

LENIN AND REVOLUTIONARY RUSSIA

STEPHEN J. LEE



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For Charlotte

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INTRODUCTION

The *Questions and Analysis* series is based on the belief that the student actively benefits from explicit interpretation of key issues and help with source-based technique. Each volume therefore separates narrative from analysis and sources; it follows an overall structure of Background Narrative, Analyses, and Sources with questions and worked answers.

This volume, *Lenin and Revolutionary Russia*, is the first in the series to add another dimension. Sixth-form and university courses have given increasing importance to historical debates, requiring proficiency in historiography as well as history. The revised format takes this development into account.

Chapter 1, therefore, provides some general explanations of why historians differ in their interpretation of key historical issues. The subsequent chapters follow a common pattern. The Background is confined to essential introductory perspectives or narrative. Analysis (1) focuses on a key historical issue (as in previous volumes), while Analysis (2) now examines the historiographical dimensions of the same issue, considering the extent of and reasons for changes of emphasis. In examination terms, Analysis (1) is in line with the requirements of AS and Analysis (2) with A2. They are, however, interlinked: Analysis (1) provides the material the student needs to know before being able to deal with A2 perspectives, while Analysis (2) gives the AS student a view of the next logical development in interpretation – and an insight into the implications of A2. The Sources also vary in their approach. The main principle is that the first set of Sources and Questions in each chapter is aimed at developing AS skills; the style of Sources and Questions varies to provide an overlap with each of the examining boards. The second set of Sources, relating to A2, follows the pattern broadly associated with one board, which offers the topic in its specifications. Where (as in Chapters 2 and 8) there is

only one set of Sources, the subject matter is largely historiographical and therefore related to A2.

This book also aims to interest students in higher education, who might find a background to history and historiography helpful for their chosen topic. The Sources and Questions offer a variety of approaches and techniques that are likely to provide at least a starting point for further analysis. The series as a whole has kept in mind the interest of an increasingly sophisticated general reader, perhaps coming to a particular topic as a result of television, which emphasises new ideas in history.

The subject of this volume could not be more controversial. Lenin's reputation has been subject to a wider range of interpretations than that of any other major historical figure. He was a force for fundamental good – or evil. He was crucial for the growth of revolution in Russia – or peripheral to it. He was a liberator – or an autocrat. He based his actions on ideas – or his ideas followed his actions. He was consistent – or inconsistent. He led the masses – or followed them. His plans came to fruition under Stalin – or were betrayed by Stalin. And finally, the Soviet regime collapsed in spite of his influence – or because of it.

It is hoped that the student or general reader will want to contribute to the debate in these chapters. Such a range of ideas is bound to stimulate more. Provided that they can be substantiated, they are all valid – and they all count. This is what makes history so creative.

CHRONOLOGY

Russia used the Julian calendar under Tsarism, so in 1917 the two revolutions may be termed February and October (Julian) or March and November (Gregorian). The Julian calendar is used for all dates in this book up to 1918: The Bolsheviks adopted the Gregorian calendar in February 1918.

1883 Formation of the Emancipation of Labour (a Marxist group) by Plekhanov.

1895 Formation of the Fighting Union for the Liberation of the Working Class by Lenin.

1898 Publication of Lenin's *Tasks of the Russian Social Democrats*. Formation of Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (RSDLP) from the Emancipation of Labour and the Fighting Union for the Liberation of the Working Class.

1899 Publication of Lenin's *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*.

1900 Formation of the Socialist Revolutionary Party from various populist groups. Foundation of the RSDLP paper *Iskra*.

1902 Publication of Lenin's *What Is to Be Done?*

1903 Publication of Lenin's *To the Rural Poor*. Second Congress of RSDLP in Brussels and London, resulting in split between Lenin and Martov – Bolsheviks and Mensheviks (July–August).

1904 Publication of Lenin's *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back* and Martov's *Struggle with the State of Siege in the RSDLP*. Outbreak of Russo-Japanese War.

1905 Publication of Lenin's *Two Tactics of Social Democracy in the Democratic Revolution*. Bloody Sunday and the beginning of the 1905 Revolution (January). Formation of Petrograd Soviet. Russia's defeat in Russo-Japanese War. October: Tsar's October Manifesto.

1906 Fundamental Laws promulgated. First Duma convened.

1907 Second Duma convened (February). New Electoral Law (June). Third Duma convened (November).

1912 Strikes in the Lena goldfields. Fourth Duma convened (November).

1914 General strikes in Baku and St Petersburg. Outbreak of war against Germany and Austria-Hungary. St Petersburg renamed Petrograd.

1915 Strike action throughout European Russia. Command of the Russian forces assumed by Nicholas II. Zimmerwald Conference of revolutionary parties (August).

1916 Publication of Lenin's *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*. Conference of revolutionary parties in Kienthal (April). Major strikes in Petrograd (October). Assassination of Rasputin (December).

1917 Publication of Lenin's *The State and Revolution*. Overthrow of Tsarist regime and formation of Petrograd Soviet and Provisional Government under Lvov (February). Return of Lenin to Russia. Publication of *April Theses*. Failure of attempt to overthrow Provisional Government (July). Lenin in hiding in Finland. Resignation of Lvov and replacement as head of the Provisional Government by Kerensky. Attempted coup by General Kornilov. Bolshevik aid enlisted by Kerensky to overcome Kornilov (August–September). Trotsky elected President of Petrograd Soviet. Bolshevik majorities in Petrograd and Moscow soviets. Formation of Revolutionary Military Committee (September–October). Bolshevik Revolution and overthrow of the Provisional Government. Meeting of All-Russian Congress of Soviets (October). Elections for Constituent Assembly. Establishment of Cheka.

1918 Dissolution of Constituent Assembly by Lenin (January). Protest by Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks. Formation of Komuch programme. End of war between Germany and Russia by Treaty of Brest-Litovsk (March). Beginning of the Russian Civil War. Socialist Revolutionary governments established (e.g. Ufa Directorate) in defiance of Bolsheviks. White coups and campaigns. Constitution of the RSFSR (July). Killing of Tsar and family by Bolsheviks at Ekaterinberg. Foreign intervention in support of the Whites. Introduction of War Communism.

1919 Defeat of White campaigns under Kolchak, Yudenitch, Deniken and Wrangel. Withdrawal of foreign troops.

1920 War between Soviet Russia and Poland (ended 1921). Resistance to Bolshevik regime by peasant armies.

1921 Kronstadt uprising (March). End of War Communism and introduction of New Economic Policy (NEP).

1922 Activities of the Cheka suspended.

1923 Codicil added to Lenin's Testament (January).

1924 Death of Lenin (21 January).

1924–9 The interregnum and struggle between Stalin and Trotsky.

1929–53 Stalin in power.

1953–64 Khrushchev in power. Destalinisation campaign from 1956 onwards.

1964–82 Brezhnev in power.

1985–91 Gorbachev in power. Policies of *glasnost* and *perestroika*.

1991 End of the Soviet Union (December).

