



# **JSCSC LIBRARY BIBLIOGRAPHY**

**Command and Leadership Series**

**Vladimir Ilyich Lenin**

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## Vladimir Ulyanov (Lenin) 1870–1924

### Introduction

Born *Vladimir Ilyich* in 1870, one of the most legendary revolutionaries of the 20<sup>th</sup> century became known to the world as Lenin. His leadership of the Soviet State of Russia began with the October revolution in 1917, protected Russia from potential German invasion in 1918 and had initiated enduring changes within the country by the time of his death in 1924. An event that is said to have influenced Lenin's thirst for political change was the execution of his older brother, Alexander, at the age of 19, for attempting to assassinate Tsar Alexander III. After completing a law degree, Lenin continued to participate in revolutionary groups, publishing illegal newspapers and getting arrested for his activities. He spent a few years in Siberian exile for his membership of radical political groups and traveled extensively throughout Europe, building a political following before returning to Russia in time to instigate governmental defeat and his rise to power.

### Biographies

Among the many biographies of Lenin held in the library, the most notable of these is by **SERVICE**. This work is both thorough and absorbing. It combines extensive, factual research with interesting detail about Lenin's personal life, for example, the way in which he could not stand extraneous noise when he was writing. In addition, **SERVICE** describes Lenin's childhood and personality development, such as the way his mother and sisters and later, his wife, were servile to him. This learned manipulation and control of others can be seen between Lenin and his party members in his political life later. Through its practical, 'invisible' narrative, this work is an objective, balanced and illuminating exploration of both the political and personal life of Lenin. Other comprehensive works include those by **CLARK**, **PAYNE** and **MORGAN**. A common obstacle when researching Lenin is that information about his life and activities were not accessible until quite recently and even now there may be patches of factual inconsistency, due to documents being destroyed by the Ochrana (Russian secret police) in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and also by the Cheka (Secret police set up by Lenin) at the time of Lenin's rule. **PAYNE'S** work describes Lenin's judge of character in his political life, inferring a naivety on his part towards independent secret police agents being in 'every faction of every party' that he governed up to his leadership of the Soviet State. The discussions highlight, at least, an indifference in Lenin towards seemingly dangerous elements as long as they did not interfere with his political aims. This adds to his profile of a leader with total 'tunnel vision'.

Several biographies focus on the revolutionary aspects of Lenin's life. **THEEN**, **MAILLOUX** and **HOLLIS** have written clear and concise works. Although the record of events after Lenin's take-over of power in 1917 is brief in **THEEN**, Lenin's tactical methods described here provide insight into his political decisions leading up to this period. Lenin's dogged persistence in urging the October revolution is emphasised succinctly in **MAILLOUX'S** work as well as his willingness to take on the burden of administration after the event, which as the author concedes, is a rarity in revolutionary leaders. A logical progression of Lenin's years in exile whilst developing Bolshevik organisation is given by **HOLLIS**. Similar to the other revolutionary biographies, Lenin's time in power is covered in just two chapters.

For the reader already equipped with knowledge of Lenin, one work is unique in its portrayal of Lenin through copies of correspondence. **PIPES** uses extracts of 'released' archival material to show Lenin's personal and political character during power. These chosen extracts present a cruel, anti-social ruler although this portrayal is somewhat narrower than those from testimonies of Lenin's family, contemporaries and Western biographers, such as **SERVICE**. However, the format is novel and provides the reader with a broader picture of the interactions within the party, for example, memos between Krestinsky, Trotsky and Lenin (pp54-56)

### Psychology

Three books that can help the reader to get inside the mind of Lenin, the leader, are **DEUTSCHER**, **BURTON** and **WOLFENSTEIN**. The first contains excerpts from different people known to Lenin at various stages in his life. One particular piece, 'Lenin as a revolutionary leader' by M N Pokrovsky, relays Lenin's total belief in his decision to 'surrender' to Germany at Brest Litovsk in 1918. This was against strong opposition from members of his party. Despite Pokrovsky's admiration of Lenin, the extract does show Lenin to have the ability to take on great responsibility, showing complete self-belief, and absolute dedication to his political goal (eg. A communist Soviet State and a future communist Europe)

To support his theories of revolutionary violence, **BURTON** presents Lenin's amoral stance on war and his readiness to do deal with opposing countries as examples of tactical aggression. Similarly, this objectivity to human suffering that Lenin seemed to possess is discussed in **WOLFENSTEIN**, who describes Lenin's impersonalised authority when leading the Bolsheviks with Marxist doctrine. His immense control over people is described alongside a deep conviction for others to see the 'truth', or his political utopia. **WOLFENSTEIN** also proposes a psychological basis for Lenin's controlling personality; he didn't learn to walk until he was three years old. In terms of the psychologist, Erikson's 'Trust vs Mistrust' theory, Lenin did not trust those most close to him, therefore leading to a tightly manipulative nature and a concrete self-reliance. This interesting work compares Lenin, Trotsky and Gandhi, using their early life experiences to form reasoning behind their leadership.

## Revolution

Lenin's involvement in the revolution of 1917 is described and documented well in **MOOREHEAD, HILL, WHITE and MARPLES**. The first of these, although using a dramatic narrative that may be due to its publication age, describes the important contribution of his political newspapers, Iskra and Pravda, to Lenin's revolutionary zeal. The effect of Lenin's personality on fellow members of the Social Democratic Labour Party and his eventual push for take-over in October 1917 is well captured in Chapter eleven, 'Lenin's Return'.

**HILL** brings the atmosphere and urgency of the revolution to life. There is a fair amount of Lenin's speeches included in this work and these help to show the persuasion used to convince the workers about Bolshevik rule. The power of Lenin's forthright public speaking and widespread use of propaganda is represented by the fact that 80% of the population were peasants (not workers – his 'target' audience), therefore, he reached audiences previously ignored. Agrarian policy, critiques of imperialism and Lenin's National and International policies are also discussed.

A useful and clear interpretation of Lenin's activities at this time is given in **WHITE**. Both this work and that of **MARPLES** provide chronologies for quick scanning of events and dates. Also within **MARPLES**, is a description of the Cheka (Lenin's secret police) and he argues that the flexibility shown by Lenin and the Bolsheviks, winning them power, rapidly changed to cruel authoritarianism to maintain that power. Included are explanations for the failure of the Provisional Government with a comparison of Lenin's more successful approach.

Further information about the revolution can be gathered from such works as **MCNEAL, LEE, COATES and PIPES**. There is perhaps unavoidable, positive bias towards Lenin in the detailed accounts from Krupskaya (Lenin's wife) in **MCNEAL**. It is interesting, however, to view Lenin's fervent leadership from as close a perspective as that of his wife. In contrast, the questions and analysis series work written by **LEE** explains simply the factual events of the revolution. The reader may find the study format either useful or distracting depending on the purpose of study and time. This work describes clearly the differences between the Mensheviks, Social Revolutionary Party and reasons for their unpopularity. The Imperialist White Army's conflicts with Lenin's party are also well explained. Excerpts of official papers can be found in **COATES** with interesting memos between British Officials at the time regarding the Imperial Russian family and Lenin's growing power. A more concise version of **PIPES'** two texts on the Russian revolution contains useful factual detail about events, covering the time before the Bolshevik formation to events after the revolution. This book is a good tool for those who want a quick overview of this period in Russian history.

Finally, two works provide detail of the effects of the revolution on the nation of Russia; those of **BROOK-SHEPARD** and **REMICK**. The former relates to Western views of the revolution and the perceived threat that Lenin posed to Western nations. The latter may be useful as a final read for those who want to see 'what happened next' and to consolidate their knowledge of this era.

## Leadership

Lenin's style of leadership is discussed in good detail in **KEEP, EARLE, KOSLOV FRANK and GILLETTE** and **VOLKOGONOV**. Lenin as a leader is summarised well in **KEEP**, 'Men of spirit and independence sooner or later rebelled'. Similarly described by **WOLFENSTEIN** in the previous psychology section, Lenin was seen as a practised manipulator. There are claims in **EARLE** that Lenin met his match in Woodrow Wilson, his failing in this respect being that he did not understand Western psychology despite being so well versed in how to sway Russian thought through propaganda.

A Soviet perspective explores Lenin's stance on the moral-political factors involving war in **KOSLOV**. Lenin's ideas of the training of military troops are also described here and the author claims that these have since been widely practised and remain applicable to Russian military training. Military thought and the differences between that of Lenin and Gorbachev are explored in **FRANK**

**and GILLETTE.** This work also describes the effects of each approach on the military and Russia's relations with the West. Lenin's decisions as a leader about the Red Army at Warsaw are illuminated in **VOLKOGONOV'S** work. This is a good source for detailed information about Lenin's actions whilst in power and contains a comprehensive history that includes Lenin's leadership among his political colleagues as well as the military.

For an overview of the effects of Lenin's leadership it is worth pursuing the varied perspectives of **KENNAN, D'AGNOSTINO, ANDREW and GORDIEVSKY, KULL** and **GORBACHEV**. There are interesting discussions in **KENNAN** about the effects on the West of Lenin's actions and lineage, including his tactics to encourage political change. **KENNAN** also presents a gripping web of deception, cynicism and reluctant agreements in his analysis of relations between Germany, Russia and the Allies. The work of **D'AGNOSTINO** focuses on elite power struggles to explain the development of Soviet political policy, particularly foreign policy. Also provided is historical discussion of leadership struggles within the country since Lenin. Insights are presented into how Lenin acted to inspire, surprise and thus lead opposition into the Nation's dislike. He is seen as 'Acting from afar'; so that others performed the terror he ordered and he constantly jumped from one stance to another in order to suit his aims.

For a slightly different angle to the study of leadership, **ANDREW and GORDIEVSKY** describe the origins of the KGB in 1917 in the Cheka and, previously, the Ochrana. Chapters one and two are particularly interesting with regard to counter-revolutionary practices of the Cheka, initiated by Lenin to pursue his aims of terror and 'Agent penetration' (or the control of any opposition to his party).

**KULL**, a political psychologist, proposes that the 'New Thinking' of Russia's later leaders developed from a cognitive revolution; the burying of Lenin's memory to make way for cooperation with Western countries. **KULL** explores how this happened, realistically and credibly. He uses excerpts from interviews with Russian policy makers and information from public records to develop his theories. Lastly, in the translation from Russian by George Shiver, former Russian President, **GORBACHEV** uses experience, knowledge and past leadership to comment on his country including the October revolution. He attempts to answer questions on socialism, its place in Russian culture and effects on International relations in a succinct and balanced book.

### **The Works of Lenin**

The Library contains published works of Lenin, many of which are in translated form. These include his infamous *What is to be done?* There are also collected works and selected papers by Trotsky and Lenin and Lenin's writings about the founder of Marxism, Karl Marx. (Please see reference section for shelf numbers)

### **Periodical Articles**

Although the books provide the most extensive and thorough accounts of Lenin, there are some journal articles that are useful in their specificity to aspects of his leadership. One such article is by **REIAI**, which documents the traits of the professional revolutionary. An interesting combination of many early life experiences, family position and personality are described as causative, however, the psychological basis for these is not explored in depth.

A clearly written exploration of Lenin's strategic military thought can be found in **DURRANT**. This account makes use of Lenin's view that conflict, war and violence are an inevitable part of communist society until all Imperialism and Bourgeoisie have been eradicated. In similar vein, **DAVIS** and **KOHN** discuss in detail Lenin's perceptions of Clausewitz, with excerpts of his reactions to theories of politics and war, for instance, that "The army is the key to a country". **CHERNOV** writes of Lenin's approach to leadership, written in the year of his death. This article delves into Lenin's personality and tactical abilities as personally viewed from the author, his political rival. This stance makes it an absorbing read, particularly as he describes Lenin as a typical chess player, continually looking for new ways to trip up his opponent. Finally, **WALKER** reviews the legacy of Lenin in a critical

appraisal of Gorbachev's leadership. Interesting comparisons are made between the views and actions of these leaders, particularly when the author considers how the West should respond.

### Websites

The **LENIN ARCHIVE** on the **MARXISTS ORGANISATION** website contains copies of his works, biography and many sources for info on Russia, theory of Marxism, politics behind the state and timelines. The **MODERN HISTORY SOURCEBOOK**, located on the library intranet pages, has comprehensive collection of pages on the Russian revolution, including Tsarist State, Lenin, events leading to revolution and links to other sites (Marxists.org). There are excerpts from Lenin's texts here including his last testament in 1922 made when he was suffering from ill health and conscious that he should choose a successor. Another site for a quick factual profile of Lenin is the **BBC HISTORY** website, it provides an interesting overview and contains links to other sites for information about Soviet history and the Russian Revolution. The **HISTORY CHANNEL** website contains excerpts of Lenin's speeches which may be listened to through the computer, particularly useful to capture the mood, atmosphere and oratorical style of Lenin.

### Images

A large amount of images of Lenin can be found at the Marxist.org website, as well as other internet sites. In addition, several varied photographs and propaganda posters of Lenin are available on the JSCSC Heritage IV library database. To find these on Heritage IV, change the Media option to Images and type in Search Term Lenin.

### Videos

The fullest biography, **LENIN**, in video format is by the History Channel. Telling his life story with archive footage and clear narration, it encompasses both his childhood and political life with interviews from a variety of knowledgeable sources.

The first in the **CIRCLE OF POWER** series provides useful discussion and debate on the situation of the Soviet Union as well as a brief but informative insight into Lenin's life and leadership. A particularly intense interview with John Erikson, Professor of Politics at the University of Edinburgh emphasises the strength of Soviet culture in their consistency of strategic doctrine from the time of Lenin through to the time of recording. Further biographical if more general information about Lenin can also be found in the **YEAR TO REMEMBER** series, **1924**.

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This bibliography has been designed to provide a guide as to where to find information on Lenin. Please note that the list of references below is a selection of the more relevant titles and information on the subject. The list is not intended to be exhaustive or definitive but is an introductory guide to some of the resources available.

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<http://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/index.htm>

Modern History Sourcebook

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/modsbook39.html#The%20Russian%20Revolution>

BBC History

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The History Channel

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### Any Queries

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