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| **Historians Name & School** | **Quote** | **Significance or Context** |
| **Tsarist Russia** |
| **Richard Pipes - western** | “October was not a revolution but a classic coup d’etat planned in the dead of night on October 10th, and executed two weeks later…The seizure of power, masterminded by Trotsky, was a model putch…Conceived and carried out in the strictest secrecy, it eschewed barricades and mob actions in favour of surgical strikes against the organ of the state. It was so successfully camouflaged as a transfer of power to the All-Russian Congress of Soviets that virtually no one, including the rank and file of the Bolshevik Party, had any inkling of what had happened.” | Secrecy and efficacy of the 1917 October revolution |
| **Buchanan – Western** | “The emperor Nicholas the second is one of the most pathetic figures in history… it was he who was to cause the catastrophe which has brought it to utter ruin and misery.” | Nicholas – a bad leader |
| **Hasegawa – Revisionist** | “The tsarist regime was pregnant with irreconcilable internal contradiction that it had no capacity to resolve.” | Tsarism to blame for revolution |
| **1905 Rev** |
| **Pares – Western** | “The monarchy had been saved; the economy was prosperous; and Russia had – shall we say – half a constitution.” | The Tsar’s reforms, However short lived, did work for awhile.  |
| **Orlando Figes - Revisionist** | “… Although the regime succeeded in restoring order, it could not hope to put the clock back. 1905 had changed society for good. Many of the younger comrades of 1905 were the elders of 1917. They were inspired by its memory and instructed by its lessons.” | The 1917 October revolution was inevitable after the 1905 revolution |
| **First World War** |
| **Hill – Soviet** | “The fundamental cause of the Russian revolution, then, was the incompatibility of the Tsarist State with the Demands of modern civilisation. War accelerated the development of revolutionary crisis, but their deep-lying causes could not be wished away in times of peace.” | Tsarist regime & Tsar to blame. |
| **Pipes – Western** | “Whilst the collapse of Tsarism was not inevitable, it was made more likely by deepening cultural and political flaws that prevented the tsarist regime from adjusting to the economic and cultural growth of the country, flaws that proved fatal under the pressure generated by WW1.” | Social strains affected the revolution – it may not have been inevitable |
| **Fitzpatrick – Revisionist** | “The autocracy’s situation was precarious on the eve of the first world war. The society was deeply divided, and the political and bureaucratic structure was fragile and overstrained. The regime was so vulnerable to any kind of jolt of setback that it is hard to imagine that it could have survived long, even without the war.” | The revolution was inevitable, and all that could be done was to delay it.  |
| **1917 February revolution** |
| **Leon Trotsky – Soviet**  | “Who led the February revolution? We can… answer definitely enough: Conscious and tempered workers educated for the most part by the party of Lenin.” | February revolution led and initiated by the workers, accredited to Vladmir Lenin |
| **Chamberlin – Western**  | “The collapse of the Romanov autocracy in march 1917 was on of the most leaderless, spontaneous, anonymous revolutions of all time.” | The revolution was spontaneously perpetrated by the people. |
| **Smith – Revisionist**  | “When the February revolution came, it was not as the result of military defeat, or even war weariness, but as the result of the collapse of public support in the government. | Government & Tsarist regime to blame for revolution |
| **Collapse of Tsarism** |
| **Pares – Western**  | “No-one made the Russian revolution; unless it was the autocracy itself… it was the direct result of the utter bankruptcy of the autocracy.” | Tsarism to blame |
| **Orlando figes -**  | “Time and Time again, the obstinate refusal of the tsarist regime to concede reforms turned what should have been a political problem, into a revolutionary crisis… The tsarist regime’s downfall was not inevitable, but its own stupidity made it so.” | Tsarism to blame |
| **1917 October revolution** |
| **Obichkin – Soviet**  | “In his guidance of the uprising, Lenin’s genius as a leader of the masses, a wise and fearless strategist, who clearly saw what direction the revolution would take, was strikingly revealed.” | Lenin = GreatLenin and Bolsheviks cause of revolution |
| **Pipes – Western**  | “October was a classic coup de’tat, the capture of the governmental authority by a small band… with a show of mass participation, but with hardly any mass involvement.” | Bolsheviks to blame |
| **Acton – Revisionist**  | “The October revolution emerges as very much more than a conspiratorial coup de’tat. By then the central political issue was that of soviet power.” | Movement of the people |
| **Pipes – Western** | “The events that led to the overthrow of the provisional government were not spontaneous but carefully plotted and staged by a tightly organised conspiracy…” | Bolshevik’s overthrew provis. gov.Top down rev |
| **Adam Ulam - Soviet** | “The Bolsheviks did not seize power, they picked it up” | Bolsheviks took power from the provis gov, who HAD no power. |
| **Richard Pipes – western** | “It was a surreptitious seizure of the nerve centres of the modern state, carried out under false slogans in order to neutralize the population at large, the true purpose of which was revealed only after the new claimants to power were firmly in the saddle”  | Bolshevik perpetrated rev – seeking power, not for the people |
| **Pipes – western** | “Communism, thus did not come to Russia as a result of a popular uprising, it was imposed on her from above by a small minority hiding behind democratic slogans.” | Rev from above by Bolsheviks |
| **John Reed – Soviet** | “Instead of being a destructive force, it seems to me that the Bolshevik were the only party in Russia with a constructive programme and the power to impose it on the country. If the had not succeeded the government when they did, there is little doubt in my mind that the armies of imperial Germany would have been in Petrograd and Moscow in December, and Russia would again be ridden by a Tsar.” | Bolshevik revolution, for the good. |
| **Pipes - Western** | “Whatever grievances they may have harboured – real and fancified – the ‘masses’ neither needed nor desired a revolution; the only group interested in it was the intelligentsia.” | Masses not need a revBolsheviks + intelligentsia cause |
| **History of the CPSU** | “The revolution was victorious because its vanguard was the working class which headed the movement of millions of peasants clad in soldiers’ uniform demanding ‘Peace, bread and liberty’” | Successful rev. perpetrated by the masses |
| **Trotsky – soviet** | “…The country had so radically down the people’s throat again.” |  |
| **Pipes** | “Totally out of touch with reality, if not positively mad.” (On Lenin’s April theses) | APRIL THESES |
| **Lynch - Western** | “1917 did not mark a complete break with the past. Rather, it was the replacement of one form of state-authoritarianism with another” | Swapped dictatorships |
| **Post Revolution** |
| **Initial decrees** |
| Western | Pipes | “[Lenin’s initial decrees] adversely affected the interests of the workers and peasants” | **Decrees BAD** |
| **Civil War** |
| **Interpretation** | **Historian** | **Quote** | **Paraphrase** |
| **Soviet** | Deutscher | “The single-party system became for the Bolsheviks an inescapable necessity. Their own survival, and no doubt the survival of the revolution, depended on it” | Single party rule necessary, so too was brutality. |
| **Western** | Thomas and McAndrew | “The communists might have controlled the railways, the large industrial enterprises and the armed forces, but not the hearts and minds of the people.” | Bolsheviks do not represent the people |
| **Revisionist** | Figes | “Nothing did more to shape the ruling attitudes of the Bolsheviks than the experience of the civil war… The bolshevism that emerged from the Civil War viewed itself as a crusading brotherhood of comrades in arms, conquering Russia and the world with a red pencil in one hand, and a gun in the other.” | Brutality and Bureaucracy, unable to change from survivalist mentality. |
| **Western** | Wolfson | "...the participation of the Allies and the behaviour of the White Armies undoubtedly gave the Reds additional support among ordinary people - were they not defending the homeland from acquisitive foreigners? Peasants did not love the Bolsheviks, but they loved the Whites even less, especially when the latter were suspected of aiming to restore land to the former owners." | Civil War lent support to Bolsheviks – They rallied to the Red Flag when threatened by the White. |
| **E.H Carr** | Revisionist | “Almost every step taken by them was either a reaction to some pressing emergency or a reprisal for some action against them. In seeking to ride the storm were they themselves driven before it?” | No time to implement true communist reforms |
| **War Communism and NEP** |
| **Soviet** | History of the CPSU | “War communism had been an attempt to take the fortress of the capitalist elements in town and countryside by assault… Now Lenin proposed to retire a little… To change from an assault of the fortress to the slower method of a siege, so as to gain greater strength and resume the offensive.” | Change from war communism to NEP, necessary and clever step toward socialism |
| **Revisionist** | Volkogonov | “Lenin apparently never asked himself why, before 1921, the Bolsheviks were incapable of giving the people anything but chaos, civil war, hunger and terror. The fact is, the Bolsheviks had achieved their goal; the Party had power.” | Bolsheviks only caused trouble, sole goal of the party was to achieve power |
| **Western** | Figes | “War communism was not just a response to the civil war; it was also a means of making civil war… The policies of war communism were seen by the Bolsheviks as an instrument of struggle against their social or “Internal” enemies.” | War Communism essentially, would eventually cause another civil war. |
| **Soviet** | Joseph Stalin | “The best times then were considered to be the days on which we could distribute to the workers of Leningrad and Moscowone-eighth of a pound of black bread, and even that was half bran. And this continued...for two whole years." | Severity of famine under War Communism |
| **Red Terror** |
| **Soviet** | Hill | “The attempt to overthrow the Bolsheviks after the revolution produced cruelties indeed; but the revolutionary process abolished a regime of despair and created a new world of hope.” | Red Terror necessary |
| **Western** | Volkogonov | “Lenin wanted earthly happiness for the people, at least those he called the “Proletariat”. But he regarded it as normal to build this “Happiness” on blood, coercion and the denial of freedom.” | Red Terror bad – Lenin best intentions |
| **Revisionist** | Figes | “The Red Terror did not come out of the blue. It was implicit in the regime from the start… The Bolsheviks were forced to turn increasingly to terror to silence their political critics and subjugate a society they could not control by any other means.” | Red Terror – Forced to happen by opposition |
| **Western** | Dmitri Volkogonov | “Threatened by danger, the Bolsheviks resorted to the most repugnant means of saving their state, mass terror against their own people. They kept Lenin’s promise to turn the imperialist war into a civil war.” | Bolsheviks resort to terror BAD TERROR! |
| **Lenin’s Leadership** |
| **Soviet** | Obichkin | “The leadership given by Lenin, and the Bolshevik party, the valiant struggle and the heroism of the workers of the red guard, the soldiers and the sailors, ensured the success of one of the greatest events in world history – the overthrow of the power of the landowners and capitalists.” | Lenin + Bolsheviks heroes & revolution a success |
| **Western** | Lieven | “To impose such immense sacrifices in the name of so naive and flawed a vision makes Lenin one of the greatest criminals o the 20th century.” | Lenin – evil fool |
| **Revisionist** | Service | “While Lenin was cunning and untrustworthy, he was also dedicated to the ultimate goal of communism. He enjoyed power, he lusted after it. He yearned to keep his party in power. But he wanted power for a purpose. He was determined that the Bolsheviks should initiate the achievement of a world without exploitation and oppression.” | Lenin perhaps bad person, but dedicated to ultimate utopia for all |
| **Western** | Richard Pipes | “Lenin didn't care for the people of Russia, unlike the Tsar” | Tsar = BETTER |
| **Western** | Michael Lynch | “…there was something essentially totalitarian about lenin himself. He did not know how to act in any other way. He had always accepted the necessity of terror as an instrument of political control…” | Lenin totalitarian |
| **Western** | Volkogonov | "Dogma deprived the Bolsheviks of common sense" | Bolsehviks = dumb |
| **Soviet** | Lenin | "History will not forgive us if we do not assume power" | derp |
| **Western** | Richard Pipes | "Lenin is the father of modern terrorism" | Lenin baaad |
| **Western** | Richard pipes | “Lenin was a mass murderer” |
| **Summary of Lenin’s communist regime** |
| **Soviet** | Deutscher | “Besieged fortresses are hardly ever ruled in a democratic manner.” | Lack of democracy due to lack of peace |
| **Western** | Pipes | “Judged in terms of its own aspirations: The communist regime was a monumental failure.” | Failure. |
| **Revisionist** | Figes | “Russia in the 1920’s remained a society at war with itself – full of unresolved social tensions and resentments just beneath the surface. In this sense, the deepest legacy of the revolution was its failure to eliminate the social inequalities that had brought it about in the first place.” | Ultimately a failure – Perhaps grew from it’s failure to be stronger; therefore maintained these failures? |
| **Western** | Alan White | "In April 1917...Lenin declared that Russia was one of the freest countries in the world. In truth, under the Bolshevik regime, Russians were stripped of most the rights they briefly enjoyed in 1917." | No freedom – Lenin bad |
| **Western** | Alan Wood | "For him [Lenin], true democracy was the rule of the Bolshevik Party, the voice of the Revolutionary masses. This idea was based on the notion that the workers needed the enlightened leadership of the Bolsheviks to guide them towards the achievement of their revolutionary potential." | Lenin was ignorant to the wants of the people, believed they needed intelligentsia to rule |
| **Western** | Volkogonov | "their promises rapidly changed into coercion, limitation and alteration" “The Bolsheviks clung to power at any cost”  | Bolshevik Deceit |
| **Western** | Volkogonov | “The Bolsheviks clung to power at any cost” | Bolshevik greed |
| **Revisionist** | Service | "There had been created a centralised, one-ideology dictatorship of a single party which permitted no challenge to its monopoly of power..." | Lenin = Dictator |
| **Revisionist** | Avrich | “The retention of power dwarfed all other objectives. The party of opposition and revolt had become the party of discipline and order” | Bolshevik greed |
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| **Kronstadt Rebellion** |
| **Soviet** | Isaac Deutscher | "Denounced the men of Kronstadt as counter-revolutionary mutineers, led by a White general. The denunciation appears to have been groundless." | Kronstadt sailors NOT led be white general etc |
| **Western** | Berkman | "The Kronstadt experience proves once more that government, the State -- whatever its name or form -- is ever the mortal enemy of liberty and popular self-determination. The state has no soul, no principles. It has but one aim -- to secure power and hold it, at any cost. That is the political lesson of Kronstadt."  | Government = bad, even socialist |
| **Soviet** | Victor Serge | "defeated sailors belonged body and sole to the Revolution; they had voiced the suffering and the will of the Russian people, yet, hundreds of prisoners were taken away to Petrograd; months later they were still being shot in small batches, a senseless and criminal agony" (particularly as they were)"prisoners of war . . . and the Government had for a long time promised an amnesty to its opponents on condition that they offered their support"). The "responsibilities of the Bolshevik Central Committee had been simply enormous" and "the subsequent repression . . . needlessly barbarous." | Needless brutality to the Kronstadt sailors, critical view of Bolshevik regime |
| **Soviet** | Victor Serge | "Right from the first moment, at a time when it was easy to mitigate the conflict, the Bolshevik leaders had no intention of using anything but forcible methods." | Bolsehviks immediately ready to destroy opposition |
| **Failure of Revolution** |
| **Revisionist** | Orlando Figes | "If there was a one lesson to be drawn from the Russian Revolution it was that the people had failed to emancipate themselves. They had failed to become their own political masters, to free themselves from emperors and become citizens."  | Failed due to peoples inability to adapt |
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