

## Lenin's Niece Dead at 89

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Olga Ulyanova in 1999 **Mikhail Metzel**

Olga Ulyanova, a niece of Soviet founder Vladimir Lenin who wrote several books praising her uncle and family, has died in Moscow. She was 89.

Lenin never had any children of his own, and Ulyanova was one of his last known living relatives, according to the government in the Ulyanovsk region, which was named after her family. She was the daughter of Dmitry Ulyanov, Lenin's younger brother and one of the first members of the Bolshevik party.

Olga Ulyanova, a chemist and a writer, died in Moscow on Friday, the regional government said. The cause of death was not given.

Her uncle, Vladimir Ulyanov, took Lenin as his nom-de-guerre in 1901 while in exile near the Siberian river of Lena. Sixteen years later, Lenin headed the Bolshevik Revolution. He died in 1924, when Ulyanova was almost 2 years old.

After Lenin's death, his embalmed body was placed in a mausoleum on Red Square, where it is open to the public.

Following the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union, many Soviet critics demanded the removal of his body from the mausoleum, seeing it as a symbol of the Communist past.

Ulyanova fiercely objected. "Those who want his reburial are just malefactors," she told Interfax in 2007.

She had fond memories of growing up in the Kremlin with other children of Bolshevik leaders and said she never abused her status as Lenin's kin. She worked as a professor of chemistry and physics at various universities and wrote extensively about her uncle.

"It was a mistake to turn him into an icon," she told the Italian Panorama newspaper in 2008. "But ideological distortions, falsification of his theories were even a bigger mistake."

She also claimed that her uncle disapproved of the 1918 shooting of last Tsar Nicholas II, his wife and five children.

One of Lenin's last living relatives is his great nephew Dmitry Ulyanov, an Orthodox priest in the western city of Ivanovo who once demanded that his parish worship icons of Lenin and his successor, Josef Stalin, according to Izvestia.

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