

The Prophet Unarmed

A Biography of Leon Trotsky

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After the Civil War Russia was in dire straits. The statistics says it all, or almost all. National income was down to one third of that of 1913, its industries produced only a fifth of what it did before the war, in particular coal-mines put out only a tenth, and the iron foundries only a fortieth of what it used to. Thus heavy industry was particularly badly affected. Furthermore the infrastructure was devastated, railways not working, trade between cities and countryside halted, cities depopulated. The old structure was gone and very little had come in its stead, the leaders of the country confronted a completely new situation and had to begin from scratch. The victory was hardly to be celebrated.

The old working class, which had given the regime its legitimacy was now but an empty shell; and with it gone in whose name was the regime actually acting? Could they not be seen as a gang of adventurers who had seized power, and not really understanding what to do with only how to keep it, had now run the country to a devastating halt. The former industries were now empty or functioning at a very low level of capacity being mostly idle, the workers having to make ends meet by petty theft. Instead of healthy markets black markets proliferated. As a desperate means of economical survival Lenin had, inspired by Trotsky, lifted economic restrictions calling it a New Economic Policy (NEP) fostering a corrupt class of marketeers heartily and bitterly despised by the old Bourgeois. But unlike the now defunct proletariat the peasants turned out to be much more resilient class. This is not surprising, after all it was very primitive, and their economy was much more directly connected to nature, requiring no involved infrastructure unlike industry. And of course everyone has to eat so there was no shortage of demand for their products. Thus as a result of the upheavals it had been strengthened and the regime was forced to seek its support in particular to stop requisitioning and allowing it to sell its surplus (on the other hand there was not much to be bought for it). Marx famously characterized rural life as a sack of potatoes¹ being in a state of primitive self-sufficiency as exciting as a sack of potatoes. That was the only thing that had some semblance of working.

In conclusion. The Bolshevik party originally was formed to represent the proletariat, not really directly but through the Soviets a legacy of the revolutionary attempt of 1905. But now the Soviets no longer were in position to authorize the actions of the party, their only authority left was that with which they were endowed by the party. So once again, what did they represent after the disappearance of the proletariat? It only represented itself, and thus it was no better than a usurpation, and so it started to view itself. This was close to desperation. But indeed they were not really usurpers they told themselves, and if so through no fault of their own. They simply could not give up after all the

¹ 18 Brumaire

sacrifices they had made, the change of history they had effected had to be vindicated, but how? There were historical precedents such as the English Puritan Revolution and the French one. In both cases the army took over, after all the army represent pure direct power just as primitive peasantry exercised a pure and direct economy. In the Puritan case Cromwell took over, and in the French case Napoleon took over the reins. Cromwell had been part of the original revolution, Napoleon had not. In Russia the Bolshevik party would play the role of the army by virtue of its solid organization. The party was to lead and instruct the working class of its true interests; but that was so called substitutionism according to Trotsky. Rather than to be instructed by the working class as an external empirical existence, the insights would come from the party itself, and thus it would be deprived of an external check, to use the language of Popper. In a way, the party could make itself independent of the working class, which would of course make matters much simpler. On the other hand how do you divine the will of the people or even of a seemingly homogeneous class? Traditional means are through elections and votes, which often may differ little from a toss of a coin, or more articulately through so called public opinion, which seldom represent the opinions other than that of the few. Substitutionism had replaced the dictatorship of the proletariat with that of the party which had acquired a political monopoly. The party had after all grown up during Tsarist times when political life involved a variety of parties. And this variety of opinions also encouraged an internal division and freedom of speech. Now it was very different. It was impossible to abolish democracy outside and keep it inside. Without any external opposition there will be no check. A single party system is a contradiction in terms. What would be the solution? Splitting the party? Having imposed silence on non-Bolshevik Russia it has imposed silence on itself. The party had been very successful, but by virtue of its own success it had destroyed itself. Its victory seemed for all intents and purposes a Pyrrhic one. But the party grew nevertheless. It grew spectacularly, from 23'000 in 1917 to a quarter of a million two year later, to 700'000 on 1922 but by then only some 2% of the members were old underground veterans from before the Revolution. Most of this growth was spurious, there was a need to winnow the chaff from the wheat as there were innumerable vacant posts in government and industry to be filled. Thus a party may hence be happy for its voters and not to have to be picky, but not as to its members. How could you tell ardent members, who really identified with the party and its aims, from those who were just hanging on? Before when there were many parties to choose between, you could assume that they had chosen you because you were the best option available, now there were no other options. The first party purge took place in 1921 when a third of the party members were expelled, in absolute figures some 200'000. There were a variety of reasons. Vulgar careerism was one, a dominant party always attracts them. Former members of anti-Bolshevik parties such as the Mensheviks were not welcome either. Those who were politically immature were useless needles to say, and those who had been corrupted by power and privilege were abhorred. But one unwanted result of the purges was that it brought about intimidation and concomitant self-suppression. Anyway those purges brought about no change of policy as the party was not controlled by its rank and file but by a very small elite of veteran revolutionaries, known as the Old Guard and constituting the core of the party and which never counted more than a few thousand. For such a

small number of individuals to dominate the party, and hence the country, cohesion was imperative, even a slight dissension might be enough for it to lose its authority and hence its ability to control events. This involved the establishment of a hierarchy with exacting admission. The longer the faithful service, the higher the posts available. Still the Old Guard lived by an austere code identifying their destiny by selfless work for socialism yet not devoid of personal ambition. Trotsky did not suffer fools not being diplomatic like Lenin who was a master of subtle manipulation. The Old Guard was suspicious of him, was he not originally a Menshevik and looked upon him as a man of the state not of the party. In it but not out of it. He was the born trouble-maker and resented as such. In short he overshadowed the others, suffering no fools he made them feel inferior. Lenin was however anxious to support him and give formal acknowledgment of it by having him appointed as his deputy, but Trotsky resisted and why? Perhaps vanity, maybe he thought of himself and Lenin as comrades in arms, and becoming his deputy would make their relation asymmetric, and besides were there not many Vice Presidents around? Stalin had been appointed as the General Secretary, and although this position had originally been meant as merely formal and symbolic, maybe even ornamental, Stalin had quickly made it his power base, and Lenin was getting worried and needed Trotsky as a counterweight.

Another source of embarrassment was that the NEP markets worked, in fact beautifully so, much better than the state sector. Its proponents discovered enthusiastically old capitalist truths, which testified to the economic innocence of many of the leading party officials. Trotsky argued for a planned economy and the need for, if necessary, to discontinue unprofitable enterprises and disband their workers. Lenin on the other hand opposed planning, arguing that the Soviet economy was too primitive for that, after all Marx assumed an advanced state of economy with a large accumulation. Trotsky thought it would be possible that one could go through the phase of initial primitive accumulation but through social ownership; in this way one would forego exploitation and plunder. The slogan of those opposed to NEP was that NEP stood for New Exploitation of the Proletariat (Новая Эсплуатация Пролетариата). Trotsky argued, somewhat disingenuously, that it was a question of self-exploitation and thus really not exploitation. He argued for a single overarching plan drawing on the theoretical works of many others but making up a synthesis and fashioning a political argument. He was for giving more authority to Gosplan (Госплан) - The State Planning Committee. He was then accused of trying to become the master of economy, as he once was the master of the Red Army. But Trotsky stood his ground wanting to have the Planning Committee developed and put in effect as soon as possible. His antagonism with Stalin grew. Stalin and Rabkrin headed a body to inspect commissars but Stalin turned it into his police and employed shock treatment and intimidation. According to Trotsky it was a body of misfits, including that of Stalin, and in particular very inefficient. But Lenin defended Stalin against Trotsky's criticism, which he thought of as part of a personal vendetta. All in all Trotsky could not accept the Vice Premiership thinking of it as contradiction in terms.

Another bone of contention was the status of the nationalities within the Federation of Soviets. Stalin had banned the Mensheviks in Georgia and when they had protested he had intimidated them. In fact he was denying the Nations their right to self-determination according to Trotsky, yet Stalin had in his treatise 'Marxism and the Nationalities' presented

himself a champion of self-determinism, so why should he offend the National dignity of his own countrymen? Lenin trusted Stalin but would eventually come around to Trotsky's position. The latter took initially no cognizance of Stalin and his provocations but eventually they could not be ignored and reluctantly he had to engage himself. This rivalry was inevitable in view of the difference in temperaments, backgrounds, political inclinations, ambitions. Initially it had been personal, mostly stemming from Stalin's antagonism towards a rival who made him feel inferior, and thus it could be suppressed by Lenin, as long as it could not be identified with real political conflicts. But eventually those conflicts would emerge. The basic dilemma was between authority and freedom, a question with which Trotsky grappled. He decided that the former involving discipline and taking into account reality should be given precedence when survival was at stake. Freedom was to be seen as the ultimate goal. In practical politics he seemed to waiver, the more the balance was tipped on one side, the more he was inclined to uphold the other. While Stalin was for authority and exacting obedience.

Trotsky wanted to equip the Red Army with modern weapons, while the Soviet heavy industry, in particular its armament industry could not deliver, but had to be reconstructed, necessarily by foreign help, but where to turn? The German army dismantled as a consequence of the Versailles treaty and its armament industry was idle. Surreptitious contacts were made as early as 1921 with the blessings of the Politbureau. Both Russia and Germany being considered as pariah nations after the Great War there were common ground and even a sense of comradeship. Initially contracts were formed between Krupp and some other industries which were willing to supply equipment and technical assistance needed for domestic manufacture of planes, submarines, artillery and other munitions. As negotiations proceeded the scope of the co-operation widened. Not only armament industries were idle in Germany but also their officer corps who were willing to train and instruct the Red Army on the condition that they were also allowed to train their own cadres in Russia, which they were not allowed to at home. Thus the groundwork was laid for a co-operation between the Red Army and the German Reichwehr which would outlive Trotsky. It all was formalized in the treaty of Rapallo in 1922.

In spite of his brilliance Trotsky was not free of illusions. But illusions are often necessary to uphold morale. In the case of Trotsky his grand illusion was the conviction that global revolution was more or less imminent, and once brought about would fundamentally change the position and prospects for the Soviet Union. This was a comforting illusion providing hope and strength. But European capitalism had withstood the shock of war and the possessing classes of Western Europe had learned their lessons and could take counter measures. Also, I would like to venture, their institutions were more solid and resilient than those of Tsarist Russia, but as history would show not immune against insurrection through other means, notably the parliamentary. Trotsky predicted that Fascism would rise in the West cued by Mussolini's march on Rome, and warned that a German Mussolini may appear as well. With Lenin he proposed that Communist parties should lie low and slowly build up a base and cooperate with other parties especially the reformist Social Democrats. Only when the left in general had achieved political dominance it was time for them to assert themselves. This was known as the strategy of the United Front, but it met with fierce opposition from the ultra-radicals predominantly from the West embittered by

what they had felt as being the treason of the old Socialist parties supporting the War effort. They were in no mood to admit defeat, be it tactical and temporary². Lenin and Trotsky had to use all their influence and authority to prevent the ultra-radicals to get the upper hand, even threatening a split. At the International Congress of 1921 the majority vote was for the United Front but it did so reluctantly and with reservations. It was clear that both Lenin and Trotsky now belonged to the moderate right wing of the international Communist movement accusing the ultra-radicals of being unrealistic, with no deeper understanding of Marxism and liable to succumb to unprincipled opportunism.

On the domestic front Lenin pushed for Trotsky's appointment as a deputy Premier, assigning to Stalin the task of bringing the matter to the Politbureau. No one was opposed, yet Trotsky resisted. This brought once again about a marked coolness between Lenin and Trotsky but events would force an immediate reconciliation between the two, which was to last until the death of Lenin, who was by now in poor health forced to periods of inactivity by his doctors. The issue that joined them was that of foreign trade, which up to now was the monopoly of the Government as this was thought of necessary to protect the fragile Soviet economy from outside pressures, so called 'socialized protectionism' as termed by Trotsky. The Central Committee had voted for some easing of restrictions, which had alarmed Lenin greatly finding in Trotsky an invaluable ally. The latter had little trouble in convincing the Committee to reverse their decision, and Lenin was exultant as a result. This prompted him to go out of his way to patch up relations on further issues which had separated them (such as his support of Stalin in the 'Georgia affair'). And of course to renew his request that Trotsky would accept the post of Vice-Premier, as due to his state of health, he was very much concerned about succession and about to write his will. This time, when the matter was breached in private and with such personal insistence he did not reject it outright. But time was running out a few days later Lenin suffered yet another stroke. Around Christmas 1922 he dictated a letter ostensibly to give advice on succession but would turn out to be his last will and testament. In it he warned against the split of the two most eminent leaders - Stalin and Trotsky - emphasizing that it still was a matter of personal antagonism. He then described Trotsky as the most able, but noted also that he was excessively self-confident and far too individualistic for an ideal Bolshevik leader, yet he added that the party should not hold Trotsky's pre-revolutionary disagreements with Bolshevism against him. As to Stalin he simply noted that he had as General Secretary concentrated immense power in his hands, power it was not clear he would know how to use with caution. A few days later (January 4, 1923) he added a significant Postscript in which he explicitly called for the removal of Stalin, lest the conflict with Trotsky would go out of hand and endanger the party. It stands to reason that with Stalin out of the way the succession of Trotsky would be a foregone conclusion. Strongly worded as the Postscript was it nevertheless did not fully express the fury against Stalin which he had become to feel in the week following upon his letter. Stalin had at the Congress during that time proclaimed the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics replacing the Federation of the same in the 1918 constitution. This might seem to be a formality

² Hobsbawm reports that the Communists did not think of the National Socialists as the main enemy but the Social Democrats, something that puzzled him arguing that a united front might have quelled the former.

but Lenin thought of it as the first step in doing away with the autonomy of the non-Russian republics and a throwback to the Russian total dominance of the Tsarist times. Things were clear, the power and the centralized organization, had become an object to pursue for its own sake, not as a temporary step to ensure survival. In particular with Stalin the party was about to abandon its idealism and become a power machine. This is of course what in retrospect would be seen as the big watershed and in the eyes of loyal Communists the excuse to separate Stalinism with all its excesses and atrocities from true genuine Communism, represented by Lenin and Trotsky. In Soviet history there was a late rejection of Stalinism but never of Leninism, but of course there probably was much more continuity from one to the other than is readily acknowledged by Communist apologists. Deutscher himself is a case of point underplaying the degree of pre-Stalin terrorism. True Lenin never enjoyed dictatorial power, and neither did Trotsky, although of course his power as the head of an army during the Civil War must have been considerable as is required by any successful military operations.

Trotsky's fall from power in the year 1924 was dramatic, and it started already the year before. It makes for a cautionary tale, and regardless of your political opinion of the man, it is a touching story in which he cannot fail to enlist the readers sympathies for the victims. It is a case of the game of power in any organization regardless of its nature and not specifically relevant to a Communist one, although certain features of the latter were bound to exacerbate it. The party itself had some sort of internal democracy in which decisions were made by vote never by the command of a leader, so even if Lenin was recognized as the moral leader he had no such formal executive powers. The ultimate power was given to the regular Congresses, which appointed a Central Committee which was responsible to the Congress but which met too infrequently to attend to the day-to-day affairs, and thus there was formed a Politbureau responsible to the Central Committee, which could be thought of as the collective executive office. Lenin did, as noted, not have a formally distinguished rôle in it but depended on his diplomatic skill and undisputed authority to form majorities for his initiatives. In Lenin's absence there were six people on it, of whom three made a kind of triumvirate consisting of Zinoviev, Kamenev and Stalin, apart from them there were Tomsy, Bukharin and Trotsky, who did not act a single body but voted independently. Thus Trotsky was quite isolated, whenever he was opposed to the triumvirate, all he could hope for was a draw, never a majority. Bukharin was friendly towards him, but no such ties existed with Tomsy, rather the opposite. Then there were auxiliary members such as Kalinin and Ryokov, where the former was well-disposed towards Trotsky. The there were two other members closely associated with the Politbureau although not members, namely the Pole Dzerzhinsky and Molotov, the former head of the precursor to KGB and whose rôle in the party was not political but had to do with security. Molotov, who in spite of his youth had risen high, were considered slow-witted and incapable of taking initiatives or having any ideas of his own, the very opposite of an intellectual although he came from an intellectual family. His speeches were dull but he had some virtues that stood him in good stead such as inexhaustible patience, imperturbable endurance, meekness towards his superiors, and of course a tireless mechanical industry that made up for his mediocrity and incompetence, at least in the eyes of his bosses. He was an aide to Stalin and must have been heartily despised by Trotsky who was quite isolated at the top when Lenin was

not at his side.

Lenin's skepticism of Stalin rapidly deepened through suspicion to fury and disgust and was soon determined to have the party expel him. As he had suffered another stroke he was unable to do so himself and entrusted Trotsky with the task, and admonished him to do it brutally and with no second thoughts. Trotsky had all the strong cards on his side and Stalin certainly trembled, but he managed to squander his opportunity. Maybe he thought it beneath his dignity to spar with Stalin, that inarticulate brute, being quite confident that he could handle him, and also counting on Lenin's recovery, which would resolve matters automatically. Thus instead of having Stalin ousted he turned conciliatory, but of course Stalin only took advantage of it, and secretly consolidated his power base further. Obviously Trotsky did not have the cunning when it came to sizing up people as Lenin had, to speak nothing about Stalin himself. It is an art to be able to distinguish among your enemies whom to destroy and whom could prove a potential ally in the future. To appreciate the ruthlessness in others you need to have some of it yourself. Trotsky for all his bravado and courage, probably was not as ruthless as Lenin and was reluctant to admit that an opponent could take advantage of a good turn. It is called naivety. Anyway Trotsky kept of course all his formal power that his high positions endowed him with, in fact he was once again asked to become a Vice Premier but he once again resisted, instead suggesting that he would be sent as an emissary to the German Communists and help them with an insurrection. The triumvirate rejected that suggestion, had he been successful his prestige would have risen further, and had he come to grief the Politbureau could be accused of having sent him to his death. Trotsky refused to oppose and was tricked into signing decisions that bound his hands. The opportunity he had had was slipping from him. Stalin and his cohorts was pushing for a monolith party with no internal dissension, while Trotsky still upheld the ideal of freedom and internal debate. He got support from 46 other high ranking members, but Stalin was able to contain them as well. The tension was taking its toll on Trotsky, who had fought bouts with Malaria which he had caught hunting ducks in the marshes outside Moscow, and then his health started to deteriorate to the extent that his doctors proscribed complete rest in a sunny resort, and Trotsky left the scene at a most dangerous time. Shortly thereafter in early January 1924 Stalin cabled him (in code) the news of Lenin's death. This was a very hard blow to him both personally and above all politically, having lost his most powerful ally. Stalin lied to him about the date of the funeral being planned for the next day making it thus seem impossible for him to arrive in time. In fact the funeral took place later but Trotsky misled by Stalin was not present, a fact which was noted.

When Trotsky returned after his temporary exile much had happened during his absence; nothing very visible, great things take place in the dark, yet crucial as to the power balance. The last will of Lenin was read out at the next Congress, in which he argued for the expulsion of Stalin, but now the position of the latter was strong enough that he could deflect it, as being of no import. Instead he and his cohorts started a campaign against Trotsky mostly base on outright lies and obfuscations of the record in addition to malicious spins on his past actions and malevolent whispering campaigns and innumerable innuendos. Furthermore his Menshevik past was turned against him, if once a Menshevik always one. The Third International consisting of all Communist parties not

only the Russian Bolsheviks if predominantly European were aghast at the attacks against him, he was in the wider world seen as a hero.

Then another blow dealt by Fate hit. The German Communists were about to do an insurrection in emulation of the Russian, and they invited Trotsky, but Stalin sent others. It all misfired. As Trotsky claimed later, the opportunity for a successful insurrection is a rare event, if it is not seized right away you might never get a second chance. The situation in Germany was stabilizing, they had managed to get control of the run-away inflation. Could it be that also the Russian Revolution was a fluke too? It was not predetermined, but maybe the conditions for an uprising were more favorable in Russia than in the West? Not more favorable for building socialism, due to its primitive economy, but for being overthrown.

The Third International was truly international and there was no intention of any one nation being dominant. After the German debacle the isolation of Russia was far more pronounced than earlier and the hopes, so fervently entertained by Trotsky of a world revolution were dashed. The consequences were that Russia became the dominant power in the Third International its Bolshevik party being the only successful one to which the others had to pay homage. Zinoviev, one of Stalin's underlings, headed it and he run it according to the directions of Stalin, and as a consequence the opposition towards Trotsky and so called Trotskyism became international as well. Further attacks and Trotsky was moved to write to his defense and wrote an introductory essay to his collected writings. In it he pointed out that the history of the Revolution split into three parts. One preliminary part up to 1917, then the revolution, and finally the post-revolutionary part. Just as an army is tested in battle, a revolutionary is tested during the revolution, what had happened before in the preliminary part is of no consequence. Both Zinoviev and Kamenev had been very cautious as to an insurrection and had their opinions prevailed there would have been no revolution at all. And so he went on explaining what had really happened and instructing what should happen. This was a revelation to many of the younger members whose memories were short. Of course this caused an uproar and a strong counteroffensive. The only way left to save the situation would have amounted to a military coup, which might or might not been effective, after all Trotsky was still Commissar of War and had support in the military. He decided not to test it, after all a success would have gone against the grain of what he had worked for all his adult life - a true proletarian revolution. He gave up and accepted his defeat. And the defeat was not only personal but a moral defeat of the whole movement of the Proletarian revolution. It was simply stolen by Stalin.

How could this happen? How could Trotsky fall so quickly out of favor, from being the true hero of the Revolution of to a petty-bourgeois Menshevik? The party was traditionally democratic, or exhibiting many democratic features, above all that of representative voting. The latter is what most people associate with democracy, but that is only one aspect, be it an important one, but far from sufficient. Democracy is not only a matter of free discussion and having conflicts resolved by a show of hands, it needs also various institutions which control it. In that respect the party was wanting, and the more superficial aspects of democracy, such as representation can so easily be subverted, as Stalin showed. As already Plato warned, elections can lead to tyranny, the dictatorship of the rubble. The campaign against Trotsky was based on lies and deception, rationality was demoted and any sense

of fair play. So even if you would detest the political views of Trotsky and his economic visions, you cannot only help to sympathize with him due to the unfairness of the treatment meted out to him, but also to feel indignation. There are meta values of democracy which are not open to debate, such as breaking the rules of logic. No such institutions were present in the Bolshevik party. The rubble took over, the majority of the party members were ignorant and stupid and easily swayed. By the death of Lenin there were no longer any moral compass, and Trotsky was incapable of replacing him, too much of a flamboyant figure, too much up in the clouds, too contemptuous of his fellow comrades, to really get to grips with mundane reality. The Revolution was a kind of fantasy come true, and in this element, he could function beautifully, but during more mundane circumstances he made too many blunders. Furthermore the very nature of abstract political thought mingled with a transcendental vision of a proletarian Savior is very millennial and fosters a religious attitude and encourages scholastic thinking at its worst. From now on dogmatic thinking and the concomitant emphasis on purity came to rule, if rule is the right word. Maybe what was ruling was pure power which needed some window dressing. Now the real question is would things have been much better with Trotsky rather than Stalin? Would he have brought about a more human communism or would it also had been a tyranny on its own, same but different. just with another version of dogma? After all the planned economy that Stalin implemented had already been proposed and pushed by Trotsky initially against the party but would the implementation by Trotsky been less brutal and realistic? This of course leads us to sterile counterfactual speculation. The only thing we can claim with any certainty is that Trotsky presents a much more congenial temperament to an intellectual than Stalin, far more imaginative and varied. The spectacle would have been a more entertaining one, but maybe as deadly. Good intentions are no guarantee against atrocity, in fact moral convictions may be essential for the committing of them. Thus one should be leery of romanticizing Trotsky. But one thing seems clear, he was after all in the Bolshevik party but not of it. In comparison his fellow comrades strike one as singularly dull and dumb, Molotov only being an extreme example. What future would he have had in a party in which he had no peers? Especially in a weakly democratic one, with no checks and balances and in which the personalities of the leader would have to carry such a burden.

As already repeatedly noted the personality of Trotsky was profoundly different from that of his fellow comrades, in particular when it came to the breadth and depth of his intellectual interests especially his non-political ones. While most of the Bolsheviks took a very dogmatic and rigidly literal view of Marxism and crudely applied it to all walks of life, Trotsky and to a lesser degree Lenin, held the view that science and art should be free of its direct influence. The idea of a Marxist science and Proletarian art was strongly rejected by them both and in the case of Trotsky passionately and particularly expressed. As to science regretted that scientists tended to become more and more specialized and urged scientists to also take a broader view and holding up Marxism as an inspirational example, not that of its tenets, which would of course have no relevance, but of the principles of holism and the awareness of the inter-relatedness of different disciplines it displayed. In many ways this was a case of kicking in open doors. Trotsky took Mendeleev as an example, a brilliant chemists, but politically very naive caught in a petty bourgeois conception of

society. He lauded his insight that chemistry can be reduced to physics, as being the lesson of the periodic system, and thus that chemistry can be reduced to the materialistic. He then envisioned a whole chain in which biology was applied chemistry, while physiology was applied biology and that psychology had a physiological basis. And at the same time each discipline had its own concepts and laws. This is of course far from original, in fact more or less the consensus in the scientific community where people privately may have religious views or at least believing in spiritual aspects of reality, but nevertheless agreeing that anything amenable to scientific analysis has to be materialistic. Now what is meant by materialistic? This would not be a question a regular Bolshevik would have found occasion to ponder, but Trotsky was as in so many other cases an exception. With the discovery of radioactivity many physicists started to talk about non-material causes, to which Trotsky took them to task, pointing out that Marx had a less literal interpretation of the material than was usually the case, even among physicists who along with the general public tended at the time to think of particles out of which materia was as small hard balls. Even the ancient Greeks to whom speculation on matter was first introduced had a more sophisticated view, let alone the case of modern quantum mechanics. In particular Trotsky had the temerity to support Freud arguing that his theories had as much a claim on a materialistic basis as Pavlov whose empiricism seemed to the regular Marxist as the epitome of materialistic science. Trotsky saw Pavlov's approach through conditioned reflexes as what we now refer to as a bottom-up approach while Freud as a top-down³. In Trotsky's view the reductionism to sexual instincts is as much of a materialistic approach as any, following the classical adage of science of explaining more complicated phenomena in terms of simpler⁴. Freudism was subsequently rejected by the Communist party. Deutscher makes a big case of the fact that Trotsky predicted the future tapping of nuclear energy but that is unwarranted. All we can deduce from his writings on science was that he was well-read and had the intelligence to understand and to digest what he read, but, as Deutscher admits, when it came to science he was but an amateur.

Different was the case of literature and literary criticism where his writings are on a professional level and still of great interest according to the author. Both Lenin and Trotsky rejected the notion of Proletarian art or more generally Proletarian culture so called Proletkult. Classical culture was rich and sophisticated having grown organically during the bourgeois era and there was as little reason to reject it as it would be to reject the economic advancement and capital accumulation of capitalism. The Russian proletariat was far too primitive to have developed a culture by its own, and the time allotted for it to do so would be far too short, as the so called dictatorship of the proletariat was just going to be a short interlude before the classless society would be in effect. Concerning the latter Trotsky entertained Utopian but not unprecedented visions of a society where

³ Those expressions probably was not known to Trotsky but in his elucidation of the difference between the two he employs the image of a deep well in which Pavlov dives to the bottom and explores it by swimming up to the surface, while Freud peers at it from above trying to discern its nature.

⁴ If carried to an extreme what does it mean? How far can you go in simplification, in classical Euclidean axiomatization you go down to the simplest axioms which are irreducible and cannot be deduced from simpler principles, then you have to resort to meta-logical principles such as intuition divine or not. In addition to this principle of analysis and subsequent synthesis could be added the change of viewpoint.

the average man was on the level of Aristotle and Goethe, and during which mankind would bring nature and society closer to each other, not by lowering society to the crude level of nature, but by lifting up nature to the exalted level of the future society; thoughts not that unusual as to the future benefits of science⁵. Visions apart, Trotsky's attitude towards literal Marxism and art is refreshing in view of modern nonsense about gender perspectives to be applied not only in art but also in science, showing the unparalleled resilience of simple stupidity.

The deposition of Trotsky from his Commissariat of War clearly signified his fall from the pinnacle of his formal power and from then on he became marginalized in the party, but it did not mean his expulsion although Zinoviev had urged this measure to be taken in combination of a public recant for further humiliation, and he still did keep important posts as Stalin insisted he should do. Additionally he kept his position in the Politbureau. Trotsky complied with the imposed strictures and kept a low profile in the interest of party discipline which he respected. It also gave him an excuse to stay aloof from inner party struggles, which he detested and devote himself to his true metier, that of an intellectual, in particularly an ideological such, some of the concerns we have already touched upon above. But he also wrote books and pamphlets especially on one the socialist movement in England and prophesied that the US would become the most powerful capitalistic country in the world taking over the rôle Britain had traditionally held. This was done in spite of health problems, involving a steady high fever which was not diagnosed⁶ and which the Soviet medical establishment was incapable of dealing with thus necessitating a trip abroad to Berlin, allowing him to regain personal ties with German communists, committed as he was to the international mission of socialism.

Meanwhile the party was splitting into factions. There had always been strong differences of opinion and concomitant factions, but as those differences of opinion had been tied to particular issues, the factions were not fixed by fluid and continually shifting, but now there was a more noted crystallization which had some rather startling consequences. Bukharin, who traditionally had been seen on the left was now identified with the right championing the peasantry and thus taking the view of the country as opposed to the city. Everyone had been aware from the start that the state of Russia was very primitive and thus not an especially promising choice for a socialist proletarian revolution; in particular its economy was very basic, namely to feed the nation. Without bread nothing else was possible. As we know the economy was mixed after the conclusion of the Civil War with a thriving private market section and a struggling socialist. The N.E.P. produced some very ideologically unpalatable effects, such as a wealthy section of so called NEP-men taking advantage of the situation. As the food shortage became pressing, as the rural section of society had no incentive to produce a surplus, and as to the poorer section of the peasants there was not even the capability had they so wished, very little went beyond self-sufficiency and hence was not even part of any semblance of an Economy. Bukharin's vision was that one should concentrate on having the peasantry slowly (realistically very slowly) build up the necessary capital for further economic development. This tied in with 19th century

⁵ That goes back at least to Francis Bacon and is an essential part in any vision of progress. Nowadays AI is expected to provide unimagined benefits, and regrettably even more.

⁶ one may speculate that it could have something to do with his bout with malaria, referred to above

ideas of Russian spirituality and the concept of Socialism in one country shorn of any internationalist ambitions, thus we are talking about the literal interpretation of National Socialism. In practical terms the hope was pinned on the richer peasants, who often employed poorer ones as traditional serfs, and who were referred to as 'kulaks'. However, there was no sharp division between rich peasants and poor ones but a continuum. As the N.E.P had worked so well (in fact keeping the head of post-revolutionary Russia above water) it would be logical to extend it to the agricultural segment of society, which in fact was the most important segment of Russian society, stop all requisitioning, which had started during the Civil War (and should be thought of nothing but time-honored war-plunder, one may remark), and instead give the kulaks every incentive to enrich themselves, hoping that this wealth would trickle down (in particular to the peasants enlarging the number of kulaks). This was of course anathema to traditional Bolshevism, one could point out that this economic strategy could as well have been implemented under Tsarism; and an opposing left was formed with Zinoviev and Kamenev at the head. Both of them tried to distance themselves from Stalin and this very critical issue gave them a base for doing so. Staling, predictably preferred to sit on the fence, occupying what may euphemistically speaking be thought of as the center. Stalin was more concerned with the machination of acquiring and maintaining power than with ideological issues, and as a consequence he was committed to the idea of Socialism in one country, dispensing with international adventures. Zinoviev and Kamenev were very much inter-nationalistically oriented and also committed to the dictatorship of the Proletariat. Zinoviev also has a strong power-base in Leningrad and Deutscher speculates that if Trotsky at this stage had decided to join forces with his former adversaries there would have been a formidable bloc against Stalin. But as always with the case of counterfactual speculations, having them fulfilled would bring no relief as history is written in real time and not by intelligent design of a powerful author who has the option of rewrites. Has Stalinism been nipped in its bud, there would not have been any Stalinism as we know it, and Stalin in retrospect would have been a minor figure, maybe even one who had by some more fanciful seen fit to have been a figure who could have prevented X-ism with its own brutality, whatever name could have been substituted for X. The reason that Trotsky did not step in availing himself of an ostensibly golden opportunity was that he found the recent developments in the party confusing. An obvious reason for dithering was that both Zinoviev and Kamenev had been bitter adversaries and attacked him with a rhetorical vehemence far outdoing that of Stalin himself who preferred to work behind the scenes. But, the author admonishes Trotsky, he could have been more observant and not so haughtily aloof, and thus been able to assess the situation more accurately. So during the fourteenth Congress everybody was looking for the reaction of Trotsky as if he, in spite of his demotion, carried a lot of moral authority, especially after the death of Lenin; an authority based not on his power, because he had not, unlike Stalin, systematically built a power base, but on his intellectual brilliance, which however resented nevertheless had to be grudgingly respected. But Trotsky refused to break his silence. Was he letting a golden opportunity to pass, either because of confusion in his own mind or pure exhaustion, mental and physical, the latter brought about by his poor health. Later on a reconciliation was brought about with his former enemies Zinoviev and Kamenev. It dawned upon them all that they now were in agreement voting on the same proposals, and

soon thereafter there came to a private meeting in which Zinoviev and Kamenev went head over heels in assuring Trotsky of their high regard for him, how they regretted their former attacks and pleaded with him to let bygones be bygones. Not only that they went out of their way to impress on Trotsky how much they despised Stalin, how abhorrent they were of his cruel ways and hunger for power, not being above of mimicking his mannerism and struggling command of the Russian language, much to the impatience of Trotsky. He was of course grateful for their change of heart, but obviously, in spite of his innocent naivety, no fool, keeping a skeptical attitude realizing that those have made a turnabout once are more than likely to do it again; and of course his assessment of them both was far from favorable thinking of them too fragile a frigate to rely on. If Trotsky was to save himself he would have to do it on his own. And of course the seemingly formidable support that Zinoviev had in Leningrad had started to crumble under Stalin's onslaught. Democracy is a fragile thing, especially its representative aspects, which can easily be perverted. Stalin may not have been very articulate and speaking Russian poorly with a heavy Georgian accent, but he understood what was important in a congregation of people, especially in a party, and had quietly taken control of the party machine seeing to it that underlings were appointed to key posts. Finally even if Trotsky could come to a working agreement with his former opponents on a personal level, this was not the case with their cadres who viewed each other suspiciously and not without hostility. Also Trotsky's supporters, the forty-six, had suffered through the last year of enforced inactivity and much of their erstwhile enthusiasm had worn thin.

Now they were ready for the great confrontation. What they needed was to engage the masses for their policies, all what the rulers with Stalin at the head had to do was to befuddle them which was far easier. In fact the masses, the proletariat whose dictatorship had ostensibly been established was like God absent when they were needed. The proletarian masses were in fact mute and indifferent, an inarticulate primitive mass of people. How could you ever think of them as a source of guidance to divine their will and draw on its wisdom, where they not just figments of the imagination, useful figments, inspirational even, but what kind of reality had they? Still Trotsky had based not only his philosophy and world view but his whole sense of mission on them, and now when he needed them the most, to support him, to listen to him, and most of all to be appealed to, they simply was not there. They were abstractions, and as such uplifting, but they did not allow too literal an interpretation. The fact was that the party, the most literal interpretation of the abstraction was actually isolated as it had been since the conclusion of the Civil War, the storm that was to rage only took place in a tea cup consisting of at most a few thousand somewhat active people and the general public could at most consist of readers of the *Pravda*.

For the opposition to work and confront it had to establish a platform behind which they could assemble and confront the ruling faction of Stalin and Bukharin. Now the Opposition was for all intents and purposes a faction, and any faction was a threat to the unity of the party and its authority, and this was a basic tenet that Trotsky and his comrades in arm were committed to and this would prove to tie their hands and allow Stalin the ultimate card, namely to appeal to this sacrosanct principle so firmly established by Lenin. What the opposition could do was to maintain the principle of free debate and

to convince the party elite that their stand was closer to the real party line and necessary to protect the Revolution.

So what was the stand of the opposition worked out between Trotsky and Zinoviev.

- 1) Lower taxes and higher wages for the poor
- 2) A more rapid industrialization and economic planning
- 3) Downplay the private sector, i.e. the private markets of the N.E.P.

4) Internationalism, never forgetting that the Revolution to succeed needed to be global. This was of utmost importance to Trotsky, in fact the ultimate source of his hopes. This implied the rejection of any kind of united front, the Communists around the world should not cooperate, let alone comply, with the reformists, as that would weaken the revolutionary resolve. One particularly example was the Anglo-Soviet Council involving in which British Communists cooperated with the Trade Unions, and much pushed by Stalin. Trotsky's internationalism was not just a romantic notion for him, but based on modern sophisticated economy of interdependence, involving division of labor and up-scaled production. In short he was an economic globalist, drawing on Marx who had claimed that socialism in a single country was an impossibility. One may in an ironic spirit point out the convergence with capitalistic globalization, now very much resented on the left.

As to the first Stalin argued that increased wages not related to increase productivity were counterproductive, which sounds as a sound economic principle, Trotsky argued that the poorer workers were underpaid not to say exploited and the increased wages would actually motivate them and stimulate the consumer economy, or at least words to that effect. Stalin was also very much for Socialism in one country having abandoned any international ambitions. In fact this was one point on which he was firm throughout, while on many other issues he was happy to adopt the policies of Trotsky because he had few if any original ideas himself, what he was interested in was power, and various political stands provided a palette out of which he could choose, their interest being primarily tactical not strategic or ideological. But as to socialism in one country it pertained to something basic, meaning his own personal power. Russia he could control, but hardly the whole world, after all he was for all his ruthlessness, or maybe because of his ruthlessness of a cautious nature⁷ not liable to do anything rash.

His first move was to expel Zinoviev from the Politbureau but not Trotsky knowing the prudence of proceeding piecemeal, to attack one step at the time. As to the attempts of the opposition to get in touch with the rank and file of the party, Stalin had seen to it that the party machine would foil any such attempts breaking up any meetings involving the Opposition who had to work clandestinely and hence off the public eye. To the party members Stalin stood for peace and stability notions only vaguely understood and hence so more effective. Trotsky was not to get any opportunities to rouse members by fire-laden speeches. And besides the theoretical concerns which Trotsky dealt with went over the heads of most people. One could say that Stalin was of the Slavophil persuasion seeing a special rôle for Russia and a consequent Russian chauvinism (although he was Georgian) while Trotsky was a Westerner in the classical 19th century division and was to be seen as an alien element and a Jew. One could summarize it as Stalin proposing Socialism in

⁷ Not to say physically cowardly, known for his fear of flying

Russia which would eventually help to make a Worldwide Socialism possible, but if so in the distant future; while to Trotsky, Socialism could not be possible in Russia unless it was worldwide for reasons already explained. However, Lenin clearly came down on the International side, and Stalin and Bukharin could hardly afford to be opposed to Lenin; thus there ensued a most contorted scholastic arguments from their side which could only bore the rank and file to tears losing all interest in the discussion and as a consequence depriving the opposition of an important audience.

As noted Trotsky and his allies were committed to the unity of the party, which as already noted, constricted their latitude of action, and were forced to make a temporary truce with Stalin which was almost indistinguishable from a surrender. Temporary because soon no trace remained of the truce. This roused Trotsky to fury and he accused Stalin of being the grave digger of the Revolution, which made the latter furious storming out. He later returned, calmed down but hardly in a conciliatory mood, and gave a long harsh speech lasting for hours. Kamenev countered it, but timidly, to be followed by Trotsky who gave a brilliant one, in fact according to Deutscher one of his best (of which there seems to have been many) to be followed by a pathetic one by Zinoviev, which was frequently interrupted, booed and finally he was expelled from his tribune. The mood of the Central Committee was unabashedly pro-Stalin, and many of his now fervent supporters would later succumb in purges. The vituperation was very bitter and it all gives a sad illustration of what a group of humans are capable of when succumbing to the momentum of mounting social indignation. In particular one wonders how such a mild-mannered 'professor' as Bukharin, who always had entertained friendly feelings towards Trotsky, could have turned into such a hooligan. And Trotsky could but regret the passivity of the masses on whose enthusiastic attention he always could count on during the days of the Revolution.

As to the party members at large what would they make of it all? They experienced total confusion and had no idea where to turn. It was hard to withstand the surging wave of hostility towards the former hero, yet they had a hard time fully understanding on what it was built. As must have been very clear to Trotsky, Stalin had no program on his own, thus he was a centrist by default, his power relying solely on having control over the party machine. In view of the former friendly relations with Bukharin would it not be advisable to ally himself with him and oust Stalin? But Trotsky decided against it, never left and right against the center, as admonished by Marx. Maybe an alliance with Stalin against Bukharin? Trotsky's main concern at the time was to prevent a restoration, more or less corresponding to the Thermidor during the French Revolution the latter being very much on the minds of the revolutionaries and a rich font for historical analogues mostly going over the heads of the rank and file. But if there was a danger of a Thermidor that would be the cause of Bukharism. As Deutscher points out, Trotsky tried to proceed logically, but the unfolding of future events would transcend his logic and turn it into the self-effacement of the Opposition and the tragedy of Trotsky's political suicide.

At about this time there were some very interesting developments in China which would have a direct influence on internal party strifes. Sun Yat-sen the leader of Kuomintang was at the head of the 1911 Revolution that overthrew the Qing dynasty. They formed an uneasy alliance with Communists which was very much a junior partner. This was very much encouraged by Stalin as part of the policy of the United Front in which

oversee Communist parties should keep a low profile and comply its policies to more senior parties. This was of course anathema to Trotsky's outlook but he had not concerned himself very much with Chinese communists, after all China was even more primitive than Russia and thus not a very fruitful venue. Then the new leader of Kuomintang - Chiang Kai-Shek - invaded Shanghai during the Civil War which followed upon the Revolution and instigated a massacre on Communists, although at an International Communist meeting he had been appointed an honorary member of the party. The Communists then fell back to an alliance with the left wing of the Kuomintang, but even those turned against the party. Trotsky was proposing to the Executive Committee a different China policy, and the recent debacles put Stalin and Bukharin in a very difficult position, which they were able, at least temporarily to ride out. The problem for Stalin was that if Trotsky brought the matter to the upcoming 15th Congress in the fall for an open discussion, his position might be fatally weakened thus it was imperative for him to expel Trotsky and his allies before that. In fact Trotsky had already had some success at a public meeting at the Yaroslavl station, even if he had spoken with considerable restraint. In the absence of a democratic structure in the party, the only way he and his allies could seize power was through an internal coup. Stalin brought Trotsky to a tribunal to have him expelled, but the judges, even if beholden to Stalin they dragged their feet in doing his bidding, after all to them Trotsky and his allies were old comrades. There was some hope that they might bring their case to the Congress after all. They prepared a *Platform* and proceeded to have it clandestinely printed, which would be the cause of farcical episode. The printing shop was broken up and it turned out that a Wrangel, a former White guard, had been involved. This was of course very embarrassing to the Opposition, but then it turned out that the Wrangel character had been a provocateur employed by Stalin, and the reason that the printing press had been discovered. But to use a White guard as a provocateur was, according to Stalin, fully legitimate, when it comes to clamping down on counter-revolutionary activities any means fair or foul are appropriate. Furthermore Stalin stole much of Trotsky's fire by promising a seven hour day and a five day week with the wages kept. Trotsky was trapped, he could not go against it, lest Stalin would claim that Trotsky was against bettering the lot of the workers. Once again Trotsky came against the naivety, stupidity and ignorance of the workers, bound to lose their sympathies.

Stalin reiterated his demand for the expulsion of Trotsky, and now the general mood was even more hostile, while Trotsky spoke making a last stand, warning against further purgers, which would now hit Stalinists and Bukharists, and that Stalin would meet with a violent end, ink-pots and other handy objects were thrown at him. He concluded with the prophecy 'Expel us - you will not prevent our victory'.

Zinoviev and Kamenev broke under pressure and surrendered themselves to Stalin, while Trotsky refused to. The decision turned out to be wise. His two former allies would find out that their surrender was just the first step towards a seemingly unending sequence of humiliations. Their submissive silence was not enough, a recant would also turn out to be necessary.

So finally Trotsky would be deported. Following him in his exile would be his wife and one son, while the other preferred to stay behind in Moscow and pursue his stories. The deportation was postponed for two hours due to demonstrations aimed at stopping the

departing train, but they were taken already the next day to an obscure station outside Moscow. It all reminded him of his exile in Tsarist times, and he was reminded of his first arrival in Moscow, now he saw it for the last time in his life. The destination would be Alma Ata the latter capital of Kazakhstan and it would take them seven days to get there, the final leg on sledge through a snow storm. His guards were very respectful to him, he still having a lot of prestige, and helped him within their capacities.

Alma Ata turned out to be a godforsaken dump and the lodgings very poor. He asked for concessions and many of them were actually granted. In spite of the harshness, he found the stay almost idyllic, the city situated very scenically among high mountains, which would provide him with many opportunities to go hunting (initially his radius of action as severely restricted, but he appealed to a larger one claiming his desire to hunt larger games). But all was far from well, the malaria he had caught years before had not left him. He was active carrying on an extensive correspondence with supporters spread all over Asiatic Russia, the Opposition was kept alive, also in exile. The benign conditions brought back pre-revolutionary times, this would all change in the 30's. Then something unexpected happened, Stalin suddenly took a left turn and started to pursue policies Trotsky had proposed, such as rapid industrialization, turning against the Kulaks and dismantling the N.E.P. Trotsky could but concur and approve. The Opposition split into those who wanted a reconciliation with Stalin, after all they were now on the same side, and those who had no truck with such surrenders. Trotsky was caught in the middle trying to reconcile the two wings. He was still rather skeptical, how sincere was Stalin, would be likely to revert back to the right? Stalin had no expertise at his hands, his followers were party men part of the party machinery, good for consolidation of power but not for technical, ideological and economical advice. Those were to be found by the followers of Zinoviev and Trotsky, and Stalin made overtures to Zinoviev and Kamenev in order not to have recourse to Trotsky, although he kept that door open as well. Meanwhile Bukharin made some overtures to Kamenev. Obviously he was in terror of Stalin, whom he finally had understood was the despot he deep down was. He literally feared for his life and pleaded with Kamenev to make common cause against Stalin. Now Trotsky was caught in a trap, whatever course he took it was sure to be the wrong one. He had earlier toyed with the idea of making common cause with Bukharin against Stalin but strongly rejected it on theoretical and Marxist ground and by historical analogy. A coalition between the right and the left against the center had occurred in the French Revolution, the center having been occupied by Robespierre. His death had paved the way for Thermidor ending up with the death of the Revolution and the rise of Bonaparte. Something similar could happen with the Russian Revolution. Nevertheless he was now starting to reconsider and finding some common ground with Bukharin, namely the restoration of democracy within the party. He received a lot of criticism for this from the left wing of the opposition the members of which were scandalized by this *volte en face* but Trotsky defended himself by claiming that it was not to be seen as a political alliance, but more like two parties negotiating about the rules to be held at a duel. Anyway there were also hopes among the members of the opposition that Stalin would mend his ways, see who his real partners were, and call them back from exile urging Trotsky to offer his services. Trotsky held back though, if there would be a reconciliation with Stalin it would be on his own terms, Stalin

would have to take the first step and send for a train.

Stalin had pursued Trotsky's policies with an unprecedented brutality involving not only planning and a rapid industrialization but also a violent attack not only on the kulaks but on the entire peasant class forcing them into collectivization. The consequences were short of catastrophic, shortage of bread and widespread starvation threatening the cities. The situation for Stalin was dire, but he reckoned that time was on his side, having been able to sow widespread dissension among his adversaries reducing the Opposition to impotency.

One may argue that just like the French Commune achieved a victory in spite of its defeat by making a restoration of the monarchy impossible in France, Trotsky too could be claimed as a winner, even if he had lost his personal power, after all his policies had won the day, even if implemented by somebody else. Now it is a common view among Communists that Stalin was an aberration of the Bolshevik party, had Lenin lived longer and had Trotsky been left in charge instead of Stalin, the history of the Soviet Union would have been very different and far more humane. But can we be sure? After all the policies for which Stalin became notorious were those of Trotsky. Would not Trotsky have been just as much of a dictator as Stalin, had he not also shown ruthlessness in the Civil War and had advocated forced industrial labor during its aftermath? Deutscher wisely refuses to engage in counterfactual speculations, history as it actually played out is complicated enough to disentangle. The obvious idea being though that Trotsky was a much more humane being than Stalin far more open to debate and more committed to democracy, whatever that means. Surely he would have shown far more finesse and diplomatic tact than Stalin would have been capable of in implementing the policies, and also due to his superior intelligence, after all he was an intellectual and as such far more liable than Stalin to be identified by readers (such as of this biography). The basic premise seems to be that the authoritarian and later dictatorial rule by Stalin was alien to the very tenor of the Bolshevik party, and that thus indeed Stalin was a deplorable aberration. But there is a big difference sitting by a desk or arguing with comrades at a coffeehouse, and actually being in charge of running a country. There is a gulf between thought and action, although the former is of course a prerequisite for the latter. The old guard of Revolutionary veterans may have been very democratic in principle, but the making the Bolshevik party not only the dominant party but the only party was a crucial undemocratic step which eventually would trump the democratic impulses and instincts of its members, As Deutscher points out the status of the Bolshevik party as the single party of a one-party state, did not only blur the distinction between party and state, but also forced the party itself to be monolithic turning against factions and stifling inner-party dissent. If Trotsky had entered a new kind of Civil War, now with the enemies being a recalcitrant peasant class, and dead-set to bring about a rapid if primitive accumulation of capital to jump start a necessary industrialization, would he have dallied with opposition against doing the right thing? Two circumstances which might have tempered him were absent. The first being the failure of a world-wide revolution, which would have relieved Russia from its almost claustrophobic isolation, the second being the passivity of the masses, which Lenin had warned him about, but which he had underrated. After all the goal was the dictatorship of a certain social class - the Proletariat - and this was also the entire rationale of the Revolution, and it

served as an empirical basis for thought and action and thus a necessary corrective, as in scientific pursuit, through divining the will of the class and interpret it accurately. But if this class was passive and mute in what way could it correct and provide guidance? The fact that this class was also a minority, did not make things better, logically it needed to be expanded to include the peasantry if one should have any ambitions to speak for the whole population, which was the rationale behind Bukharin's position (which seems very logical). It was the passivity of the working mass which turned out to be Trotsky's undoing, he found himself in a vacuum with no transcendental body to appeal to. The class whose interests he had devoted his life to serve could not care less. Stalin had no need of it, he had no ideology to be supported the machinations of power was a game enough to satisfy him.

The romantic exile in Alma Ata would come to an end in about a year, in the winter of early 1928 he was to leave his exile for a new one, the destination as before being initially kept a secret. However, he was granted the privilege to briefly meet with his other family, his daughter Nina having succumbed to tuberculosis and his other daughter Zinaida sick. This was the last he would see of them. His train took him down to Odessa from where he embarked on the ship Ilych which trailing behind an ice-breaker took him to Constantinople despite his fervent protests. This was a city to which the White guards of Wrangel had sought sanctuary after the Civil War and he feared for being the victim of their revenge.

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