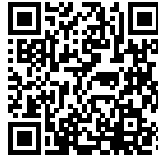




LENIN AND THE NEW MAN

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The most influential and politically decisive character in the 20th century and still in the 21st century is not Karl Marx (1818-1883), but his devoted admirer Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov (10. IV. 1870-21. I. 1924), who was from a well-to-do family and better known as "Lenin," or "he who belongs to the Lena River." He adopted this nickname in 1901, after his three-year exile (1897-1900) near that Siberian river, with his wife Nadezhda (Nadia) Krupskaya (1869-1939), who was from an impoverished noble family. It was Lenin, a fanatical millenarian of the communist utopia, *die wahre Demokratie*, authentic democracy, who made Marx famous by consolidating socialism as the world's dominant world religion in its various versions. Even the Protestant and Catholic churches have made it their own through the myths of social justice, egalitarianism, etc. "Not having succeeded in getting men to practice what it teaches, the present Church has resolved to teach what men practice" (Nicolás Gómez Dávila).

1.

The testimonies about Lenin's sincere admiration and respect for Karl Marx, imported into Russia, where he was better known than in the rest of Europe, by revolutionaries of various tendencies, are innumerable. According to one of his biographers, Lenin considered Marx's writings "sacred scriptures," like a "religious dogma," which "should not be questioned but believed." Lenin had "an unshakable faith, a religious faith in the Marxist gospel," said the skeptic Bertrand Russell.

However, he was not ideologically Marxist except in the belief that he had discovered the laws of history. Marx, Schumpeter recognized, was scientifically very rigorous and his disciple *ex lectione* was a scientist who despised facts that did not conform to his arguments, abhorred compromise and rarely admitted his own mistakes. The importation of Marx contributed to westernizing Russia, "one of the most ignorant, medieval and shamefully backward Asian countries" said Lenin, who proposed to turn the Empire of the Czars into the USSR, the only world Empire.

An example of his differences with Marx: for the German thinker, the evolution towards socialism could only take place in capitalist countries with a developed industrial proletariat, which would emancipate itself without the need for a revolution. Instead, Lenin considered necessary the "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat," led by a firmly cohesive revolutionary vanguard party, which would provide the working classes with political consciousness (education and organization) and lead the struggle against Capitalism. Nor did he attach importance to the theory of surplus value, the key to Marx's socio-economic thought. According to Lenin, "what is fundamental in Marx's doctrine is the class

struggle. Thus it is very often written and said. But this is not accurate. From this inaccuracy derives very often the opportunist misrepresentation of Marxism, its distortion in a sense acceptable to the bourgeoisie." And so on. Lenin thought of the homogeneous new man with whom all differences would disappear.

2.

The Ulyanov couple, who could not have children because of a physical defect of Nadia Krupskaya, managed to flee from Siberia to Western Europe. They returned to Russia at the outbreak of the 1905 revolution against tsarism at the same time as the Russian-Japanese war (8.II.1904-5.IX.1905), which ended with the defeat of the Russian Empire and the affirmation of the Japanese as the Asian power capable of confronting the Western powers. In truth, that revolution was nothing more than a broad social movement calling for an improvement in the deplorable situation of the working classes. But it was the prolegomenon of Lenin's revolution, because of "Bloody Sunday": on January 22, 1905, a peaceful demonstration led by the priest Georgy Gapon of more than 150,000 Orthodox workers and peasants, who held up crosses and icons and portraits of Tsar Nicholas II—who was absent—to whom they wanted to deliver a request for labor improvements, was violently repressed by the imperial guard who killed about 2,000 people, at the gates of the Winter Palace in Saint Petersburg, including women and children. The news spread throughout Russia. There were riots and revolts that were repressed; the unrest spread through all layers of Russian society. The absurd response of the government was not forgotten and the memory of the tragic event was kept very much alive.

Authentic revolutions are first prepared in the heads, said Ortega, and the Bolshevik revolution, destined to change the course of universal history, began that Sunday. It was a revolution "suspended," said Gonzague de Reynold, "unfinished" said Stéphane Courtois. For, as Ortega also said in *The Revolt of the Masses*: "every ignored reality—in this case the manifestly improvable situation of the majority of the Russian people—prepares its revenge." The postponed revolution had three phases.

Lenin and his wife went into exile again in 1907, after the failure of the first phase in which, by the way, the soviets appeared on the scene. They returned in 1917, during the second phase: the "bourgeois" revolution of February 23, 1917, which forced the tsar to abdicate. This revolution occurred almost by chance, since the revolutionary bourgeoisie did not have politicians of stature. Kerensky, second president of the Republic in the few months of the provisional government, was called "the clown." Lenin, rather Trotsky, initiated the third revolutionary phase in the same year 1917, in which "a new

epoch begins. It concludes the history of Russia, begins that of the USSR and also initiates a new era for mankind." Both phases, bourgeois and Leninist, also took place during another war, the Great European World War of 1914-1918. The bourgeois was in favor of continuing the struggle against the central empires; the proletarian, a revolution of intellectuals who hastened to sign the peace of Brest-Litovsk to begin the third phase, which lasted practically, although sub-phases could be distinguished, until the implosion of the USSR in 1989-1992.

3.

Lenin, "the great machinist of the revolution," who imposed the technological mentality in the USSR by describing his revolution as "soviets and electrification"—the State as a great capitalist enterprise—was a very cultured man, who also knew German, French and English perfectly. A great reader, very interested in the French Revolution, especially in the Jacobins—"furious theoreticians" (Burke), the first totalitarians according to common feeling—he certainly read Sylvain Maréchal's prophecy in the *Manifeste des Egaux* (1795): "The French Revolution is only the precursor of a much greater revolution, much more solemn, and which will be the last one." It would be the Great Revolution of Equality, another delayed revolution confused with the democratic revolution that began in the Middle Ages, according to Tocqueville and which Rodney Stark traces back to the Roman Empire when women and slaves converted to Christianity.

Lenin was a nationalist according to Trotsky. But, a reader of Bakunin, because "the revolution begins at home" and Moscow was, according to the myth, the Third Rome, he was surely thinking of Maréchal when he declared, "Russia is but a stage towards the world revolution." In exile, he had already begun to spread the idea of transforming the Great War into a revolution of the European proletariat that would prepare the utopian world revolution of equality—the key to his thought, his political action and his success, very different from the revolution of freedom—"freedom for what?" Lenin replied to Fernando de los Ríos in 1920—initiated by Christianity.

4.

Lenin and Trotsky, who had gone from the conciliatory Mensheviks to the intransigent Bolsheviks, carried out the coup d'état on October 25, according to the Julian calendar then in force in Russia, November 7 according to the Gregorian calendar of 1917, skillfully taking advantage of the power vacuum. "Ten days that shook the world," became the title of a book published in 1919 by the American

Marxist journalist John Reed. The revolution proper, destined to change the course of world history, came later. Not as an exclusively Russian political revolution, but as the beginning of the world revolution of the proletariat, which would definitively redeem Humanity. A religious revolution that began with the period of the Terror, which lasted nineteen and a half months (September 1918-January 1920) with an annual average of 1.5 million dead.

Vladimir Lenin is an example of what Walter Schubart said about the religiosity of the Russians: "In the Russians everything is religious... even atheism. They offered to the world, for the first time and in great style, the unusual spectacle of a religious atheism; or, in other words: a pseudomorphosis of religion, the birth of a belief in the form of unbelief, a new doctrine of salvation in the figure of perdition, of impiety. Its religiosity... has nothing European about it; it hurls itself, eager for dogmas, to seize a doctrine that comes from rationalist Europe. Hence the profound antagonism that explodes from within Russian atheism, and with it, Bolshevism: the contradiction between the ideal and the methods; between the goal of peace and humanity, and the means of terror and crime, typical marks of the Russian soul. If one wants to characterize Bolshevism with a blunt phrase, it could be done with this formula: in the hands of the Russians Marxism has become a religion; and more precisely: a semblance of religion. For it cannot be called "religion," a movement which considers finite values as absolute greatness—without the note of an all-embracing totality—mere fragments, mere fragments of the universe." But, as John Gray says in *The New Leviathans: Thoughts after Liberalism*, "Russian atheists, nihilists and terrorists sought to divinize the human species, instead of 'learning to live without God.'"

To understand Lenin, including his crimes, it is necessary to take into account that deeply religious character, which drove him to hate God—as a Gnostic, Voegelin would say—because the world is not perfect: "every thought dedicated to God is an unspeakable vileness." His passionate atheism made him a charismatic leader, like those of Max Weber: "passion," said Weber, "does not turn a man into a politician if he is not at the service of a cause and does not make responsibility for that cause the guiding star of his action."

5.

The young Lenin, faithful orthodox, good student and very mature—he always gave his family a preeminent place—had never been interested in politics. But hurt, naturally, by the death of his older brother Aleksandr in 1887, hanged for participating in an anarchist plot to assassinate Alexander III—Lenin would avenge him by ordering the assassination of Tsar Nicholas II and his entire family—he

began to associate with revolutionary groups and, moved by hatred, became a political activist. A figure about which Lenin would later theorize as a quasi-priestly profession, dedicated to redeeming Humanity incarnated in the proletariat. "Except for power, everything is illusion," Lenin believed and said; and he conceived of the party of the proletariat as a Comtean community, or *pouvoir spirituel*, and the shock troops of History against "class monopoly capitalism;" capitalism which was and remains the Satan of the socialist faith. The party was the priestly caste that led the egalitarian revolution, promoting [Stakhanovism](#) and [Gaganovism](#), so that there would be no free hours of work, but free activities, to achieve total equality, in which the new men, being equal in everything, would follow the instructions of the nomenklatura, and thus it was assumed that all would be free.

Dazzled by the novel, [What Is to be Done?](#) (1862), by Nikolai Chernyshevsky, one of the leaders of the populist movement (*narodnik*) of socialist tendency, Lenin exchanged his orthodox faith for faith in science, founded the communist religion as a more radical heresy of the socialist one and, as Nietzsche guessed—*die Zeit kommt, wo man über Politik umlernen wird* (the time is coming when the meaning of politics will be changed), effectively changed the traditional conception of politics, which seeks a balance between freedom and security, making it revolutionary: The Permanent Revolution theorized by Trotsky, the continuous change that leads to totalitarianism according to Hannah Arendt. The Brazilian thinker Olavo de Carvalho said that the ideas of Lenin and Gramsci coincide with those of Wycliff, Huss, Müntzer and other messianics. For the messianic scientific Lenin, who never took facts into account, "there is no Marxist dogma. Marxism is the scientific management of human affairs."

Follower of the Marxist branch of German social democracy, rival of the most powerful social democracy of Lassall against which Bismarck reacted, Lenin distanced himself from the liberalizing of his teacher Georgi Plekhanov (1857-1918), considered the "father" of Russian Marxism, and founded Marxism-Leninism—an ideology that has more of Lenin—almost everything—as Ersatz religion, substitute, than of Marx; atheist, but not moved by hatred. "Where Lenin is, there is Jerusalem," said the Marxist philosopher, Ernst Bloch.

Just as Marx inverted Hegel to found socialism, Lenin inverted Marx to found the religion of hatred. Nevertheless, hagiography presents Karl Marx as Moses and Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov, a Slav with a "Mongolian face" (F. de los Ríos) as a westernizing Marxist, as the Joshua who brought down the walls of bourgeois capitalism. Certainly, at the cost of millions of victims, killed by him and his disciples in Russia and the rest of the world.

However, since the denunciation of Stalin's crimes by Nikita Khrushchev in 1956, Lenin was the good guy, and the evil one his disciple and successor, Stalin. Lenin, who wanted to eliminate all bourgeois and all those who were not proletarians, was the redeemer of humanity; Stalin, who followed the terrorist policy of Lenin's religion of hatred, the Satan infiltrated who had into Leninism. Communism seemed to Alain Besançon more perverse than Nazism—an imitation of Leninism in its most sinister aspects—because it uses the universal spirit of justice and goodness to spread evil. But the slogan *reductio ad hitlerum* prevails. Solzhenitsyn commented in 1980: "During Lenin's lifetime, there were no fewer innocents killed among the civilian population than under Hitler, and yet Western students, who today give Hitler the title of the greatest madman in history, regard Lenin as a benefactor of mankind."

Leninism is still present. Lenin is invoked in universities in the USA and all over the world, in the America of "21st century socialism" and in monarchic Spain, in the European Union, in China... one reads books like the one by the Slovenian Slavoj Žižek, *Repeating Lenin* (2004), etc. The Leninist conception is a world completely planned by a party that bureaucratically controls—the nomenklatura—the least human activity. This conception has been revived by Klaus Schwab and the Davos Forum bosses, who claim to be the "administrators of the future," already put into practice by the Anti-European Union, against which populisms are beginning to rebel: "the nickname," says Chantal Delsol in her politically incorrect book, *Populisme*, "A defense of the indefensible, with which the perverted democracies virtuously disguise their contempt for populism."

6.

Since "the revolution begins at home," Lenin hastened to create in Russia, in the few years that he enjoyed his triumph, the structures of the terrorist State—the Cheka, the repression of nonconformists, the denunciations—which turned it into the USSR, the paradise of the proletariat.

Some of Lenin's sayings on the use of terror as an instrument of political and social control:

"It does not matter if ninety percent of the Russian people perish as long as only ten percent of them live through the world revolution."

"I am astonished that you do not proceed to mass executions for sabotage," he telegraphed to his people on January 29, 1920, on the occasion of the railroad workers' strikes.

"The good communist is also a good chekist."

"The greater the number of representatives of the reactionary clergy and the reactionary bourgeoisie that we succeed in executing, the better."

Against the formal abolition of the death penalty in the USSR: "How are you going to make a revolution without executions? Do you expect to eliminate your enemies by disarming yourself? What other means of repression are there?"

"When people censure us for our cruelty, we wonder how they can forget the most elementary principles of Marxism" (*Pravda*, October 26, 1918).

"We must set an example: 1) Hang (and I say hang in such a way that people will see) not less than 100 kulaks, rich men, too well-known blood drinkers. 2) Publish their names. 3) Seize all their grain. 4) Identify the hostages as we have indicated in our telegram of yesterday. Do this in such a way that people for a hundred leagues around will see it, so that they will tremble and say: they kill and will continue to kill bloodthirsty kulaks. Telegraph that you have received these instructions. Yours, Lenin."

"Lenin," writes Richard Pipes in his classic, *The Russian Revolution* (1992), was "the guiding force of the Red Terror throughout." He wanted to build a world inhabited by good citizens and that obsession led him, like Robespierre, "to justify morally the elimination of bad citizens."

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Tradition of Liberty). This article appears through the kind courtesy of [La gaceta de la Iberosfera](#).

[Featured](#): *Lenin and Demonstrations*, by Isaak Brodsky; painted in 1919.
