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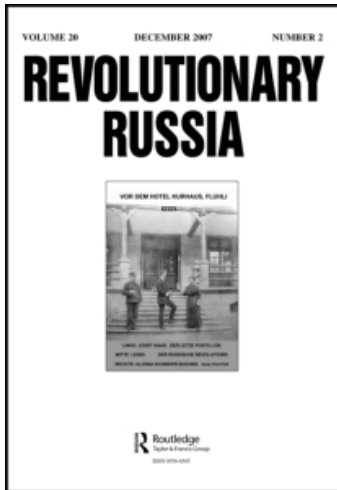
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Erik van Ree

LENIN'S CONCEPTION OF SOCIALISM IN ONE COUNTRY, 1915–17

This article discusses Lenin's conception of 'socialism in one country' during the years 1915 to 1917, in the context of the militarisation of his strategic thinking. Contrary to the standard view, Lenin was not merely referring to socialist revolution in one country, but also to the possibility of constructing a socialist economy in a single country; and, in this regard, it can be said that during the 1920s Stalin interpreted Lenin's views more correctly than did Trotsky. In Lenin's conception, the construction of a socialist economy would allow an isolated revolutionary state successfully to wage revolutionary war against imperialism. Lenin had confidence in the success of a Bolshevik takeover in Russia, not only because he expected the German workers to follow the Russian example but also because an isolated, revolutionary Russia with a Soviet-controlled economy would be the superior military power.

This article proposes a new interpretation of the conclusions Lenin drew in the key Bolshevik publication *Sotsial-Demokrat* in August 1915, concerning the possibility of the victory of socialism in one, single country.¹ Most likely, Lenin wrote the article in the Swiss village of Sörenberg, 80 kilometres from Bern. From September 1914 to February 1916 he lived in Bern, which he found a dull town, but he and his wife Nadezhda Krupskaja could not afford the more expensive Zürich. On the positive side, Bern had good libraries. Also, Grigorii Zinov'ev, Lenin's closest comrade apart from his wife (and, perhaps, Inessa Armand), lived nearby. Lenin regularly communicated through the mail with Bolshevik and other Russian revolutionary exile groups in Switzerland, as well as in other European countries and, as far as possible, with comrades in Russia. In late May or early June Krupskaja's health problems made the couple decide temporarily to move to Sörenberg in the mountains. There, Lenin mostly did his writing sitting under a large tree in the garden of Hotel Mariental. In the autumn the couple moved back to Bern, where Lenin earned some money with his lectures. In February 1916 they moved to Spiegelgasse, 14 in Zürich, with even better libraries than were available in Bern. They stayed in Zürich until their return to Petrograd in April 1917.²

Historians have been quick to charge that Stalin later misinterpreted Lenin's August 1915 article to legitimise his own project of 'socialism in one country' in the 1920s. First, it is said, Lenin would not have been referring to backward Russia as the arena of socialist revolution but to capitalistically developed states. Second, even though he accepted the likelihood of socialist *revolution* in a single country, Lenin supposedly never intended to suggest that a socialist *society* could be constructed in a single country. One of the first to have formulated this classical interpretation was Robert Daniels.³

Lev Trotsky pioneered the interpretation according to which Lenin was only referring to the establishment of a 'proletarian dictatorship' in a single country.⁴ The view that Lenin could not have been referring to the construction of a socialist economy or society in one country, but only to revolution and the establishment of workers' power, can be found, in various forms, in the works of many distinguished scholars.⁵ The problem with this is that Lenin, in the clearest of terms, referred in his article to the organisation of 'socialist production' in a single country – a point oddly ignored in the scholarly literature.⁶

The August 1915 article has always represented a hard nut to crack for historians. They have had to make sense of the odd fact that during 1915–16 Lenin repeatedly mentioned the possibility of socialism in one country, whilst at the same time insisting that no country could ever find a revolutionary exit from capitalism on its own. In the present article it will be argued that there was no real incoherence here and that Lenin's belief in the possibility of socialism in one country was genuine as well as compatible with the internationalist, world-revolutionary perspective. The textual evidence on which this hypothetical reconstruction of Lenin's thinking is made is not abundant, but the reconstruction is convincing in light of the known facts.

Lenin's pronouncements must be seen in the context of the social-democratic strategy of world revolution. Marx and Engels were never so naive as to believe in a literally simultaneous international revolution, but they clearly did expect it to be near-simultaneous, with one revolution quickly triggering others in a chain reaction, to be accompanied by wars between revolutionary and counter-revolutionary states. They attributed the interconnectedness of revolutions to the fact that the capitalist countries of Europe were subject to a process of equalisation of developmental levels and had become ever more interdependent due to economic globalisation.⁷ Hal Draper has dubbed the Marx–Engels scenario, '*contagious revolution*'.⁸ Massimo Salvadori points out that Karl Kautsky, the main representative of 'orthodox Marxism' after Engels's death in 1895, likewise imagined the European revolution in terms of the 'hypothesis of revolutionary chain reactions'.⁹

The model of the chain reaction coloured the way Russian social-democrats imagined their own revolution and its place in the larger European revolutionary process. During the 1870s Marx and Engels concluded that a Russian democratic revolution might help trigger a proletarian revolution in the West, which might again allow revolutionary Russia an accelerated development towards socialism.¹⁰ Kautsky too adopted this viewpoint.¹¹ Under the impression of the 1905 Revolution, the Menshevik conference in Geneva in April–May of that year, as well as the Bolshevik Third Party Congress held in London, adopted resolutions confirming this variety of the international chain reaction as a possible scenario.¹²

In August 1915 Lenin took an unexpected turn, when he suggested that a socialist revolution in one country need not necessarily immediately trigger others. However, the Bolshevik leader never saw himself as taking a distance from the world revolution. In the present article I will present the following interpretation of his revolutionary strategy. With the outbreak of the Great War, Lenin focused his energies on opposing the majority social-democrats' defencism. However, he realised that socialists could not unconditionally reject war. He even came to attribute decisive significance to revolutionary war, a new departure in the Marxist strategy, though not without precedent in

Marx and Engels's writings. According to Lenin, the socialist revolution might initially remain confined to one country; that country would then have to wage war against the remaining capitalist world.

To this Lenin added the daring thought that, for the isolated revolutionary state, it would be feasible to organise a socialist economy within its own borders. This was far from an academic matter. At the time Lenin's thoughts were focused on war and revolution, not on the question of the construction of a socialist economy – either in one or in any other number of countries. However, it was precisely that focus on war which made the notion of socialism in one country seem interesting and urgent to him; for there would be no more effective way to increase the military viability of the revolutionary state than to introduce the superior socialist economic principle. Socialism in one country was the single most important propellant of the revolutionary war.

Lenin did not break with the orthodox conception of the world revolution in terms of a chain reaction and a contagious process. Rather, revolutionary war would serve to reignite the faltering world-revolutionary chain reaction. Also, Lenin did not envision the possibility of long-term peaceful coexistence between the single socialist state and the capitalist world. Revolutionary war was bound to end either in victory and the triumphant expansion of socialism to other countries, or in defeat and the destruction of the socialist state. Either way, socialism in one country would come to a speedy end. It could never be more than a short-term option.

Socialism in one country

The Russian social-democrats agreed that without the assistance of the victorious proletariat in the West, there could be no socialism in Russia. The lone exception here was Trotsky, but even he assumed that if revolution in the West failed to materialise, Russian socialism would collapse.¹³ However, the ideologues of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (RSDLP) showed remarkably little interest in the question of socialism in one country outside the context of their own backward country: that is, in the question of whether isolated socialist construction would be possible in any country at all, for example in developed Germany or Britain.¹⁴

The only reference that I found was in Aleksandr Bogdanov's science-fiction novel *Red Star* (1908). The left-wing Bolshevik Bogdanov has the Martian Sterni mention the uneven character of the struggle for socialism on earth, which he expected would result in the creation of socialist islands surrounded by a hostile capitalist sea.¹⁵ I found no references in Lenin's pre-First World War works to the question.¹⁶ Prior to the war even Trotsky showed only a very sporadic interest in the problem of socialism in one country outside the Russian context. In a little noted passage in *Results and Prospects* (1906) he made the following observation:

The development of the social division of labour, on the one hand, and machine production on the other, has led to the position that nowadays the only co-operative body which could utilize the advantages of collective production on a wide scale is the State. More than that, *socialist production, for both economic and political reasons, could not be confined within the restricting limits of individual states.*¹⁷

With the modern economy outgrowing the framework of the nation-state, a socialist economy could not be constructed in any single country – by implication, not even in a capitalistically developed one.¹⁸ But Trotsky never elaborated on this matter before the start of the war.

Upon the outbreak of war, debates among Russian social-democrats were naturally focused on which attitude to take towards the war, but as a long-term perspective the question of world revolution remained decisive. Overall, among the party left wing, Bolshevik and Menshevik, the war, which in a gruesome way brought Europe together from East to West, caused the revolution to be imagined in even more pronouncedly internationalist ways than before. Indignation regarding the ‘social-patriots’ further undermined nationally confined scenarios of revolution. Many party ideologues dreamed of a single, concerted action by the European proletariat resulting in the immediate abolishment of state borders. Underlying this image was the hypothesis that the ‘productive forces’ developed to a point where nation-states became obsolete. Among those most forcefully advocating radical internationalism were the left-wing Bolsheviks Nikolai Bukharin and Georgii Piatakov. In his seminal work *Imperialism and the World Economy*, written for the most part in 1915, Bukharin projected a ‘slogan of the destruction of the state borders, and of the combination of the nations into one socialist community’. He saw the imperialist economy as an integrated global whole that was subject to a process of ‘economic levelling’. In a paradox, imperialist states were also forming themselves into closed national units engaged in competition and war, but socialism would be heir to the first tendency.¹⁹ During 1915 the left-wing Bolsheviks produced various documents in which they proposed a socialist United States of Europe as the goal of the proletarian struggle.²⁰ Meanwhile, in his 1914 *The War and the International* (originally written in German), Trotsky likewise argued that the productive forces had outgrown the national state, and that the world economy had become a single, interdependent whole. Defence of the fatherland had become pointless for the proletariat, and Trotsky set his hopes on the creation of a ‘much more powerful and robust fatherland – the republican United States of Europe’.²¹

After the outbreak of the war Menshevik émigré leaders too became fascinated by ultra-internationalist scenarios. In his 1915 *The Crisis and the Tasks of the International Social-Democracy*, Pavel Aksel'rod argued that the development of the productive forces made the nation-state obsolete and that, ‘The blasting of the state frameworks in several capitalistically highly developed countries’ was a necessary condition for the communist revolution.²² In his ‘War and the Russian Proletariat’, published early in 1915, Iulii Martov argued that the Russian proletarian movement could not be ‘locked up in national frameworks’. Any Russian revolution that failed to trigger revolution in the West would be suppressed by the tsar, he wrote. Martov furthermore concluded from this that the scenario of revolutionary war by Russia against the capitalist states was ‘extremely unlikely’, and he rejected ‘naive illusions of revolutionary romanticism, parodying 1793’.²³

Until early 1915 Lenin remained part of this radically internationalist consensus that seemed almost to rule out revolution in single countries. In ‘War and the Russian Social-Democracy’ (November 1914) he too proposed the formation of a ‘republican United States of Europe’, following upon the ‘revolutionary overthrow of the German, Austrian and Russian monarchies’.²⁴ Lenin described the nation-state principle as obsolete, to be contrasted with socialism as a necessarily supranational system:

'It is impossible to make the transition from capitalism to socialism without breaking the national frameworks', he argued.²⁵ Lenin even subtly distorted passages in the *Communist Manifesto*. The *Manifesto* argued that the working class has no fatherland, but cannot avoid seizing power in single countries.²⁶ Lenin misleadingly suggested that according to Marx and Engels proletarian seizures of power in single countries were only possible during the early stages of capitalism.²⁷

However, Lenin's writings in the spring and summer of 1915 suggest that soon enough he came to realise that all this represented an irresponsible radicalisation of the contagious revolution scenario. At the February–March 1915 Bern conference of foreign sections of the Bolshevik organisation the slogan of the United States of Europe came under attack. Lenin decided to omit it from the conference decisions and to organise a debate in the Bolshevik press about it.²⁸ The conference resolution once again observed that the productive forces of world capitalism had outgrown the cadres of the nation-state, and that in the imperialist era justified national wars became rare. Even so, 'revolutionary wars' were not completely ruled out. Included in that category were wars 'for the protection of the achievements of a proletariat victorious in the struggle with the bourgeoisie'.²⁹ This referred both to the Russian proletariat triumphing in the democratic revolution and the socialist proletariat of developed nations.

It never came to a debate in the Bolshevik press concerning the United States of Europe, but the matter was discussed in the small circle of Lenin's confidants. Sometime after 23 July Lenin sent Zinov'ev an article on the slogan and requested him, his wife and G.L. Shklovskii to notify him in case they disagreed.³⁰ In another letter to Zinov'ev written between 28 July and 2 August Lenin again mentioned the article, which he claimed was written 'in the spirit of our negotiations'.³¹

Lenin's article 'On the slogan of the United States of Europe' appeared in *Sotsial-Demokrat* of 23 August 1915, and represented the viewpoint of the editorial board. Lenin observed that the socialist revolution would not take the form of 'one act', but of a whole epoch of revolutions and counter-revolutions. One of the reasons for withdrawing the slogan of the United States of Europe was that:

It might lead to an incorrect interpretation concerning the impossibility of the victory of socialism in one country and concerning the relationship of such a country with the others. The unevenness of economic and political development is an unconditional law of capitalism. It follows from this that the victory of socialism initially in several or even in one, separately taken capitalist country is possible. Having expropriated the capitalists and having organised socialist production at home, the victorious proletariat of this country would rise *against* the remaining capitalist world... in case of need even coming out with military force against the exploiting classes and their states... The free unification of nations in socialism is impossible without a more or less prolonged, stubborn struggle of socialist republics against the backward states.³²

The new formula for world revolution presented here did not amount to the abandonment of the scenario of the chain reaction, but to its reformulation. Lenin realised that, due to the uneven nature of capitalist development, there might occur a serious time lag between the outbreak of revolutionary civil wars in the European countries. There was

a good possibility that the proletariat could initially take power only in one country and of the chain reaction subsequently cooling down. In that case, the chain reaction would have to be refuelled through revolutionary war, as an alternative route to revolutionary transformation in other countries.³³

Even though Russia was not ready for socialism, it too might find itself engaged in revolutionary war, Lenin postulated. In October 1915 he concluded that, should the Russian proletarian party take power and establish a democracy, it would have to submit peace proposals to the combatant states that included the liberation of the colonies. However, this was not meant as a serious effort at a just peace, but as an alibi for a future Russian revolutionary government to continue the war on a new basis. Lenin admitted that neither Germany nor Britain nor France would accept his conditions and then 'revolutionary war' to arouse the colonial peoples and the European proletariat to revolution would become inevitable.³⁴

That the revolution would not occur simultaneously in all major European states was something that Lenin had difficulty in pronouncing outright. Engels, after all, was on record as saying that revolution could only be a simultaneous event in the major 'civilised countries'.³⁵ Even though the latter never took this literally, it would have been difficult for Lenin to turn vociferously against an idea solemnly proclaimed by one of his revered teachers. The 1847 text in which Engels laid down simultaneous revolution as a principle was first published by Eduard Bernstein in 1914.³⁶ The very recentness of the publication would have made Lenin the more acutely aware of his own heresy. That he mentioned a supposedly unconditional law of *capitalism*, not of imperialism, proves that he found his thesis retrospectively applicable even in Engels's days, which made his heresy the more blatant.

Lenin's nervousness showed when, in his September 1916 'The Military Programme of the Proletarian Revolution' (in which he reiterated the thesis of socialism in one country), he noted that Engels had been completely correct when, in his letter to Kautsky of 12 September 1882, he 'straightforwardly acknowledged the possibility of defensive wars of *already victorious* socialism. He had in mind precisely the defence of the victorious proletariat against the bourgeoisie of other countries.'³⁷ In fact, Engels was contemplating wars between a socialist Europe and America and the not-yet-socialist world. Lenin's scenario of war waged by a *single* socialist state was not mentioned by him.³⁸ But, however unconvincing, this was Lenin's way of proving his loyalty to the tenets of the master. The 1882 letter kept cropping up in his writings.³⁹

The second and more strikingly new element in the August 1915 article was Lenin's suggestion that before engaging in revolutionary war, the single revolutionary state would have to organise a socialist economy at home. For this to make any sense, Lenin must not only have assumed that socialism in one country was possible at all, but also that it would be possible to introduce it very rapidly. As we have already seen, historians tend to deny that Lenin could have found it a feasible project for an isolated proletarian state to construct a socialist economy. But it is very hard to interpret otherwise his statement about the expropriation of the bourgeoisie and the organisation of 'socialist production' in a single country. As we shall see, in the short period up to December 1916 Lenin reiterated the socialism in one country thesis at least three times. These references surely did not amount to a sustained reflection on the subject on Lenin's part, but they added up to more than a coincidental and odd formulation. The matter was obviously on Lenin's mind.

In September 1916 Lenin repeated that the uneven development of capitalism made it inevitable that socialism 'will be victorious at first in one or several countries'. The 'socialist state' would have to fight wars 'for socialism, for the liberation of other peoples from the bourgeoisie'. Lenin realised that, whatever steps one state took at home, war remained unavoidable: 'Only after we will have overthrown, finally vanquished and expropriated the bourgeoisie in the whole world, and not only in one country, wars will become impossible.'⁴⁰ This passage is especially significant, for it can only mean that, even though this would not yet make wars impossible, finally vanquishing and expropriating the bourgeoisie in one country was possible. And in putting things in that way, Lenin, in effect, once again suggested that the revolutionary war would be preceded by the expropriation of the bourgeoisie – that is, by the introduction of a socialist economy. In a December 1916 article Lenin wrote again: 'There is the possibility of wars of a socialism victorious in one country against other bourgeois or reactionary countries.'⁴¹ In the same month Lenin explained in yet another, too little noted article that militarised capitalist Germany had proved that it was possible to lead a huge economy '*from one centre*'. This economic feat proved for Lenin that a 'socialist revolution' was no utopian enterprise – even in Switzerland. A 'small people' like the Swiss, with that country's democratic tradition and its 'very high level of capitalism':

... will do *just the same* as that which has been put to the test of practice in Germany...; with that difference, of course, that in Germany millions of people are being killed and crippled for the purpose of enriching a few... whereas in Switzerland at most 30,000 bourgeois will have to be expropriated... and they will have to hand over the rest [of their property] to the socialist workers' government.

Not only would it be possible to expropriate the bourgeoisie and set up a centralised economy, but Lenin was confident that revolutionary Switzerland could survive even in the absence of revolution abroad, because a powerful international proletarian solidarity movement was bound to emerge. Under the present condition of world war he did not expect the imperialists to intervene.⁴² This article represents additional strong proof that Lenin found the project of an isolated socialist economy a realistic one.

Finally, Lenin was not the only one to advocate the idea of socialism in one country. In his 'The Russian Social-Democracy and Russian Social-Chauvinism', published in 1915 in the Bolshevik theoretical journal *Kommunist*, his close comrade Zinov'ev mentioned the possibility of a 'war of a *proletariat* that has been victorious in some country, and that defends the socialist system [*stroï*] gained by it, against other states attempting to vindicate the capitalist regime.'⁴³ The term *stroï* leaves little doubt that Zinov'ev was not merely talking about a workers' government but about a socialist economy. The article suggests that Lenin's confidants shared his views on socialism in one country.

Nevertheless, in interpreting Lenin in this way it remains a troubling fact that Marx and Engels, whom he greatly respected as the foremost theoreticians of socialism, were on record that the forces of the world market made the establishment of an isolated socialist economy a futile undertaking. Moreover, given the now well-known complexities of the project of socialist transition, it might strike the present-day reader as odd and counter-intuitive to assume that Lenin could have believed that the socialist project could be successfully completed in a single country. For these reasons, might it not be

prudent, then, to interpret Lenin's references to expropriating the bourgeoisie and organising a socialist production not too literally, and take them as, really, only referring to the commencement of the socialist transition?

In the absence of more evidence we can never be absolutely sure about how the Bolshevik leader would have answered this question. But we do know what Lenin expected a fully formed socialist economic system would look like. His most extensive pre-revolutionary discussion of the economic system of socialism is to be found in his seminal *State and Revolution*. The book, written in August–September 1917, defines socialism as the first, lower stage of communism, to be sharply distinguished from the subsequent stage of 'complete communism'. The socialist economy would resemble capitalism to a surprising degree, in being organised along the lines of existing state-capitalist syndicates and being modelled on the ordinary post office. In essence, for Lenin, communism's first stage, socialism, represented no more than a modern, rationally organised industrial economy, nationalised and taken in hand by a revolutionary workers' state.⁴⁴ Given these relatively modest criteria for a socialist society, there is no compelling reason not to take Lenin at his word and to speculate that he must, after all, have deemed the realisation of a completed socialist economy in one country impossible.

The 'Law of unequal development'

Lenin's 'Law of uneven development' helps us understand why he came to attribute such importance to revolutionary war. The 'law' represented no original finding on his part. Rather, Lenin reinterpreted and sharpened the existing social-democratic discourse on imperialism. In his seminal *Das Finanzkapital* (1910) Rudolf Hilferding explained that, under the new conditions of protectionism, the world market became divided into nationally separated economic territories, such as the British Empire and the American continent controlled by the United States. There was a premium on size. The larger the economic territory, the higher its growth rates; the smaller it was, the more restrictions on its developmental potential a territory would experience. However, Hilferding did not see the 'unevenness [*Ungleichheit*] of the industrial development', which he believed led to war, as an absolute. For him, there were counteracting tendencies working against a violent solution to the problems of international competition.⁴⁵

The idea that the world tended to get divided into a small number of more or less autarkic territories was a popular one among social-democrats. In the early years of the twentieth century there was a flood of 'revisionist' publications in the right-wing social-democratic journal *Sozialistische Monatshefte*, establishing this tendency. The main imperial spheres mentioned were Great Britain, the United States, Russia and East Asia.⁴⁶ In his *Imperialism as the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, written in the first half of 1916, Lenin quoted from one of these authors, Richard Calwer's 1906 *Einführung in die Weltwirtschaft*, adding his own observation that these territories developed at different speeds.⁴⁷

More resolutely than Hilferding, Kautsky speculated that the imperialists might come to a peaceful resolution of their conflicts. He called this tendency 'ultra-imperialism'.⁴⁸ It was this speculation that enraged Lenin, who was convinced of the warlike essence of

capitalism. Lenin absolutised Hilferding's thesis of the uneven development of capitalist powers, insisting as he did that the trend represented an 'unconditional law' and that therefore no reconciliation between the imperialists was realistically conceivable. In his *Imperialism* Lenin acknowledged the reality of the 'global levelling process [*nivelirovka mira*]', but 'differences between the tempo [*bystrotoi*] of the growth of the different parts of the world economy' remained inevitable. Imperialism even served to increase the 'uneven development' rather than to decrease it. Therefore, the relations of strength between capitalist powers would constantly change, resulting in wars over the redistribution of spheres of influence, which made an 'ultra-imperialist' condominium effectively impossible.⁴⁹

The uneven economic development of countries also increased the likelihood, for Lenin, that socialist revolutions would not immediately spill over from one country to another but might initially remain confined to one country. In the notebooks that he wrote in 1915–16, when he was working on *Imperialism*, there is to be found a crucial piece of evidence shedding light on the thinking process that led him to reject the slogan of the United States of Europe. Lenin quoted and underlined a passage in Kautsky's 1911 article 'War and Peace' as follows:

'[I]f [the revolution] will not be international, but will be confined to one state, then under the present conditions such a situation cannot last long. It (the revolution) must spill over to other states' ... and from this Karl Kautsky draws the conclusion of the United States of Europe.⁵⁰

Intriguingly, the underlinings seem to refer us to Lenin's August 1915 article, which reads like the direct opposite of the point Kautsky had been making in 1911: whereas Kautsky was deducing the slogan of the United States of Europe from the likelihood that one revolution would immediately trigger others elsewhere, Lenin was arguing that the slogan should be rejected because that was not necessarily the case. There was the possibility that the chain reaction stopped, and in that case it could only be reactivated through the medium of revolutionary war.

The isolated socialist economy

Revolutionary war and socialism in one country represented two complementary sides of the one world-revolutionary strategy that Lenin developed during the Great War. In expecting revolutionary wars to be waged in Europe, the Bolshevik leader would have wondered what might provide isolated revolutionary states with the iron needed to survive such titanic armed conflicts. That is where socialism in one country came in. As we saw, in his August 1915 article (as well as in September 1916) Lenin fantasised about the revolutionary state expropriating the bourgeoisie and organising socialist production and then engaging in battle with the imperialists. At this point Lenin did not explain the logic behind this scenario. But most plausibly he would have thought that, given its supposedly superior mechanism compared with capitalism, introducing a socialist economy would improve the revolutionary state's military capabilities. Socialism in one country was, then, the solution for the isolated revolutionary state, not the problem.

There existed a German social-democratic literature in which Lenin could have acquainted himself with the proposition of an isolated socialist economy. In the debates of the 1920s Trotsky mentioned Georg Vollmar, a prominent leader of the right wing of the German SPD, as the father of the idea of socialism in one country, as well as of the 'law of uneven development'.⁵¹ In 1878 Vollmar had written a small book, *The Isolated Socialist State*, to prove the feasibility of isolated socialism.⁵² However, we do not know whether Lenin read this book. Another book in which Lenin could have found support for his thesis for the isolated socialist economy was an 1898 study by a Latvian socialist scholar living in Germany, Karlis Balodis (Karl Ballod, writing under the pseudonym 'Atlanticus').⁵³ The book was popular among the intelligentsia in pre-revolutionary Russia and had several Russian translations.⁵⁴ Interestingly, when in 1919 Balodis brought out a second, revised edition, Lenin had it translated and printed in Soviet Russia.⁵⁵ Then again, Lenin was probably more interested in Balodis's outline of socialist construction than in his thesis of socialism in one country as such.⁵⁶

The key to understanding why Lenin would have accepted the unorthodox notion of the socialist economy in one country lay in his conclusion that organising a socialist economic system was a simple operation. As he saw it, under the dual pressures of monopolisation and war, a centralistic state-capitalist mechanism had been set up in the major European states. The proletariat needed only to expropriate the bourgeoisie and set the ready planning machine in motion for their own purposes. This was Lenin's argument in his December 1916 article on socialism in Switzerland, and he had also referred to it in *Imperialism*.⁵⁷ According to Lenin there remained no 'middle' between imperialism and socialism; there were no 'intermediate rungs' left on the historical ladder leading from capitalism to socialism.⁵⁸ In the developed capitalist countries the introduction of socialism had therefore become an immediate task. In *State and Revolution* he argued that capitalism had prepared the introduction of socialist production by spreading literacy, by teaching the workers productive discipline and by extremely simplifying administrative work and structures. Under these conditions, the introduction of the 'first stage of the communist society' was an 'urgent and burning question of today's politics', and a matter to be taken in hand 'immediately, overnight [*s segodnia na zavtra*]'.⁵⁹

Even though completely rejecting his political conclusions, Lenin was following in the footsteps of right-wing German social-democrat Paul Lensch, who argued that the capitalist *Kriegssozialismus* was preparing the way for the real thing, because the principle of organisation contained the essence of socialism.⁶⁰ Before the outbreak of the First World War, Hilferding and Alexander Parvus (Helphand) had likewise argued that the capitalist control mechanisms over production turned the introduction of socialism into an easy operation.⁶¹ In the heat of the debate with Bernstein in 1898 Parvus had even confessed that a workers' party needed to be in power for no more than half a year to put an end to 'capitalist society'.⁶² This surprisingly light-hearted view of the task of the expropriation of capital was by no means exceptional. Engels wrote in 1894 that the ground for the 'transformation of the capitalist enterprise into a social [*gesellschaftlichen*] one' was fully prepared in Germany, and the transition could be effected 'overnight'.⁶³

That capitalism would have prepared the socialist planning mechanism did not logically imply that this could be done in one country. The German social-democrats mentioned here observed an international process playing itself out in all major European countries. But under the conditions of war it was separate states that were

each organising their own war economy, often directed against each other, and it was this example that Lenin had before him and that apparently inspired him.

All this is not to say that Lenin abandoned the internationalist perspective of the contagious revolution. Strikingly, in September 1915, just one month after he solemnly proclaimed the possibility of socialism in one country, the Bolshevik leader observed that due to the imperialist war the revolutionary crises in Russia and in the West became so intertwined that 'no separate solution of the revolutionary tasks in any single country is possible'. He expected the democratic revolution in Russia to become a 'component of the socialist revolution in the West', and these revolutions might even be 'simultaneous'.⁶⁴ In August–October 1916 Lenin sarcastically berated Iurii (Georgii) Piatakov for his conception of the international revolution as a 'united action' of the proletarians of all countries, destroying the state borders. But he did not deny that such a thing was possible among the developed countries.⁶⁵

These and other similar statements led Soviet historian S.V. Tiutiukin to suggest that Lenin's views suffered from a lack of coherence: the Bolshevik leader, he noted, seems to have operated with 'two lines', now rejecting then accepting the possibility of socialism in a single country.⁶⁶ Tiutiukin's analysis serves as an important warning to historians not to read more coherence into their objects of study than there really is, and to recognise the ambiguities in the thinking of real-life political leaders. However, I would argue that in this case the ambiguities were only apparent, not real. I would speculate that Lenin would have been surprised had anybody accused him of inconsistency when he mentioned socialism in one country in August and denied that there could be a separate revolutionary solution for any single country in September. Lenin never suggested that after the introduction of a socialist economy the revolutionary state could opt out of the world revolutionary process. It would after all still have to face the test of the battlefield. Even in the unlikely case that the imperialists would leave this country alone, the socialist state would be duty bound to restart the chain reaction and offensively spread socialism by military force. And, as Lenin saw it, the revolutionary war would result either in a triumph of the revolution on a European scale or in the destruction of the isolated socialist state. Even after the introduction of socialism in one country no separate solution would, then, become available. The European working classes would still rise or fall together.

1917

After the February Revolution Lenin abruptly stopped referring to the possibility of socialism in one country. This had everything to do with his new focus on revolutionary developments in socio-economically backward Russia. Lenin did not stray from the orthodox position that whereas the capitalist countries were ripe for socialism, predominantly peasant Russia was not.

Even so, Lenin now fundamentally reformulated his understanding of the Russian revolution. As he came to see it, backward Russia could not fully, but could *partially* socialise its economy. In other words, backward Russia could not complete the socialist transformation without the assistance of the workers of the West, but it could nonetheless make a start.⁶⁷ To the bewilderment of many of his orthodox comrades Lenin concluded that economic conditions had matured to the point of allowing 'transitional'

steps to be taken in the direction of socialism, mainly in the industrial and banking spheres. He proposed the establishment of a Soviet government that put under its control or even nationalised the banks and industrial trusts and syndicates.⁶⁸ In his speech on 12 May at the Seventh Party Conference Lenin divided the Russian economy into 'big capital' and the peasants. In introducing transitional measures, Russia 'will be with one leg in socialism, with one – because the peasant majority leads the other economic side of the country.'⁶⁹ Lenin did not believe that the Russian agricultural sector could be socialised without the assistance of proletarian states in the West. Without a socialised agriculture a country could not legitimately be called socialist, which made socialism in one country logically impossible in Russia. But it is essential, for understanding the logic of Lenin's thinking, that the Russian industry and banking sector *could* be socialised without a preceding revolution in the West.⁷⁰

Lenin applied his earlier thesis of how capitalism and war prepared the conditions for socialism to the transitional measures that he was now proposing for Russia. As he saw it, the ravages and chaos caused by the war made a rigidly centralistic Soviet system urgently necessary, to save the country from a catastrophe. Fortunately, like the Junkers and bourgeoisie in Germany, the tsarist government had introduced a system of economic regulation, to be called by Lenin 'war capitalism', 'state capitalism' or 'state-monopoly capitalism'. A Soviet government need only take over that ready-made apparatus to set the economy on the right track.⁷¹

All the same, Lenin continued to recognise that it would be absurd to focus on the situation in only one country: the war had bound up all humanity into one 'bloody lump [komok]', and 'an exit from there of only one country' was impossible. In Lenin's stark terms: 'either the proletariat breaks free as a whole, or it will be suppressed'.⁷² Once again, revolutionary war was central in Lenin's considerations. He repeatedly reminded his comrades of his October 1915 statement, in which war against the imperialists by a future Russian revolutionary regime had been presented as unavoidable in case the proletariat failed to take power in other European states.⁷³

Revolutionary war would either lead to the expansion of socialism to Western Europe or to the defeat of Soviet Russia. The third option of long-term coexistence apparently did not enter Lenin's mind. But he was remarkably optimistic about the outcome of the military conflict that he foresaw. In June he promised the Russian workers global leadership in the war against German and British imperialism, 'which will be unable to unite against you because they are locked in a deadly fight among themselves'.⁷⁴

Lenin's confidence was boosted by his high appreciation of the potential of a Soviet economy. Even though he stubbornly refused to call a revolutionary Russia without a socialised agriculture 'socialist', he now spelled out the logic of socialism in one country that had remained implicit in his 1915–16 statements: if socialism was indeed the superior economic system that it claimed to be, then being the only country to have it at its disposal was an advantage, not a disadvantage. By fitting out the country with a new and superior economic system, the revolution would provide it with the military superiority that it needed to successfully break out of its isolation on the battlefield, and spread socialism through Europe.

The most significant of Lenin's publications highlighting this argument is 'The Impending Catastrophe and How to Combat it', written in September 1917. In this stunning statement backward Russia was catapulted into a position of military and economic

superiority compared with the developed capitalist states. As Lenin pointed out, not only was Russia unusually well endowed with natural resources but the revolution would raise the country to an 'immeasurably higher level of economic organisation':

The military power of a country with nationalisation of the banks is *higher* than of a country with banks that remain in private hands... One always points to the heroic patriotism and the miracles of military courage of the French in the years 1792–93. But one forgets about the... conditions that precisely made these miracles possible... the transition of the whole country... to a higher mode of production... The example of France tells us one and only one thing: in order to make Russia capable of defence... it is necessary to... renovate, regenerate Russia *economically*.

Lenin was confident of the outcome of the test to which war would put Soviet Russia. Revolutionary war would place the country before the question of 'either to perish or to catch up with the advanced countries and to overtake them *economically*. This is possible, for we have before us the ready-made experience of a large number of advanced states, the ready-made results of their technology and culture.'⁷⁵

Later that month, Lenin wrote that the Bolsheviks would be well advised to take power, for nothing could prevent them from holding on to it. Provided they took over the economic apparatus from the bourgeoisie and set it to work, they could build a sufficiently strong state to carry on until the victory of the socialist world revolution.⁷⁶ In sum, Lenin reached the conclusion that an isolated Soviet Russia might not only introduce a socialist industrial and banking system, but that this would make her almost invincible and turn her into an effective military instrument of the world revolution.

Conclusion

What does all this tell us about Lenin? The Bolshevik leader comes across as a man prepared to challenge what was then considered the Marxist orthodoxy. His acceptance of socialism in one country as an option for developed capitalist states and his advocacy of initiating socialist construction in backward Russia were part of one and the same package of Lenin's new thinking. Theoretically, both innovations were linked with his admiration for the power of the state-capitalist mechanism, *Kriegssozialismus*, which supposedly made the march to socialism much easier than social-democrats had formerly assumed.

The reformulation of the world-revolutionary strategy discussed here mainly attests to the enormous influence of the First World War on the Bolshevik leader's thinking. Lenin's mentality has been aptly described as 'socialist militarism'.⁷⁷ During the period under discussion here, revolution and war tended to get conflated ever more narrowly in his mind, in more than one way. Not only did he unceasingly call for 'civil wars' to break out throughout Europe, but under the circumstances of the great bloodbath Lenin also became interested in war in its more straightforward, country-to-country form, as vehicle of revolution. The 'revolutionary war' became a dominant element in how he imagined the world revolution might proceed. It is in that context that he came up with 'socialism in one country'. Even though he could have found support for such a notion in German social-democratic literature, we do better to see

it as part of the militarisation of his strategic thinking rather than as the fruit of theoretical contemplation.

That Lenin saw chances for socialism in one country, even though only as a short-term measure in preparation for the decisive war, is not only of interest for those engaged in minutely reconstructing the Bolshevik leader's every word and thought. It has, I believe, a broader historical significance in that it sheds more light on the source of Lenin's supreme confidence in unleashing the October Revolution. Moreover, the expectation that the superiority of the Soviet economic system would allow revolutionary Russia to defeat imperialism on the battlefield did not immediately leave Lenin after October. As Trotsky remembered, in January 1918 he wrote that at least a few months would be required for the 'success of socialism' in Russia:

Shouldn't it have been a few years or decades? But no – this was no slip of the pen... I remember very well how during the first period, in the Smol'nyi, Lenin repeated time and again in the Council of People's Commissars: half a year from now we'll have socialism and we'll be the most powerful state on earth... *He believed what he said.*⁷⁸

But it did not take long for Lenin to be overtaken by reality. The catastrophic situation in which Russia found herself soon convinced him that his dreams of victorious revolutionary war had been wildly naive and presumptuous. When in early January 1918 he wrote in his theses on the question of peace that for 'the success of socialism in Russia... at least several months' were needed, he was in fact already shifting into a more realistic mood. The Soviet leader advocated peace with imperial Germany, because the army would not be in a state to wage a revolutionary war during the 'coming months'.⁷⁹ It is fascinating to see that at this point the underlying logic of Lenin's thinking was still intact: the overlapping of the two time frames suggest that bringing the Russian army to a state of preparedness was conditional upon the achievement of some form of socialist economic consolidation in that country. Nevertheless, the shift in mood was undeniable. The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk of 3 March 1918 was the main fruit of Lenin's newfound realism.

At the Seventh Party Congress held later that month Lenin observed that, 'it is an absolute truth that we would go under without a German revolution'.⁸⁰ Years later, in July 1921, he famously remarked that, before the revolution, 'we thought: either immediately or at least very soon the revolution will come in other, capitalistically more developed countries, or, in the opposite case, we must go under'.⁸¹ On the standard view, confirmed *ex post facto* by Lenin himself, the revolution was a gamble he only dared engage in because he expected the German workers soon to bail out his isolated proletarian regime. However, the briefest glance at his writings shows that his 1921 reminiscences incompletely reflected what had been on his mind on the eve of the revolution. What is missing in this interpretation is that, even in the case that the German workers would not rise of their own accord, Lenin had trusted that Soviet Russia could end the fatal isolation herself and open up the way to socialism in Germany through revolutionary war. This scenario, again, depended on the supposed superiority of the Soviet economic system. In other words, next to his undoubted faith in the German workers, it was his conviction that the socialist economic mechanism could be established in one country – and in a modified or partial form even in

backward Russia – that gave Lenin the confidence to engage in the October uprising in the first place.

Lenin's 1915–16 statements were frequently referred to in the Great Debate of the 1920s. Stalin gratefully and triumphantly floated these texts to provide his own programme of socialism in one country with the necessary legitimacy. We may now conclude that in important ways he was justified in making this claim. Stalin, of course, presented a caricature of Lenin's position, but Trotsky's interpretation was even wider of the mark. The General Secretary falsified the record in suggesting that Lenin had been referring to backward, predominantly agrarian Russia as a possible candidate for socialism in one country. He was also wrong in attributing to Lenin his own view that the isolated socialist state could in principle coexist indefinitely with the capitalist states. On the contrary, for Lenin socialism in one country had been a scenario for the short term. As noted above, he foresaw a quick dénouement, with the socialist state system either expanding through Europe or going under. But even though Stalin expanded the scope of socialism in one country beyond Lenin's original intentions, the fundamental fact remains that the latter accepted the possibility for isolated revolutionary states to organise their own socialist economies within national walls. Trotsky's insistence that Lenin was only referring to socialist revolution, not to the construction of a socialist society or economy, was misleading and plainly wrong.

Most importantly, Trotsky did not understand the spirit of Lenin's words – something that, in contrast, Stalin grasped instinctively and without fail. Lenin's writings discussed here implied that an isolated socialist state must orient itself towards war, overtake the imperialists economically as well as militarily and ready itself to defeat them on the battlefield. This orientation on state construction and military results obviously anticipated Stalinism in some of its essential elements. Altogether, then, Stalin had a strong case when he referred to Lenin to legitimise his own strategy.

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Notes

1. See Lenin, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii* (hereafter *PSS*), vol. 26, 351–55.
2. See: Elwood, 'Lenin on holiday', 125–27; and Rappaport, *Conspirator*, Chapters 16 and 17.
3. Daniels, *The Conscience of the Revolution*, 251–52 (453n.); and Daniels, *The Nature of Communism*, 30, 174. See also: Meyer, *Leninism*, 220f. The idea that the socialist revolution would first break out in Russia, as imperialism's 'weakest link', has been wrongly attributed to Lenin. See White, *Lenin*, 120–21; and Read, *Lenin*, 125.

4. See Trotsky, *The Third International*, 12, 43–44.
5. See, for example: Carr, *A History*, 40–41; Marek, *Philosophy*, 74; Leonhard, *Die Dreispaltung*, 98–99, 125, 142; Nation, *War on War*, 159; and White, *Lenin*, 120–21. Other historians leave unanswered the question of whether Lenin referred to socialist revolution or to socialism. See for example: Harding, *Lenin's Political Thought*, vol. 2, 67; and Kowalski, *The Bolshevik Party*, 49. To my knowledge only Robert Tucker (*The Marxian Revolutionary Idea*, 130–31) acknowledged that Lenin was referring to the construction of a socialist economy in one country.
6. *PSS*, vol. 26, 354.
7. See, for example, Marx and Engels, *Werke* (hereafter *MEW*), vol. 3, 34–35; vol. 4, 374–75; vol. 6, 149–50; vol. 7, 19, 34, 79. On the Marx–Engels conception of world revolution, see also: Davis, *Nationalism*, 20–23; Soell, 'Weltmarkt–Revolution–Staatenwelt'; Draper, *Karl Marx's Theory*, 203, 241–46; Gilbert, *Marx's Politics*, 36, 149, 156–57, 162–63, 184, 189, 215; Szporluk, *Communism*, Parts One and Three.
8. Draper, *Karl Marx's Theory*, 242.
9. Salvadori, *Karl Kautsky*, 89.
10. *MEW*, vol. 18, 565; vol. 19, 296; vol. 22, 429. According to James White (*Karl Marx*, Chapters 4–6; and *Lenin*, 35–36), in the last period of his life Marx no longer assumed that capitalism would necessarily sweep away pre-capitalist modes of production throughout the globe. This led him to conclude in 1881 that even in the absence of proletarian revolution in the West, the Russian village commune could evolve into a communist state. See also Shanin, *Late Marx*. In effect, this amounted to a 'socialism in one country' formula for Russia. Hartmut Soell ('Weltmarkt–Revolution–Staatenwelt', 137) suggests that Engels may have come to recognise the prospect of socialism in one country for Germany. However, even in 1893 the latter remained adamant that only the combined force of Britain, France and Germany sufficed to construct a socialist society: *MEW*, vol. 39, 89.
11. Kautsky, 'Allerhand Revolutionäres', 622–23, 626. See also: Donald, *Marxism*, 69–93.
12. See: *Men'sheviki*, 124; and *Kommunisticheskaia partiia Sovetskogo soiuza v rezolutsiakh* (hereafter *KPSS*), 73, 75. According to Baruch Knei-Paz (*The Social and Political Thought of Leon Trotsky*, 18–19) the model of the Russian revolution triggering revolution in the West was not taken seriously by Russian Marxists, except for Alexander Parvus and Trotsky. That is a misunderstanding. On the contrary, the model was generally accepted by both Bolsheviks and Mensheviks. What the Mensheviks did not take seriously were the various suggestions by Kautsky, Lenin, Parvus and Trotsky to the effect that the Russian democratic revolution might bring the proletariat to power. See, for these radical interpretations of the democratic revolution: Meyer, *Leninism*, 139–44, 156–60; Scharlau, 'Parvus-Helphand', Chapters 7–8; Zeman and Scharlau, *The Merchant of Revolution*, 63–66, 76–78; Harding, *Lenin's Political Thought*, vol. 1; Salvadori, *Karl Kautsky*, 86–89, 101–06, 128–29, 175, 194–97; Knei-Paz, *The Social and Political Thought of Leon Trotsky*, 18, 129–44, 152–74; Thatcher, 'Uneven and Combined Development'; and Donald, *Marxism*, 69–93.
13. Trotsky, *The Permanent Revolution*, 80, 105, 115.
14. In an 1887 draft programme for *Osvobozhdenie truda*, Georgii Plekhanov wrote that under modern economic conditions 'consolidation' of the socialist revolution required participation of 'several civilised societies': *Pervyi s'ezd*, 235. However, the manifesto adopted at the first congress of the RSDLP in 1898 did not include a similar passage. See: *KPSS*, 12–14. Neither did the programme adopted at the Second Party Congress of July–August 1903, which merely stated that the modern economy established such

- close connections between the 'civilised' peoples, that the liberation movement of the proletariat must be international: *ibid.*, 37.
15. Bogdanov, *Red Star*, 113–14, 117–18. See Loren Graham, 'Bogdanov's Inner Message', in: *ibid.*, 245–46. See also: Richard Stites, 'Fantasy and Revolution', in *ibid.*, 13. James White drew my attention to the fact that the idea of socialism in one country may have been more widespread in the Bogdanov circle: Gel'fond, 'Filosofia Ditsgena', 327.
 16. For possible exceptions, see: *PSS*, vol. 12, 157; vol. 13, 17.
 17. Trotsky, *The Permanent Revolution*, 90 (emphasis added). Trotsky was engaging in a polemic with Karl Kautsky. In his 1892 *Das Erfurter Programm* (117, 119–21) the latter discussed the socialist *Zukunftsstaat*, and asked himself: 'But how big must such a self-sufficient association [*Genossenschaft*] be?' According to Kautsky, 'there is only *one* that is of the necessary scope to be used as the framework to develop this socialist association, and that is the *modern state*'.
 18. Richard Day (*Leon Trotsky*, Chapter 1) argues that Trotsky did not deny the possibility of creating a socialist economy in Russia alone. According to Day, Trotsky argues in the seventh chapter of *Results and Prospects* that the economic prerequisites of socialism were present in Russia. I find Day's thesis unconvincing for two reasons. First, it is not clear whether in that chapter Trotsky was speaking about Russia at all. In the next chapter he brings up but leaves unanswered the question of whether in backward Russia the socio-economic conditions for socialist construction were present: Trotsky, *The Permanent Revolution*, 100, 104–05. Second, even if in Trotsky's view the economic prerequisites of socialism would have been present in Russia, it would not follow from this that a socialist economy could have been constructed in Russia alone: Trotsky had concluded that this would be an impossible feat in *any* country, even in those ripe for socialism.
 19. Bucharin, *Imperialismus*, 15, 45, 86, 116, 131, 188–89. On Left-Bolshevik thinking in this period, see: Cohen, *Bukharin*, 27–37; Harding, *Lenin's Political Thought*, vol. 2, 64; Haynes, *Nikolai Bukharin*, Chapter 2; and Kowalski, *The Bolshevik Party*, 30–44.
 20. See: Gankin and Fisher, *The Bolsheviks*, 187–88, 190, 219–30, 222.
 21. Trotsky, *Der Krieg*, 3, 6, 84. On Trotsky's position during the First World War concerning the 'simultaneity of modern revolutions', their interconnectedness and their operation in the form of a 'chain reaction', see Knei-Paz, *The Social and Political Thought of Leon Trotsky*, 303, 306–10. See also: Day, *Leon Trotsky*, 13–14; and Thatcher, 'Uneven and Combined Development', 253–54.
 22. Axelrod, *Die Krise*, 10–11, 13, 43.
 23. Martov, *Izbrannoe*, 339–43 (also 521–12).
 24. *PSS*, vol. 26, 21.
 25. *PSS*, vol. 26, 35. See also *ibid.*, 281. Kowalski (*The Bolshevik Party*, 46) interprets this as an 'implicit rejection of the possibility of socialist revolution in one country'.
 26. *MEW*, vol. 4, 479.
 27. *PSS*, vol. 26, 39–40. See also *ibid.*, 75.
 28. See: Gankin and Fisher, *The Bolsheviks*, 179–80; and Tiutiukin, *Voina*, 165–67.
 29. *KPSS*, 329. In May–June 1915 Lenin wrote that in case socialism triumphed in Europe or America and was attacked by Japan or China, if only diplomatically, 'offensive, revolutionary war' would be the correct reply. Lenin referred to Marx's suggestions for German revolutionary war against the counter-revolutionary Slavs: *PSS*, vol. 26, 226f.
 30. *PSS*, vol. 49, 101.

31. *PSS*, vol. 49, 112.
32. *PSS*, vol. 26, 352–55. See also: vol. 49, 119–20.
33. In his ‘The Programme of Peace’, Trotsky (*Voina*, 478–79) turned against Lenin’s August 1915 article. He accepted that one proletariat should not wait for the others to make their revolution, but an isolated ‘revolutionary Russia’ or ‘socialist Germany’ would be doomed. In what was probably a reference to Lenin, Trotsky rejected the ‘national-revolutionary messianism that assumes that precisely one’s own national state... is called to lead humanity to socialism or to “democracy”’.
34. *PSS*, vol. 27, 50–51.
35. *MEW*, vol. 4, 374–75.
36. Bernstein, *Grundsätze*.
37. *PSS*, vol. 30, 133.
38. *MEW*, vol. 35, 357–58. In one of his notebooks Lenin copied an 1894 passage by Engels in which it was argued that even a capitalist Russia could not achieve socialism in the absence of proletarian revolution in the West: *PSS*, vol. 228, 484.
39. See for example: *PSS*, vol. 30, 50–51, 111–12. See also: vol. 26, 226f; vol. 27, 405; vol. 28, 652–55.
40. *PSS*, vol. 30, 133–34.
41. *PSS*, vol. 30, 152. See also: *ibid.*, 13; vol. 49, 288. In a critique of Rosa Luxemburg written in July 1916, Lenin wrote that a ‘war in defence of the socialist state against the bourgeois states’ would be possible: *PSS*, vol. 30, 13.
42. *PSS*, vol. 30, 218–20. See also: Tiutiukin, *Voina*, 174.
43. Zinov’ev, ‘Rossiiskaia sotsial-demokratiia’, 129.
44. *PSS*, vol. 33: 50, 92, 94, 97–98, 101
45. Hilferding, *Das Finanzkapital*, Chapter 22 (quotation on page 452).
46. See: Fletcher, *Revisionism*, 61–62, 91; Bloch, ‘Der Kampf’, 261–62; Schröder, ‘Eduard Bernsteins Stellung’.
47. *PSS*, vol. 27, 392–94.
48. Kautsky, ‘Der Imperialismus’, 919–21; ‘Zwei Schriften’, 144–45. See also: Salvadori, *Karl Kautsky*, 181–203.
49. *PSS*, vol. 27, 367, 372–73, 378, 391–95, 415–17, 422–23. See also: vol. 28, 408–09. For references to ‘ultra-imperialism’, see also: vol. 26, 228–31; vol. 28, 243–5, 731. For references to the concept of ‘unevenness of growth’ in Lenin’s notebooks, see: vol. 28, 177, 212. See also: 411. For references to the ‘United States of Europe’: *ibid.*: 87, 111, 187, 304, 358ff, 401, 406, 408–09, 412, 418, 421–23, 592, 598, 666–67. On Lenin’s theory of imperialism and uneven development: Harding, *Lenin’s Political Thought*, vol. 2, Chapter 3.
50. *PSS*, vol. 28, 360–61. See: Kautsky, ‘Krieg’, 105–07.
51. Fel’shtinskii, *Arkhiv*, 101. See also: Trotzki, *Verratene Revolution*, 284–86; Trotsky, *The Third International*, 12, 43–44. For references to Vollmar in this capacity, see also: Goodman, *The Soviet Design*, 4; Knei-Paz, *The Social and Political Thought of Leon Trotsky*, 339n; Fetscher, *Der Marxismus*, 33, 644, 647; Jansen, *Georg von Vollmar*, 16, 21–23, 88; Steinberg, *Sozialismus*, 22, 31.
52. Vollmar, *Der isolierte sozialistische Staat*.
53. Atlanticus, *Produktion*.
54. Balabkins, ‘Der Zukunftsstaat’, 217, 229. Trotsky referred to it in *Results and Prospects*, 90–1. By 1913 Lenin had certainly read it. See *PSS*, vol. 28, 111.
55. The revised edition preserved the crucial passages about socialism possibly arriving in one country first: Ballod, *Der Zukunftsstaat*, 49–50. For Lenin’s reaction see:

- PSS*, vol. 42, 342–43, 488n; vol. 44, 51; vol. 54, 146. See also: Balabkins, ‘*Der Zukunftsstaat*’, 229.
56. For the history of the concept of socialism in one country in the German social-democracy, see: van Ree, “Socialism in one Country” before Stalin’, *passim*.
 57. *PSS*, vol. 27, 386, 425–26.
 58. *PSS*, vol. 34, 191–93.
 59. *PSS*, vol. 33, 49–50, 97–8, 100–01.
 60. See: Ascher, “Radical” Imperialists’; and Sigel, *Die Lensch-Cunow-Haenisch-Gruppe*. For Lenin’s views on Lensch’s interpretation of *Kriegssozialismus* see *PSS*, vol. 34, 191. See also: vol. 28, 576.
 61. Hilferding, *Das Finanzkapital*, Chapter 25. For Parvus, see, for example, his 1910 *Der Staat, die Industrie und der Sozialismus*, 126. For Parvus’s views on the concentration of industry as a precondition for the introduction of socialism, see Tudor and Tudor, *Marxism*, Chapter 6. For Lenin’s debt to Hilferding and Parvus see Garvy, ‘The Origins’.
 62. Parvus wrote this in the *Sächsische Arbeiterzeitung* of 6 March 1898 (cited in Scharlau, ‘Parvus-Helphand’, 98). I have not been able to view this newspaper at first hand.
 63. *MEW*, vol. 22, 504.
 64. *PSS*, vol. 27, 27; see also: 49.
 65. *PSS*, vol. 30, 110–12, 122–23.
 66. Tiutiukin, *Voina*, 172.
 67. *PSS*, vol. 31, 91–93, 168, 303.
 68. *PSS*, vol. 31, 56, 109–10, 115–16, 168, 244, 446, 450–51; vol. 32, 143, 196, 374; vol. 34, 235.
 69. *PSS*, vol. 31, 445; see also: 363.
 70. At the Sixth Party Congress in August 1917 Stalin proposed a resolution to the effect that the Russian revolutionary classes must aim for the ‘socialist reconstruction of society, in union with the revolutionary proletariat of the advanced countries’. E.A. Preobrazhenskii proposed to move in the direction of socialism only ‘in case of a proletarian revolution in the West’: *Shestoi s’ezd*, 250, 257. Stalin’s formula, allowing for socialist reforms in the absence of revolution in the West, was adopted by the congress: *KPSS*, 376.
 71. *PSS*, vol. 31, 56, 111, 143, 168, 302–03, 355, 443–46, 449–50; vol. 32, 76, 139, 143, 155–56, 188, 195–97, 247–48, 267, 293–94, 396; vol. 34, 155–57, 163, 166, 168, 191–92, 197. For a discussion of Lenin’s 1917 conclusions concerning a socialist perspective for Russia see: Marek, *Philosophy*, 67–83; Harding, *Lenin’s Political Thought*, vol. 2, Chapters 4, 7; and Kowalski, *The Bolshevik Party*, 44–56.
 72. *PSS*, vol. 31, 341, 353–54. See also: *ibid.*, 326, 358, 405; vol. 32, 100; and *KPSS*, 337. The manifesto written by the Central Committee on behalf of the Sixth Party Congress insisted that the success of the Russian revolution required the ‘international uprising... of the proletarians of Europe’: *KPSS*, 389. See also: *PSS*, vol. 32, 374.
 73. *PSS*, vol. 31, 90–91, 113–14, 281; vol. 32, 72, 99–100.
 74. *PSS*, vol. 32, 287–89, 291. See also: vol. 34, 233.
 75. *PSS*, vol. 34, 194–98. See also: *ibid.*, 233–24, 307, 373, 375.
 76. *PSS*, vol. 34, 332–33.
 77. James Ryan, ‘Lenin’s theorizing on violence and terrorism’, paper delivered to the AAASS, 2008.
 78. Trotzki, *Über Lenin*, 106.
 79. *PSS*, vol. 35, 244, 248.

80. *PSS*, vol. 36, 15. See for the development of Lenin's thinking on socialism in one country after 1917: 'Socialism in one country: a reassessment'.
81. *PSS*, vol. 44, 36.

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