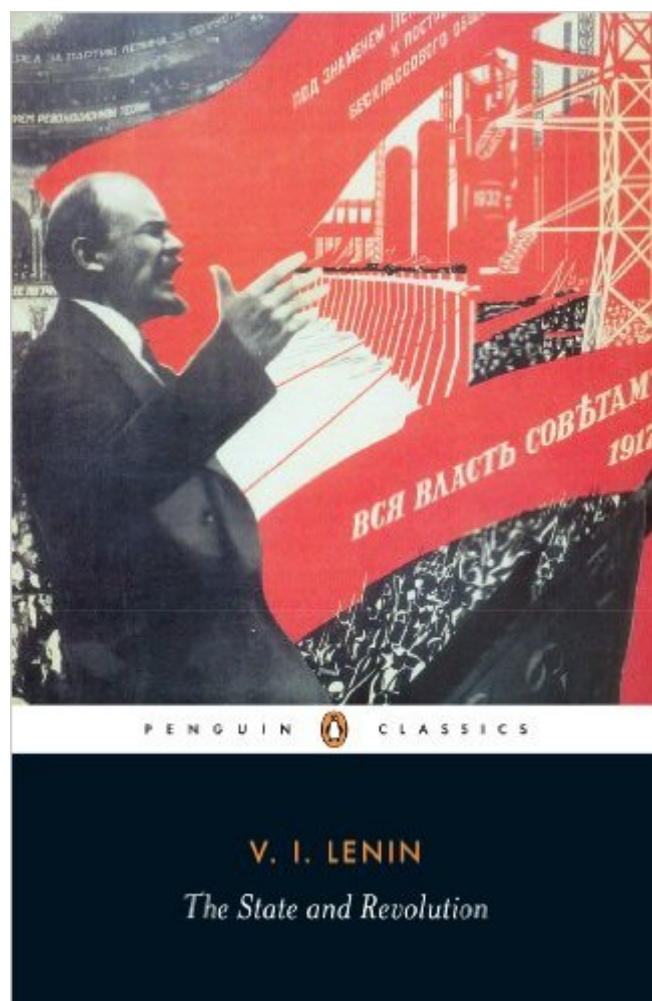


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The State And Revolution (Classic, 20th-Century, Penguin)



Synopsis

In July 1917, when the Provisional Government issued a warrant for his arrest, Lenin fled from Petrograd; later that year, the October Revolution swept him to supreme power. In the short intervening period he spent in Finland, he wrote his impassioned, never-completed masterwork *The State and Revolution*. This powerfully argued book offers both the rationale for the new regime and a wealth of insights into Leninist politics. It was here that Lenin justified his personal interpretation of Marxism, savaged his opponents and set out his trenchant views on class conflict, the lessons of earlier revolutions, the dismantling of the bourgeois state and the replacement of capitalism by the dictatorship of the proletariat. As both historical document and political statement, its importance can hardly be exaggerated. For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

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Customer Reviews

V. I. Lenin wrote this book in 1917, while he was hiding from the Russian government. Lenin pointed

out that "The question of the relation of the state to the social revolution, and of the social revolution to the state, like the question of revolution generally, was given very little attention by the leading theoreticians and publicists of the Second International (1889-1914)". He wanted to correct that oversight, and that is probably the main reason why he wrote this book. "The State and revolution" is a very short book, well structured and not difficult to read at all. Initially this pamphlet was going to have seven chapters, but Lenin didn't conclude the seventh, due to the outbreak of the Russian revolution. In the postscript to the first edition he explains that, saying that due to the reasons already explained the conclusion of the seventh chapters would have to be put off for quite a long time, but that all the same "It is more pleasant and useful to go through the 'experience of revolution' than to write about it". The main idea in "The State and revolution" is that the State is a product of the irreconcilability of class antagonisms, and an instrument for the exploitation of the oppressed class (a "special coercive force" that rules through violence). The State of the bourgeoisie will disappear, but only through a revolution that will take the people to the dictatorship of the proletariat. The proletariat (the working class) will become then the ruling class, "capable of crushing the inevitable and desperate resistance of the bourgeoisie, and of organizing all the working and exploited people for the new economic system.

I believe this is the best, concise revolutionary analysis of the role of the State ever written. I find it very annoying that here in the US, while many students may cursorily read the Communist Manifesto in school, I have never once met ANYONE in my life who has read the basic works of Lenin except for avowed Marxists (and only a minority of these)....and being a Communist myself, I have asked several students, and often looked through university bookstores to see if any poli-sci or history professors would break the "no Lenin allowed" rule. Consequently, there are many people on the "left" who pretend to understand Marx and/or Marxism, but still make the exact same errors to which Lenin here responded over 80 years ago. For example, someone just this week argued to me that Lenin was "not a real Marxist" (!!!) because he "introduced" the notion of "dictatorship of the proletariat", which was "alien" to Marx (hint: read Chapter 4 of Marx's Critique of the Gotha Programme for just one of many passages which prove this notion totally false). State and Revolution gives many more examples of extensive quotes from Marx & Engels. One of the greatest merits of S&R is that it restores the revolutionary essence to Marx, which was obscured and watered-down by the Social Democrat reformists of the 2nd International led by Karl Kautsky. Incidentally, the concept of the "dictatorship of the proletariat" has been much distorted by capitalist demagogues and anti-communist "leftists" into something completely alien to its original meaning.

To all "Left academics" and others, don't assume (or pretend) you know anything about Marx or Lenin if you've never read them...

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