, *Mody sezona* described "the kind of dresses that Parisian women take with them when they go to their summer houses," as well as the proper outfits for a game of tennis or a drive in the car. The daring young flapper of the modern era might even take an airplane flight, for which she needed a leather aviator's cap and glasses like the ones shown in the spring issue of *Mody sezona*.[55]

Although the images found in Russian and European fashion magazines showed a life style few if any Soviets could achieve, they encouraged young consumers to buy certain products by making an association between clothing and life style, subtly suggesting to the reader that wearing the right kind of clothing could lead to a more desirable way of life. This type of advertising, which cultural historians have dubbed "life style advertising," evoked dreams of adventure and a carefree life far removed from the daily burdens of revolutionary Russia. The magazines, and the consumer products described within, appealed to the fantasies of the new Soviet consumer. As Rosalind Williams describes in an article on "the dream world of mass consumption," magazines, movies, and department stores made a link between "imaginative desires and material ones", between "dreams and commerce."[56] The question, of course, is how to understand and interpret the persistence of such desires in the post-revolutionary environment.

What kinds of youth were drawn to imitate these "decadent" Western fashions? Some were the wealthy children of private entrepreneurs who feverishly shopped and traded, knowing that the right to do so was temporary and subject to increasing restrictions. However, while young people in Paris or London could shop in the latest *grand magazin* or department store, Soviet youth were limited to small, privately run stores. Two examples were the popular Moscow stores "Paris

Fashions" and "Viennese Chic."[57] While department stores in Europe were noisy and flamboyant public spaces, many of the choicest shops in post-revolutionary Russia were to be found in private apartments. As one observer described:

> To reach the millinery shop we left our sleigh one evening on the courtyard of an immense white house which was once the residence of a nobleman. We skirted the corner of the house and at the rear turned into a tiny door. My guide led me up the two dark flights of stairs, and pushed a door. We literally fell into a lighted corridor, and picked our way down between a few broken chairs, an old mattress, a bicycle, and a pile of old hats. The milliner herself answered our knock on one of the doors at the end of the passageway.[58]

To the Bolsheviks' consternation, many of the young people who were attracted to the Western fashions pictured in magazines and in Hollywood films were not the children of wealthy businessmen, but working class youth. Although they could not afford to buy such luxuries, they did their best to imitate them. Young women used Russian fashion magazines to reproduce the styles of New York and Paris at home with whatever hard-won materials they could find in public markets or Soviet stores. Journals like *Domashnyaya portnikha* [Home Dressmaker] printed clothing patterns "necessary for every family and every woman."[59] Unable to afford expensive imported items, young women bought "imitation silk stockings, lip stick and Soviet substitutes for Coty products—made by the Chinese."[60] By the late 1920s, girls were able to buy Russian lip stick, still considered a "bourgeois vice" but so popular that it was now produced by a government monopoly.[61] Hungry for the fancy goods denied them, young women envied the clothing of Western visitors. As one visitor noted:

> Some have developed an almost pathological desire for the good quality clothes they have so long been deprived of. I have had them feel feverishly my foreign clothes, hat, frock, sample the material, stroke the silk, almost pull my underwear from under my blouse in their frenzied hunger.[62]

The interest in flapper fashions was not limited to the children of NEPmen or their poorer cousins, the Soviet shop girl or office boy. One author described a young Komsomol woman who made sixty-five rubles a month working in a factory, but spent two-thirds of it on manicures, cosmetics, silk stockings, and dance parties.[63] Another complained that some Komsomol girls try to make their bodies more beautiful, "draping different bows and scarfs around their necks, and striving not to wear boots, like the likes of us, but little half boots with very high heels."[64] Komsomol activists in the *Krasnaia Treugol'nika* factory reported that there were many cases of female workers who "literally starved because they spent all of their wages on silk stockings, makeup, and manicures," while *Komsomolskaia pravda* described young women working in the *Vysovskii* factory who wore "fashionable" low-cut dresses and "scanty shoes that pinched their toes."[65]

It seems likely that by imitating the clothing and manners of wealthy West Europeans, even as they toiled away in the heat and dust of the factory floor, young men and women hoped to appropriate some of the modern independence, chic, and sophistication associated with flapper fashions. Much like dancing, silk stockings and red lipstick can be understood as a manifestation of some young people's desire for easy and enjoyable forms of everyday life. On a deeper level, however, imitation of upper class clothing can be seen not only as a search for chic and sophistication, but as a devaluation of "traditional" forms of working class culture. Contemporary observers noted that many young people did not just try to dress in the latest styles, but made "an obvious effort to reproduce 'aristocratic manners' in everything they did."[66] *Komsomolskaia pravda* described a young Komsomol member named Boris Kliuev who tried to escape the world of workers by leading a double life—honest Komsomol member by day, young, bourgeois dandy by night.

> In the evening after work this *komsomolets* can no longer be considered your colleague. You can't call him Boris, but imitating a nasal French accent you must call him "Bob". If you meet him somewhere in the park "with a well-known

lady"...and start to talk to him about something related to the factory, he will cautiously glance back at the "madam" and without fail change the conversation.[67]

According to the author of this article, Kliuev did not want to call himself a worker, but imagined a more "picturesque" appellation—*elektrotekhnik*, or *elektrik*.

It seems that fashion-conscious factory youth had internalized the message implicit in some commercial culture, which suggested that their own forms of dress, behavior, and language were not as good as those of the middle and upper classes. Socially mobile young workers tried to separate themselves from "proletarian culture" by wearing bourgeois fashions. Clothing was also used by the up-and-coming young *komsomolets* to segregate him or herself from the "masses." Some Komsomol university students even wore the same peaked cap and jacket as the pre-revolutionary intelligentsia, in order to distinguish themselves from the mass of "uncultured" and uneducated youth.[68]

The interplay between fashion and the drive for upward mobility was also evident in gender relations. Some of the factory girls who wore sexy dresses and skimpy shoes modeled after those of film stars refused to go out with working class boys. "The young ladies looked condescendingly at their comrades at work....They moved about in "high society," with the children of specialists...NEPmen, and so on," wrote Ivan Bobryshev.[69] Other women still dreamt of marrying young naval officers. This "vice" was not limited to young women. Komsomol newspapers also complained about Komsomol men who preferred to go out with "the made-up daughters of NEPmen," rather than the supposedly less attractive, but more communist, Komsomol women.[70] One frustrated Komsomol woman from Kiev complained about the impossible luxury and sophistication that these young men were attracted to, and described the "typical" scene wherein the daughter of a NEPman "with delicate hands" played "some romantic piece" on the piano while the young worker sat in a "deep, soft sofa."[71]

Of course, fashion had meaning not only for those who wore it, but for those who watched it being worn. Many Bolsheviks saw the Soviet flapper's open

identification with bourgeois culture as a threat to the successful socialization of youth. The individualistic qualities of this clothing challenged dreams of communist consensus. They worried that young people were becoming so consumed with clothing that they had abandoned all interest in public affairs. "For some youth the culture of clothing has become more important than any other question," wrote one Komsomol member. "This youth has created a cult of external splendor."[72] In this sphere, as in many others, the "private" behavior of the individual became a part of "public" political discourse. Style became as much a part of the political landscape as other forms of everyday behavior.

Concerned Bolsheviks were anxious not just with the political aspects of youths' behavior. Flapper fashions and wild dancing often appeared uncivilized, challenging standards of mature, self-controlled, and sober behavior. In this respect, these moralists had much in common with their European and American counterparts who also worried about the "decadent" behavior of their youth, describing their behavior and dress in terms that were strikingly similar. European and American moralists, for example, condemned jazz as a product of the "primitive" culture of black America: "Jazz originally was the accompaniment of the voodoo dancer, stimulating the half-crazed barbarian to the vilest deeds," wrote *Ladies' Home Journal* in 1921.[73] Similarly, A. Stratonistkii argued that wearing "excessive" amounts of jewelry was wrong not only because it reflected bourgeois traditions inappropriate for a working class society, but because it was "a vestige of primitive, barbarian times," and common to the Blacks and Indians of Africa and Australia. "[Jewelry] is a vestige from primitive, barbarian times, and as advanced and cultured people we *komsomoltsy* do not need it."[74] Although they advocated a revolutionary change in forms of everyday life, many Bolsheviks held up traditional standards for dress and public behavior.

Some Bolsheviks were concerned not only about the "uncivilized" aspects of bohemian dress and dance but about their immoral influence, which was thought to be particularly evident in the "sexual excesses" of the younger generation. European moralists writing at the same time worried that "jazz, savage, primitive, rotted moral

fiber, spread a whorehouse culture, polluted children, caused illegitimacy and all manner of unspeakable crimes."[75] Similarly, L. Kolesnikov, in a book entitled *Litso klassa vraga* [Features of the Class Enemy], argued that Soviet youth were surrounded by sex, including "the foxtrot with its strongly emphasized sexual features, erotic literature, operettas overloaded with sexual images, [and] erotic films."[76] Eroticism embodied the Bolsheviks' fears of a younger generation out of control and operating entirely on the basis of personal desire. Some of these fears may have had little to do with socialism per se, and more to do with an older generation's apprehensions about the inexplicably rebellious and "immoral" behavior of their children. It seems clear that popular forms of youth culture that diverged from the standards laid down by adults (be they from socialism or capitalism) threatened the established moral as well as cultural hegemony.

Finally, in both Europe and the Soviet Union, concern about youth centered around the menace of a dangerously polluted "alien" culture. While American and European moralists wrote about the "barbarian" influences of black jazz culture, Bolsheviks attributed much of youths' "decadent" behavior to the unhealthy impact of the bourgeoisie. By labeling flapper fashions petit-bourgeois, party and Komsomol leaders helped create the image of decadent "other" against which the communist "self" could be developed and defended. Stereotypical descriptions of the "decadent" nature of "bourgeois" youth allowed concerned communists to make easy connections between attire, attitudes, and class. In their view, "real" communist youth were not excessively interested in clothing or cosmetics. If they were, it was assumed they had been diverted from their "normal" path and influenced by the bourgeoisie. To claim otherwise would have suggested that Komsomol youth were themselves interested in fashion and external appearance, and in this way not so different from the very youth and youth culture that they were expected to oppose.

Debates about dress and dance also reflected gender anxieties. The image of fashion-conscious "bourgeois" youth was almost always female. Was being "too feminine" a sign of bourgeois decadence? What did it mean to be female and a communist? In an article entitled "The Girl in the White Scarf," Evgenii Iukon

described the appearance and shallow life of the "typical" daughter of a private entrepreneur who "loved her body" and "valued her physique." "This is not simply adoration of the features of her face," concluded Iukon, "but something bigger, with deep roots in her psyche and in her class background."[77] The dressed-up flapper described by Iukon may have been especially offensive to Bolshevik women because her efforts at self-beautification recalled the dependent, unliberal, and unequal female so criticized by agitators for the liberation of women. The unliberated "NEPkas" described in the fiction of Alexandra Kollontai were, for example, very like the "frivolous" young flappers described here.[78] On the other hand, for Bolsheviks most worried about immorality, the linking of women and fashion may have had the opposite effect, suggesting not dependence and inequality, but a shocking independence and a proclivity towards excessive eroticism. Cosmetics, which were still associated with a kind of "moral ambiguity,"[79] and the new shorter dresses both suggested a degree of sexual liberation (by which I mean the liberation of women as well as the liberation of sexuality) that made some uncomfortable.

Western films, books, fashion magazines, and traveling artists and performers helped structure a non-communist consumer mentality in Soviet Russia similar to that of Western Europe and the United States. Although this alternative youth culture was in conflict with much of Bolshevik and Komsomol culture, which encouraged the sublimation of the individual to the communal, it is not surprising that many young people enjoyed the lively, imaginative, and exotic aspects of the new culture industry. The beauty, fun, and adventure of dancing the foxtrot or slipping on a pair of silk stockings answered a need that was not fulfilled by the disciplined, and sometimes puritanical, leisure activities prescribed by Bolshevik and Komsomol moralists. A minority of young people used the language and gesture of bohemian culture purposefully to disrupt the fragile boundaries of Bolshevik hegemony, but the majority seemed simply to enjoy the fantasy of dress and dance as a temporary escape from the difficult realities of post-revolutionary Russia. As historian Geoff Eley has noted with respect to the West European working class in the inter-war years: "Whatever the intentions of the new cultural entrepreneurs or the structure of

capitalist control in the entertainment industries...[they] managed to make some genuine connection with popular needs and aspirations." The culture industry, including fashion, movies, spectator sports, and the dance hall, "proved remarkably successful in servicing a 'private economic of desire' in the 1920s." Eley argues that it occupied "a human space of everyday life that the labor movement was neglecting to fill."[80]

Many communists remained uncomfortable, however, with expressions of popular culture which to their minds disrupted the process of cultural construction. Bohemian dance and dress violated multiple cultural ideals—they were "frivolous," interfering with development of rational and disciplined forms of recreation; they were "uncivilized," threatening Bolshevik conceptions of proper public behavior, and they were "immoral," sparking fears of uncontrollability.

Ultimately, these concerns and other fears about more aggressive and self-conscious forms of youthful resistance (by the homeless street children, for example) would have larger implications for the fate of NEP. A decade after 1917 it was evident that the massive cultural transformation the Bolsheviks had hoped for had yet to take place. NEP and NEPmen would be considered particularly at fault for the problems that beset Soviet youth. Although NEP and the legalization of private business were introduced by the Bolsheviks in order to rescue a floundering Soviet economy, by the end of the decade, some party leaders and Komsomol enthusiasts were increasingly worried about the cultural implications of NEP for a younger generation constantly exposed to "bourgeois" attractions. There were those who argued that the primary danger came from city streets which teemed with traders, beggars, wealthy NEPmen, and other manifestations of the mixed economic policies of NEP. The younger generation was being "snatched away into strange hands," according to delegates at the 11th Party Congress.[81] Others insisted that the rebellious and hedonistic behavior of young people could be attributed to the alienation and confusion of those who had enthusiastically participated in the revolution and Civil War, but under NEP were experiencing what seemed a return to the pre-revolutionary era. "When it became clear that the revolution is a difficult,

bloody, slow affair, with its prosaic aspects," wrote A. K. Voronsky, "then some people began to waver and doubt, and dispirited moods, disillusionment, downright decadence appeared."[82] Significantly, both of these explanations interpret youths' everyday behavior in highly political terms, rather than attributing it to familial or biological issues associated with adolescent development and identity.[83]

As we have seen, there were Bolshevik and Komsomol leaders who insisted that the solution to problems of "decadent" behavior was not to root out bourgeois evils, but to provide more attractive, genuinely popular leisure alternatives. "The Komsomol organization doesn't understand young people," complained one Komsomol correspondent, "We haven't worked with youth, but for them."[84] These activists argued that the Komsomol should use popular forms of recreation to strengthen work among the masses, in this way attracting more youth and keeping them away from greater evils, such as drinking.

For many, however, this co-optive approach to youth culture promised less cultural conformity rather than more. Although most young people who danced the foxtrot or wore silk stockings probably saw their activities as a simple relief from the difficult realities of life and home rather than as an explicit rejection of Bolshevik culture, many enthusiasts could not tolerate even this degree of deviation from their images of a purposeful youth culture solely devoted to socialist construction. Instead of taking popular interests more into account and allowing for greater diversity, after 1928 the party increasingly responded to fears of decadence and anti-social behavior by limiting the cultural and recreational options open to young people. Thus, according to Denise Youngblood, from May 1928 to the end of the year, "film libraries were purged of foreign and domestic pictures thought to glorify 'prostitution and debauchery...and criminal activity'." By 1932, Hollywood films were no longer being shown in the USSR, and American jazz bands no longer toured the country playing the latest dance tunes.[85] Historians have attributed the end of NEP to many factors, including Stalin's struggle for power, political debates among the elite, and economic problems, but growing concern about the lack of cultural hegemony, and the persistence of non-communist kinds of behavior among Soviet youth certainly

contributed to the demise. Impatience with the apparent failure of NEP's gradualist approach to problems of cultural transformation encouraged some people to support the authoritarian policies of the Cultural Revolution, which promised to take a firm hand against non-communist transgressions.

This is not to suggest that the Bolsheviks' gradualist approach during NEP completely failed to penetrate and influence youth culture. Many militant youth communists supported Bolshevik ideals of appropriate behavior and were as outraged as adults by the bohemian behavior of their compatriots. Nonetheless, instead of the uniform youth culture the Bolsheviks desired, they were confronted with a multiplicity of youth cultures that presented different degrees of rupture, resistance, and rebellion, but many of which challenged the dominant ideology. This included not only the flappers and foxtrotters described here, but the more aggressively rebellious activities of working class toughs, homeless youth, and hooligans. While the Bolsheviks clearly remained politically dominant, their consistent inability to establish cultural hegemony over the younger generation demonstrates the difficulties of rapid cultural transformation and the limits of Bolshevik social control. The search for socialist transformation and communist hegemony would be a long and difficult one—not something that could be achieved in the single revolutionary moment of October 1917, or even in the revolutionary decade following it.

Notes

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1. "Sotsial'noe polozhenie," *Bich*, 5 (February 1928), 7.

2. William Reswick, *I Dreamt Revolution* (Chicago: H. Regnery, 1952), 52.

3. Walter Duranty, *Duranty Reports Russia* (New York: Viking Press, 1934), 105-106.

4. Reswick, *I Dreamt Revolution*, 55. The changing atmosphere was due in part to the legalization of private trade that accompanied the introduction of NE With it came the resurgence of entrepreneurs, some of whom peddled goods on the street, but others of whom opened clothing and food stores, cafes, and restaurants. Private traders lined the streets, selling everything from furs and velvet dresses to sewing machines by Singer. *Izvestiia* ran ads for corsets and fashion magazines next to advertisements for the latest books on everyday life and contests for the best enterprise. See for example, issues 58-62 (March 1928).

Although most of the descriptions of NEP life in this article refer to Moscow and Leningrad, other cities in the Soviet Union experienced some of the same changes. In his memoirs, a Komsomol activist sent to work in Rostov-on-Don remembers the busy restaurants with bright signs, the "dissolute variety shows," and the vulgar films of that city in the 1920s. See Al. Mil'chkov, *Pervoe desiatiletnie. Zapiski veterana komsomola*, (Moscow: Molodaia Gvardiia, 1965), 73-74. On private traders see Alan M. Ball, *Russia's Last Capitalists. The Nepmen, 1921-1929* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987) and William J. Chase, *Workers, Society, and the Soviet State. Labor and Life in Moscow, 1918-1929* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987).

5. One result of the continual debate within the party about NEP was that private entrepreneurs suffered a precarious existence, alternately encouraged and condemned. Allowed to flourish between 1921 and 1923, many NEPmen were arrested and their businesses closed in 1924, when policy towards NEP changed. The ideological winds shifted again just a year later, and private entrepreneurs were again enticed back into business with

lower taxes and promises of greater cooperation between state officials and private entrepreneurs. In 1926-1927, and even more intensively from 1928 on, the state enacted a final campaign to get rid of the private trader. See Ball, *Russia's Last Capitalists*, ch. 2.

6. Ilya Ehrenburg, *Memoirs, 1921-1941*, tr. Tatania Shebunia (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1966).

7. Victor Serge, "Vignettes of NEP" in Julien Steinberg, ed., *Verdict of Three Decades* (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1950), 143.

8. On the growth of mass commercial culture in Europe and the United States during this period, see for example Rosalind Williams, "The Dream World of Mass Consumption," in *Rethinking Popular Culture. Contemporary Perspectives in Cultural Studies*, eds. Chandra Mukerji and Michael Schudson (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991); Kathy Peis, *Cheap Amusements: Working Women and Leisure in New York City, 1880-1920* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1985); and Gareth Stedman-Jones, "Working-class Culture and Working Class Politics in London, 1870-1900: Notes on the Remaking of a Working Class," in *Languages of Class: Studies in English Working-class History, 1832-1982* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

9. This article is part of a larger project that looks at a wide variety of youth cultures in Soviet Russia, some of which supported the Bolsheviks but others of which displayed various degrees of resistance, rebellion, and rupture with the dominant Bolshevik culture. This includes working class youth cultures, communist youth cultures, and delinquent and criminal cultures. See Anne E. Gorsuch, "Enthusiasts, Bohemians, and Delinquents: Soviet Youth Cultures, 1921-1928" (Ph.D. thesis, University of Michigan, 1992).

10. G. Grigorv and S. Shkotov, *Staryi i novyi byt* (Moscow: Molodaia Gvardiia, 1927), 89.

11. Vera Ketlinskaia and Vladimir Slepkov, *Zhizn' bez kontrola: polovaia zhizn' i semia rabochei molodezhi* (Leningrad: Molodaia Gvardiia, 1929), 8-9.

12. V. Dmitriev and B. Galin, *Na putyakh k novomu bytu* (Moscow: "Novaia Moskva," 1927), 68. Richard Stites has some of the best descriptions of the "acrimonious arguments" over the utopian transformation of daily life. See his *Revolutionary Dreams. Utopian Vision and Experimental Life in the Russian Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989),

119. For a recent Soviet history of *byt* with some discussion of the 1920s, see V.I. Kas'ianenko, *Sovetskii obraz zhizni. Problemy issledovaniia* (Moscow, 1982).

13. N.B. Lebina, *Rabochaia molodezh' Leningrada. Trud i sotsial'nyi oblik, 1921-1925 gg* (Leningrad: Nauka, 1982), 15. This is not to say that there were just 34 studies of everyday life; these figures include only those counted by Lebina. In the Stalinist period, the majority of works on youth were on problems of work, and on political and social activism. A valuable account of sociological studies of youth as primary sources can be found in E.A. Semenova, "Materialy sotsiologicheskikh obsledovanii detei i podrostkov kak istoricheskii istochnik po izucheniu sovetskogo obraza zhizni (20-e gody)," *Istoriia SSSR* (September-October 1986), 112-122. For a history of Soviet time budget studies, see Jiri Zuzanek, *Work and Leisure in the Soviet Union* (New York: Praeger, 1980).

14. Raymond Williams, "Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory," in *Rethinking Popular Culture. Contemporary Perspectives in Cultural Studies*, eds. Chandra Mukerji and Michael Schudson, (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991), 412-417.

15. William G. Rosenberg, ed. *Bolshevik Visions. First Phase of the Cultural Revolution in Soviet Russia* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990), 17.

16. Leon Trotsky, "The Struggle for Cultured Speech," in *Problems of Everyday Life and Other Writings on Culture and Science* (New York: Monad Press, 1973) and Nikolai Semashko "Kto vinovat—neriashlivost' ili bednost'?" as cited in Dmitriev and Galin, *Na putiakh k novomu bytu*, 55-57. For debates about working class culture see especially Lynn Mally, *Culture of the Future: The Proletkult Movement in Revolutionary Russia* (Berkeley-Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990).

17. M.M. Kucherenko, "Podgotovka kvalifitsirovannoi rabochei sily v SSSR (20-e-pervaia polovina 30-kh godov)" *Voprosii istorii* 10 (October 1985), 23.

18. *Biulleten IV vsesoiuznoi konferentsii RLKSM*, 1-5 (Moscow: Molodaia Gvardiia, n.d.), 14.

19. Vera Ketlinskaia, "Zdravstvui, molodost'!" *Novyi mir* 11 (November 1975), 56, 58.

20. Edwin Ware Hullinger, *The Reforging of Russia* (New York: E.Dutton, 1925), 319.

21. M. Tramp, "Pod fonarem 'El'dorado'" in *Obyvatel'shchinu na pritsel'! Sbronik statei i fel'etonov* (Leningrad: "Krasnaia gazeta," 1928), 31.

22. Ketlinskaia, "Zdravstvui, molodost'!," 77.

23. V.A. Murin, *Byt' i nravy derevenskoi molodezhi* (Moscow: Izd. "Novaia Moskva," 1926), 82.

24. Hullinger, *The Reforging*. 319-320.

25. S. Frederick Starr, *Red and Hot. The Fate of Jazz in the Soviet Union, 1917-1980* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 55-56.

26. Ibid., 69.

27. The decadent appeal of these Western acts was satirized in a cartoon in the magazine *Bich* [Rowdy] in which two men were shown avidly watching three girls in scanty outfits perform the can-can. The caption reads: "Brother I come here not without purpose. I want to see Europe *in all her unattractive nakedness*." "S nauchnoi tsel'iu," *Bich* 20 (May 1928), 9. Emphasis in original.

28. Hullinger, *The Reforging*, 323.

29. N. Ognyov, *The Diary of a Communist Undergraduate*, trans. Alexander Werth, (New York: Payson and Clarke Ltd., 1929), 118.

30. Ketlinskaia, "Zdravstvui, molodost'!," 77. Also see *Russkaia sovetskaia estrada 1917-1929* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1976), 249, and Starr, *Red and Hot*, 60-61.

31. Ketlinskaia, "Zdravstvui, molodost'!," 77. For an interesting cultural history of the tango in Latin America and Western Europe, see Deborah L. Jakobs, "From Bawdyhouse to Cabaret: The Evolution of Tango as an Expression of Argentine Popular Culture," *Journal of Popular Culture* 1 (Summer 1984).

32. Robert A. Rothstein, "The Quiet Rehabilitation of the Brick Factory: Early Soviet Popular Music and its Critics," *Slavic Review*, (September 1980), 376.

33. Emma Goldman, *My Disillusionment in Russia* (New York: Thomas Y. Cromwell, 1970), vol. 2, 128.

34. Hullinger, *The Reforging*, 323.

35. Ibid., 65.

36. Tramp, "Pod fonarem 'El'dorado'", 28,30.

37. Ibid., 323-324.

38. Vladimir Lidin, *The Price of Life*, trans. Helen Chrouschoff Matheson (Westport, CT.: Hyperion Press, 1973), 122. A non-fictional account can be found in A. G. Kagan, *Molodezh' posle gudka* (Moscow-Leningrad: Molodaia Gvardiia, 1930).

39. A. Stratonistkii, *Voprosy byta v Komsomole* (Leningrad: "Priboi," 1926), 25.

40. *Dovesti do kontsa bor'bu s nepmanskoi muzykoi* (Moscow: Gos. muzykal'noe izdatel'stvo, 1931), 51-52.

41. Fisher, *Pattern for Soviet Youth*, 69.

42. My argument here has been influenced by Lewis A. Erenberg's thought-provoking description of the same dances in pre-war New York. See *Steppen' Out: New York Nightlife and the Transformation of American Culture, 1890-1930* (Westport, CT.: Greenwood Press, 1981), 81.

43. Lidin, *The Price of Life*, 121-122.

44. Vl. Kuzmin, "Pis'mo o novom byte," in I. Razin, *Komsomolskii byt* (Moscow-Leningrad: Molodaia Gvardiia, 1927), 321.

45. Anna Zelenko, *Massovye narodnye tantsy* (Moscow: "Rabotnik prosveshcheniia," 1927), 3; *Iunyi proletarii* 1 (January 1924), 6; A. Lunacharskii, "Proletarskii muzykant" 4 (1929) as cited in *Dovesti do kontsa*, 30.

46. Al. Mil'chakov, *Komsomol v bor'be za kul'turnyi byt* (Moscow-Leningrad: Molodaia Gvardiia, 1927), 30.

47. *Iunyi kommunist* 1-2 (January 15-February 1, 1922), 16. For a more detailed discussion of the debate in the party and the Komsomol about light entertainment see Gorsuch, "Enthusiasts, Bohemians, and Delinquents," ch. 4; and John B. Hatch, "The Politics of Mass Culture: Workers, Communists, and Proletkult in the Development of Workers' Clubs, 1921-1925," *Russian History* 13:2-3 (Summer-Fall 1986).

48. Kuzmin, "Pis'mo o novom byte," 321.

49. Kagan, *Molodezh' posle gudka*, 39, 44.

50. O. Tarkhanov, "O yshcherbe," *Iunyi kommunist* 1-2 (1922), 13.

51. Tramp, "Pod fonarem 'El'dorado'", 31.

52. N. Semashko, *Iskusstvo odevat'sia* (Moscow-Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoe izd., 1927), 3. For a discussion of the artistic and often utopian arena of Soviet fashion and textile design, see John E. Bowlt, "Constructivism and Early Soviet Fashion Design," in *Bolshevik Culture. Experiment and Order in the Russian Revolution*, eds. Abbott Gleason, Peter Kenez, and Richard Stites (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985).

53. On revolutionary militancy in the area of dress and behavior see Gorsuch, "Enthusiasts, Bohemians, and Delinquents," ch. 5; and Richard Stites, *Revolutionary Dreams*.

54. Ivan T. Bobryshev, *Melkoburzhuaznye vliianiia sredi molodezhi* (Moscow-Leningrad: Molodaia Gvardia, 1928), 105.

55. *Mody sezona* 3-4 (1928), 4, 22; *Mody sezona* 5-6 (1928). Russian fashion magazines were a few years behind their Western counterparts. In the United States and Western Europe, skirts were at their shortest from 1925 to 1927. See Richard Maltby, ed. *Dreams for Sale: Popular Culture in the 20th Century*, (London: Harrup, 1989), 79.

56. Williams, "The Dream World of Mass Consumption," in *Rethinking Popular Culture*, 203. For a description of the concept of "lifestyle advertising" and its development in the American context, see Martin Pumphrey, "The Flapper, the Housewife, and the Making of Modernity, *Cultural Studies* 2 (May 1987), 183.

57. Kolesnikov, *Litso klassovogo vraga*, 35.

58. Hullinger, *The Reforging*, 255.

59. Advertisement from the back page of *Mody* 7 (1925). See Dorothy Thompson, *The New Russia* (New York: Holt, 1928), 46 and Alexander Wicksteed, *Life under the Soviets* (London: John Lane the Bodley Head, 1928), 12 for a description of young women making their clothing at home. One historian of modern fashion notes that the typical chemise dress of the flapper was easier to reproduce at home than earlier fashions had been because it used so little fabric and was so shapeless. See Elizabeth Ewing, *History of Twentieth Century Fashion* (London: B.T. Batsford, 1974), 96. For a similar effort by young working women in interwar Britain to make copies of fashionable clothing "with material a few pence a yard" see Sally Alexander, "Becoming a Woman in London in the 1920's and 1930's," in *Metropolis. London. Histories and Representations since 1800*, eds. David Feldman and Gareth Stedman Jones (London and New York: Routledge, 1989), 263-264.

60. Dorothy Thompson, *The New Russia* (New York: Holt, 1928), 46.

61. Ibid., 30. In Europe and the United States, many women only just started to wear cosmetics before World War One. Excessive makeup was previously considered a sign of loose morals. By the end of the 1920s cosmetics "had become the norm rather than the exception, a sign of youth and up-to-dateness, a gauge of modern woman's independence." See Pumphrey, "The Flapper, the Housewife," 189. Although its popularity also grew rapidly in the Soviet Union, Bolshevik moralists continued to oppose it, associating it with bourgeois behavior.

62. Ella Winter, *Red Virtue* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1933), 48.

63. M. Rafail, *Za novogo cheloveka* (Leningrad: "Priboi", 1928), 50, 51.

64. Vladimir Kuzmin, "Pis'mo o novom byte" in Izrail M. Razin, *Komsomolskii byt* (Moscow-Leningrad: Molodaia Gvardiia, 1927), 320.

65. Rafail, *Za novogo cheloveka*, 50-51; Bobryshev, *Melkoburzhuaznye vliianiia*, 68.

66. Bobryshev, *Melkoburzhaznye vliianiia*, 68.

67. T. Kostrov, "Kul'tura i meshchanstvo," *Revoliutsiia i kul'tura* 3-4 (1927), 27.

68. G. Grigorov and S. Shkotov, *Staryi i novyi byt* (Moscow: Molodaia Gvardiia, 1927), 107-108.

69. Bobryshev, *Melkoburzhuaznye vliianiia*, 68-69.

70. Kostrov, "Kul'tura i meshchantsvo," 27.

71. Ibid.

72. Kostrov, "Kultura i meshchanstvo," 27.

73. As cited in Maltby, *Dreams for Sale*, 72. An article in the American magazine *The New Republic* entitled "Flapper Jane" might as well have had the title "Flapper Zhenia": "She is frankly, heavily made up, not to imitate nature, but for an altogther artificial effect—pallor mortis, poisonously scarlet lips, richly ringed eyes—the later looking not so much debauched (which is the intention) as diabetic..." Bruce Bliven, from September 9, 1926, as cited by Elizabeth Stevenson, *Babbitts and Bohemians. The American 1920s* (New York: Macmillan, 1967), 141.

74. Stratonistkii, *Voprosy byta v Komsomole*, 21. Semashko used a similar racist cliché, comparing those who wore flapper fashions to monkeys: "In order to become more like a lady or gentleman, people turn into monkeys, buying all kinds of stupid things." Semashko, *Iskusstvo odevat'sia*, 16.

75. Maltby, *Dreams for Sale*, 72.

76. *Litso klassa vraga*, 84.

77. Evgenii Iukon, "Devushka s belym sharfom" in *Obyvatel'shchinu na pritsle!*, 89-90.

78. I am grateful to Debbie Field for this idea. For a description of the "NEPka" in Kollontai's fiction, see Richard Stites, *The Women's Liberation Movement in Russia: Feminism, Nihilism, and Bolshevism, 1860-1930* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 356-357.

79. For a discussion of the meaning and "moral ambiguity" of cosmetics, see Elizabeth Wilson, *Adorned in Dreams. Fashion and Modernity* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1985), 107-114.

80. Geoff Eley, "Living the Future," manuscript, University of Michigan, 68-69.

81. *Odinnadtsatyi s"ezd*, 411-412 as cited in Bertrand Mark Patenaude, "Bolshevism in Retreat: The Transition to the New Economic Policy, 1920-1922," Ph.D. thesis, Stanford University, 1987, 341-342. A lengthy discussion of street culture and Bolshevik discourses about it can be found in Gorsuch, "Enthusiasts, Bohemians, and Delinquents," ch. 6.

82. As cited in Gordon McVay, *Esenin. A Life* (Ann Arbor: Ardis Press, 1976), 237-238. This is very similar to the American and European notion of the "lost generation," only it attributes youths' "rebellious" behavior to the disillusionment following the introduction of NEP rather than to the confusion and sense of loss following World War One.

83. For a more detailed discussion of the ways in which concerns about youth cultures contributed to the demise of NEP, see Gorsuch, "Enthusiasts, Bohemians, and Delinquents," ch. 9.

84. *Iunyi kommunist* 3-4 (February 15-March 1, 1922), 35.

85. Denise Youngblood, "The Fate of Soviet Cinema during the Stalin Revolution," *The Russian Review* 2 (April 1991), 157 and Starr, *Red and Hot*, ch. 5.