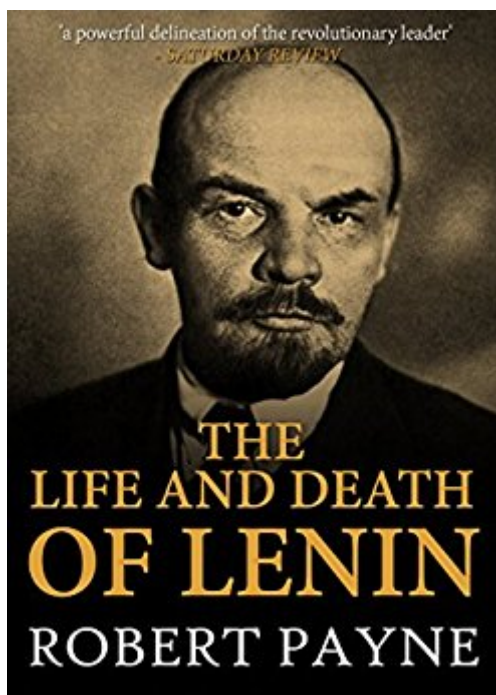


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The Life And Death Of Lenin



Synopsis

Who was Vladimir Ilyich Lenin? He was a man with vast potential for good and evil. He was one of the twentieth century's political geniuses. He was the revolutionary leader who envisioned backward, feudal Russia as the world's first socialist country. He bent Karl Marx's theories into a weapon for conquering state power, and built the Bolshevik Party into an efficient political machine capable of leading the workers and seizing power. He held the Russian Revolution together through a bloody civil war, and yet he lived to see the betrayal of his ideals by the rise of Stalin. As much as any leader, his ideas and personality shaped the 20th century.

Mr. Payne's book on Lenin is an impressive work and as interesting as it is impressive - Bertrand Russell
Splendid character study of a human dynamo - The Scotsman
A powerful delineation of the man and revolutionary leader - Mr. Payne highlights with a sure touch the main line of Lenin's drive to power, selecting the significant details of speech, gesture and daily life that bring the man and his intimates to life. The Life and Death of Lenin will clarify both the political and human realities of the Soviet revolution and of communism - Philip E. Mosely, Saturday Review
To this large-scale study [Mr. Payne] has given his full measure of devotion - [with his] ability to pace a vast, detailed narrative; political sense; an unforced feeling for drama; a firm conception of the central character; and control over an English style that always both fluent and sharply edged - Not only do we watch the unlocking of the vaults of [Lenin's] character, but we are also enabled to follow the development of the single revolutionary idea that dominated him.
- Clifton Fadiman, Book-of-the-Month-Club News
All the talents of Edgar Allan Poe, Alfred Hitchcock and Charles Addams couldn't produce a more chilling tale - Associated Press
Robert Payne (1911-1983) had over a hundred books published on a wide range of subjects during his lifetime. Critics raved about his vast erudition, his magic power over words, and that rare ability to capture the spiritual essence of his subject. The Russian series, in particular The Life and Death of Lenin and The Rise and Fall of Stalin, raised his reputation as biographer to enormous stature. Endeavour Press is the UK's leading independent publisher of digital books.

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Customer Reviews

I have read a few other bios about Lenin. This one is superior to many others such as the one written by Robert Service. This biography is very well written and describes in detail many things about Lenin on a personal level. Service's bio is mostly facts presented chronologically in a very bland way, but this work by Payne brings Lenin's life alive again in the page. You get a true sense in the writing of Lenin's quest to bring a socialist utopia to Russia and then ultimately to the world. Sadly, I think that this Lenin bio by Robert Payne is out of print. Find a copy!

Great book - quite detailed and very informative. I also purchased and read Robert Payne's bios of Trotsky and Stalin. There's a certain amount of redundancy if you read all 3, but that is to be expected.

The author argues that Lenin turned from a precocious young man into a domineering tyrant because all his life he never encountered anyone who was his intellectual equal. He was definitely a true believer, but he obviously cared as much about personally leading the revolution as promoting it. This is an excellent portrait of a man known to us through history but very little understood by

anyone.

This book is a very comprehensive biography of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. The author does an excellent job of presenting this complex man and all his facets; his vast potential for good and evil, his political genius, his vision of Russia as the world's first socialist country and sparkplug of world revolution. The author also explains how Lenin altered Karl Marx's theories to serve his own purposes, how he created the Bolshevik Party, and how his political philosophy was much closer to traditional Russian revolutionaries than orthodox Communist theory. The author also presents a man who had a single minded, ultra dedicated, domineering in his approach to politics and, above all, his unquenchable thirst for naked power. He accepted no other views and smashed all opposition. However, understand that this is a very detailed character study.

Accordingly, there is much that is glossed over and some key events are briefly introduced. It's very helpful if the reader has at least a basic understanding of the history of the times. The book has a laser beam focus on Lenin's life, his political philosophy, his unaltered drive to power, his speeches, his personality, and daily life. There are also significant parts of the narrative devoted to Lenin's romances and love affairs! As a result, I learned a lot. The author's direct prose allows the reader to unravel and understand what normally would be dense and turgid political theory. However, because of the extensive details regarding Lenin's life, philosophy and character, there is a lack of background, perspective and context that would greatly assist the reader in getting a full picture of events and times.

It was with great interest that I read this book since I was not totally aware of what happened in the life of Lenin before he came into power. What struck me was the marginal life that he led before the Revolution with only dozens of faithful followers and so many revolutionary intrigues. His life could easily have ended without any significance in history. A typical story of being at the right place at the right moment. I have also some criticism to the book and that is mainly focused on the last part of the biography. The author tries to get under the skin of Lenin and tells the reader what he must have been thinking. This is highly speculative! Also the theory that the death of Lenin is caused by poison following orders of Stalin is a weak part in the book. If you look at the frailty of Lenin a natural death would be more than reasonable and if murdered there could have been many suspects. Finally I criticize that Lenin is put down as a genius whilst the book confirms that he easily could accept two contradictory convictions. What is so genial about that? Finally it seems that Lenin at the time of his death is hugely popular where at that stage in the book you would not expect that

(only having finalized the Civil War two years before). Can someone explain his popularity.

Robert Payne achieved remarkable research concerning the life of Lenin. One would think a man who had "set the world on fire" who contributed to the ills and misery of mankind, not to mention the evil assassinations and enslavement of his people including those who had supported him and helped him gain power, would have been reared by parents who fostered revolution and rebellion. Not so, Lenin (not his given birth name) parents were educated, community/educational contributors. And were members of the Christian faith. Yet, all their children became revolutionists. The eldest, a university student, was tried and hung for making a bomb intended to assassinate the Tsar. Perhaps most telling about Lenin was his violent hatred of Jesus Christ and christian beliefs and values. His driving ambition was for power and control and the violent overthrow of Tsar rule of Russia. His was the order for the brutal killing of the Tsar and his family. Lenin was a law in to himself - anything or anyone who stood in his way was systematically purged - a legacy he bequeathed to Stalin and to the Communist way of governing. A persons 'free agency' and 'rights' was supplanted by rigid control of the creature. His so called 'reforms' for the Russian people resulted in poverty, loss of property. and eventually enslavement. It is not an easy read - Robert Payne did not intend it to be. Reading the painstaking historical research and details that Robert Payne has compiled, the reader comes fully to realize the evil of Lenin's life and the evil he unleashed on his own people - and the world. Recommended one to obtain a first edition of Robert Payne's 'Lenin.'

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