

Debate: lenin, tyrant or savior? essay



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Debate: Lenin, Tyrant or Savior? The debate is still going on between high profile historians as to whether or not Lenin was a Tyrant or a Savior.

It is hard to just take one side, as it is not clear cut. To understand better why it is so hard to put Lenin under one of these profiles, I will study the arguments as to why he was a Tyrant. Then I will go over the arguments which support the idea that Lenin was in fact a Savior. I will then be able to take an opinion.

Lenin was very interested in political activism since he was young. His brother had been involved in the assassination of the Tsar, and was therefore executed in public. He started to attend Socialist Marxist gatherings, and was taken in by Karl Marx's ideology. Later on in his life he took the lead of the Russian political group called the Social Democrats.

His faction of the party, the Bolsheviks, were a non-violent group at the start. Although this might be seen as a pacifist start for Lenin, he was only really scheming for his future coup: he waited for the others to do the hard job and overthrow the Tsar, before him and his party stepped in. This isn't really what you would expect of a Savior, though nor would you expect that of a Tyrant. Indeed we can start to see that Lenin doesn't really belong to either of these categories. Once the Provisional govt. had been installed, Lenin decided it was time to act and took power by force.

Of course, his first intentions were good, as he let the elections go as planned, but when the results turned out, he was rather disappointed, and saw that he only had 25% of the seats in parliament. This wouldn't be enough for him to make the changes he had planned. So, he ordered his

forces to throw out the other parties of the Assembly. Lenin argues that this was for the good of the country, but was it really? Of course, this enabled him to pull Russia out of World War I, but it also enables him to have near-absolute power. Now...which one of these was the real motive for him to have organized this coup? To me, it seems evident that he was after the power. Though unlike most people who are looking for power, he wasn't after the money...He was so taken in by his political views, and the Marxist ideology, that all he wanted to do was to implement it.

Whether it was for the better or the worst, that did not matter for him. People would not see him as a Tyrant in Russia, as he was not the kind to just take all the money from the state and mysteriously disappear. No, now that he had implemented the Communist Regime in Russia, he would not leave it to collapse. As time went on, he realized that his dream of a Communist state would not work without a few adaptations. He was forced to order the killings of many men, mostly Kulaks, to set an example for others.

The country was not in danger, but his Ideology was. To protect his Communist state, he didn't care whether he had to kill 10 000 or 1 million men, as long as it wasn't him doing the killing, and that he wasn't being killed either. As for him, it was just a meere game of politics and manipulating society to create the perfect regime. Though he hid his real aim, and claimed to be at the service of the Russian people. This is often what Tyrants do. However, is a Tyrant really a Tyrant, when all his people love him? Indeed, although he ordered major repressions on his opponents,

Russians saw him as their hero, who had saved them from the Tsar's oppressing rule, and stopped the horrible war.

Though his real interest was in his pioneering in the processes of social structuring, his Communist regime did bring to the country a sense of equality between classes. Moreover, Russia needed a strong hand to guide it through its post-revolution phase. Lenin was the man for the job! Just like in Iraq, we can see that although the so called 'tyrant' has been removed, people are not so much better off. Violence ravages the country. Not only that, but Lenin was even venerated after his death! 3 million people came to see his dead body once he had died.

If it had been out of hatred, then they would probably have taken his coffin and burnt it in public, to warn any others would would try and take Lenin's place. But this didn't happen. Who would venerate the death of a Tyrant after his death? No one! Yet the reason why overall he was seen as a hero by the Russians is because he killed all those who didn't. And those who were left either strongly believed he was a hero, or believed he was a hero for fear of the consequences of believing he wasn't a Hero.

We can therefore conclude that he wasn't a savior, but a very good and manipulative Tyrant! A good tyrant doesn't mean he's good, it just means that he was good at being a Tyrant!