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Where Trotsky's Train Comes From: A Literary Scholar's View of a Revolutionary's Biography

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The article discusses the autobiography of Leon Trotsky (published by Bronshtein in 1930) from a psychoanalytic angle. Trotsky the revolutionary leader was a key figure in the October 1917 coup, and a statesman second only to Lenin in the early years of the Soviet regime. The article concentrates on Trotsky's departure from Judaism and evolution toward Christianity. The author sees this drift as parallel to Trotsky's transition from the Jewish bourgeoisie to the Russian proletariat. The next step in this process of denationalization would be Trotsky's embracing of world revolution. Bolshevik terror became for Trotsky a form of emancipation from his personal past.

Keywords Church, Jewry, Lenin, proletariat, Stalin, terror, train, Trotsky

The present article is a literary scholar's reading of Trotsky's autobiographical prose, using philological methods to analyze the historical material in Trotsky's text. The approach is particularly appropriate, given that Trotsky's book is structured as a *Bildungsroman*. The article analyzes the autobiography's generic and peculiar stylistic features before arriving at a conclusion about the Jewish Communist's ambivalent and conflicted identity.

In 1929, Leon Trotsky, then a key Bolshevik leader, was exiled from Soviet Russia. While this came as a shock to the World Communist Movement, Trotsky himself preferred to see his exile as nothing more than a new stage in his struggle against Stalin. In the same year, he published a book of memoirs titled *My Life: An Attempt at an Autobiography*. In the Foreword, Trotsky wrote:

By the time this book is published I shall have reached fifty. *My birthday coincides with the day of the October Revolution*. Mystics and Pythagoreans may draw from this fact whatever conclusions they like. I myself noticed this odd coincidence only three years after the October [coup].¹

But the suggestion seems doubtful even if one is not a mystic or a Pythagorean. It is hardly likely that Trotsky should have remained unaware of such an odd coincidence even on the very day when the October Revolution took place, or, more precisely, on the following morning (the 1917 October coup took place late in the

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evening on October 25, Old Style, which corresponds to November 7, New Style). Trotsky's birthday was on October 26. He allegedly first noticed the coincidence only in 1920 ("three years after the coup"), the year when Lenin's 50th birthday was celebrated with pomp:

I have grown accustomed to viewing the historical perspective not from the standpoint of my personal fate. To understand the causal sequence of events and to find somewhere in the sequence one's own place—that is the first duty of a revolutionary.²

Let us note, however, that this passage does not merely reflect the historical "causal sequence"; it rather actually *produces* it. The revolutionary process as conveyed by the memoirs is telescoped in the author's own charismatic personality; history breathes through his lungs and speaks through his mouth. The Revolution was born in him and together with him, on the same day of October 26, 1879. It had even been conceived together with him; the spirits of the Revolution had hovered over his cradle; the Magi brought him gifts of terror:

*The year of my birth was the year of a dynamite attack on Tsarism. The terrorist party of the "People's Will," which had emerged a short time previously, sentenced Alexander II to death on August 26, 1879, two months before I was born.*³

A general picture of the late 1800s Russian era of terror follows this announcement; but there is not a single word in it about the pogroms perpetrated against the Jews in Southern Russia, including Trotsky's own native Kherson Region, after the assassination of Czar Alexander II.

At this early point, the two planes on which the narrative unfolds, the historical and the personal, have not yet become one; they are merely collocated, their synthesis only foreshadowed. The introductory historical panorama concludes in a pastoral tone:

But neither the echoes of parliamentary debates nor those of diplomatic events, nor even those of the explosions of dynamite, could be heard in the village of Yanovka where I first saw the light and where I spent the first nine years of my life.⁴

The sleepy backyard of history, where fate had placed the young Bronshtein-future Trotsky, is pictured as a land of shepherds, touched by capitalist civilization here and there, but still retaining its pristine scriptural contours. Traces of tales and legends are discernible in Trotsky's political economy, sometimes with Marquis-de-Carabas overtones:

In driving through the country, one would pass a huge flock of sheep. "Whom do these belong to?" one would ask. "To Falz-Fein." You met a hay wagon on the road. Whom was the hay for? For Falz-Fein. . . . A string of camels suddenly startles you with its bellowing.⁵ Only Falz-Fein owns camels. He had imported stallions from America and bulls from Switzerland. . . . His flocks increased as well as his pastures and his business.⁶

The crops and the herds of Falz-Fein's neighbor, the Jewish farmer David Bronshtein, were also increasing. Bronshtein, Trotsky's father, came from one of the families resettled in the newly colonized southern regions of Russia during the reign of Nicholas I. Bronshtein was a wealthy farmer by the time his younger son Leon was born.

It is from the heights of the Marxist absolute that the author of *My Life* looks back upon his own empirical germination, ruminating upon the ripening of his juvenile ego in the hinterland. Trotsky often switches to the third person singular in speaking about his childhood. Such a grammatical detachment ploy was common during the preceding few centuries, but it sounds strange in a modern autobiography, a suggestion of narcissism, if not of outright schizophrenia:⁷

Distancing himself from his infancy, the author sets it, as it were, in primeval Chaos—which already contains the possibility of a new Bethlehem.

Like many a staunch atheist, Trotsky in his early years evinces a keen interest in religion, though not in his ancestral one, but in the various confessional and quasi-confessional movements of the day. His first research dealt with the Freemasons; in his youth he would often willingly confer with members of the unorthodox sects; and during his prison terms, he studied the history of heresies and read *Pravoslavnoe Obozrenie* (*The Orthodox Review*) and other church literature with a great deal of attention.

Trotsky's later recollections of these readings are ironic, but the fact speaks for itself, as does his distancing himself from the Old Testament. He would always treat Judaism with a thinly concealed dislike or affected alienation; as Carmichael,⁸ Nedava,⁹ Wistrich,¹⁰ and his other biographers emphasize, Trotsky tried to minimize or eliminate his own Jewishness:

In my father's family there was no strict observance of religion. At first, appearances were kept up through sheer inertia: on holy days my parents journeyed to the synagogue in the colony; Mother abstained from sewing on Saturdays, at least within the sight of others. But all this ceremonial observance of religion lessened as the years went on—as the children grew up and the prosperity of the family increased. Father did not believe in God from his youth.¹¹

In the group portrait painted by Trotsky, the family teeters on the rim of the Old Testament, not quite daring to abandon it. The impact of new libertine influences begins to manifest itself in the form of pig breeding on the family farm. Trotsky mentions the fact of the presence of the swine in passing, but the reader is led to suspect a lingering Judaic reflex behind the account of the pigs uprooting an entire lot and completely destroying the garden.¹²

It was common practice among Jewish revolutionaries, including Bolsheviks, to deprecate their origins. Many converted to Christianity, a step made all the easier for the atheists who saw baptism as a purely technical measure. Strategies along these lines may have been lent further support by the anti-Judaic view of the New Testament as a canon open to all nations, unlike the Old.

Contrary to popular belief, socialist movements throughout the world are not free of racism or of Judeo-phobia.¹³ Socialists such as Fourier, Proudhon, W. Marr,

and E. Duehring were, arguably, anti-Semites; the young Marx's article "Toward the Jewish Question"¹⁴ is also problematic in this respect. Before the years of the Dreyfus affair and even later, anti-Semitism was widespread as a feature of labor movements, especially in Austria, Germany, and the Polish lands; this despite the active involvement of Jews in Social-Democratic activism. When it became necessary to reconcile these moods with the movements' officially declared internationalism, Marxist theorists appropriated the model of Christian mission: Judeophobia was replaced by the ideal of total assimilation of the Jews in their Christian milieu. This is well illustrated by the stand taken by the 1891 Congress of the Second International in Brussels: avoiding an outright condemnation of anti-Semitism, the Congress called upon the "Yiddish-speaking workers" to blend into the socialist parties of their respective nations. A very similar solution (no doubt prompted by Catholic proselytizing) was proposed by the Austrian Socialist Otto Bauer, a baptised Jew who demanded full national and cultural autonomy for all peoples except the Jews, who were supposed to assimilate into their Christian environment.

A similar mixture of anti-Semitic and assimilatory tendencies was characteristic of the early Russian socialists known as the *Narodniki* (the Populists), including members of "The People's Will" (*Narodovol'tsy*), a radical leftist terrorist organization. For them, Duehring was a cult figure.¹⁵ Suffice it to mention their ecstatic reaction to the anti-Jewish pogroms of the early 1880s. They hoped that the pogroms would catalyze a mass rebellion, a stance that flattered some Jewish members of "The People's Will," i.e., the terrorists, to such an extent that they actually welcomed the pogroms.¹⁶

The Marxist heirs of the *Narodniki* did not free themselves from the burden of these national and religious prejudices. Consciously or unconsciously, the same prejudice was also absorbed by many Jewish Marxists. Christian ecumenism masquerading as socialist internationalism provided them with a sublime justification for dropping what they disdainfully called "national narrowness." When they spoke of "the oppressed People" for whose deliverance they struggled, they meant, first and foremost, the Russian People, and not the Jews. This inverted religious position is studied in detail in my book on Stalin.¹⁷

The resultant quasi-religious stance became the source of inner polemics within the Russian Social-Democratic Workers Party (RSDRP): on the one hand, there were the Bolsheviks and such Jewish-born leaders as Trotsky and Martov; on the other hand, there were the Jewish Social Democrats who were also members of the Bund faction. The former accused the latter of *shtetl* nationalism allegedly inherent in the petty bourgeois nature of the Jewish labor movement. Indeed, Lenin went so far as to mobilize Stalin to attack the Bund. This was when Stalin wrote his famous pamphlet on "Marxism and the National Question" (1913),¹⁸ in which the former clerical seminary student's Marxist rhetoric combines with an anti-Judaic Orthodox discourse.

As early as the Second Congress of the RSDRP, the Bolsheviks turned the dichotomy of "law and grace" against the Menshevik "Talmudists and textualists": using terms borrowed from St. Paul, these last were accused of being true to "the letter and not to the spirit" of Marxist doctrine. Stalin would eventually apply this common Bolshevik homiletic to the fight against the Left Opposition within the Communist Party itself.

Thus, according to Stalin, Zinoviev "preserves the letter and has substituted the letter of disparate Marxist propositions for the point of view of Marxism, for its

method.”¹⁹ To this Stalin adds the constantly reiterated reproaches of “lack of belief” and national rootlessness. He berates Trotsky and his followers, whom he disparagingly calls “revolutionary tourists,” of being petty bourgeois and of being fatally isolated from Russian life, from the Russian proletariat, and from its leader Lenin. It is telling, stresses Stalin, that the Trotskyites “are praised by the Bund capitulator Abramovich.”²⁰

Trotsky’s *My Life* was largely a response to invective of this type. The reproaches were all the more offensive to him, considering that Trotsky as a revolutionary had matured among the *Narodniki*, had preserved his connections with them, and was known as one of the most enthusiastic Russian patriots among the Bolsheviks. His strategy in the book is to demonstrate his deep rootedness in the Russian working class. Just as Trotsky’s birthday is the birthday of the Russian proletarian revolution, so his own origins are made to suit his Messianic predestination. Therefore, parallel to the rejection of his national and religious heritage, he surreptitiously introduces the theme of an alternative family and a new genealogy. To this end, he retrospectively detects in his early childhood a tendency that he had to distance himself from his real parents.

Freud believed that the psychological background of such distancing was the sense of lack of parental love. The child’s later estrangement from his parents sometimes evolves into the form Freud called “a neurotic’s family romance,” with the child’s imagination kept busy freeing him from his real parents, whom he now holds in contempt, and replacing them with other people of a higher status.²¹

As a result, Trotsky’s Jewish father, a farmer (that is, in Bolshevik terminology, a petty bourgeois), would fade into a kind of Josef the Betrothed, devoid of sexual vitality or parental power. With this aim in view, the author strips the Bronshtein couple of bodily desires in favour of a purely economic symbiosis, with asceticism assuming the guise of fatigue from work. Theirs is not a marital union, but rather a social cell:

There was no display of tenderness²² in the family, especially in the early years. But there was a strong comradeship of labour between mother and father. . . . They both knew what it was to reach the limits of physical exhaustion.²³

Indeed, Trotsky constructs a full-scale “family romance”: he finds a suitable substitute paternal figure, more acceptable from the class viewpoint, in the person of the local mechanic employed by his father, or, as he calls him, the *machinist*.²⁴ In twentieth-century Russian, this term had a single unambiguous meaning: “engine driver,” or “engineer” in the old sense of the word (one may surmise that Trotsky here chooses the archaic term in view of the important role that the train metaphor will play at the end of the book):

A very important, in fact, the most important, place in Yanovka was the machine-shop, where Ivan Vasilyevich Gryeben worked. . . . This Ivan Vasilyevich was handsome and gifted. He wore a dark reddish moustache and a beard cut in the French fashion. His technical knowledge was comprehensive. He could rebuild an engine, repair a boiler, turn a metal or a wooden ball, cast a brass bearing, make a spring carriage, mend a clock, tune a piano.²⁵

The list of skills goes on. The vast scope of the proletarian talents of Ivan Vasilyevich includes playing the old spinet abandoned by its original owners and a knack for walking while shod in wooden platform shoes. The little Lyova adores “the engineer” and learns the manual skills and arts and trades from him.²⁶ The boy is particularly charmed by “his magic fingers”; we shall soon get back to this meaningful detail.

Ivan Vasilyevich is the father's main helper; he takes part in all family affairs. Everybody's favourite place of repose is a large sofa stationed in the dining room; it can seat the entire family. The sofa is torn in two places: “the smaller hole is [near the end] where Ivan Vasilyevich's armchair stands, the bigger one, [near the end]²⁷ where I am sitting next to my father.” These holes are narrative passageways for the winds of the Revolution: “We haven't covered [the sofa] since the year the Tsar was killed,” Mother notes.²⁸

Their positions at opposite ends of the sofa notwithstanding, there is no enmity between the farmer and his “engineer”; on the contrary, the two complement each other. Ivan Vasilyevich's entry upon the stage of the narrated sequence of events is insistently linked with the birth of the hero. When talk at the dinner table turns to the children's ages and the time when Ivan Vasilyevich began working for the family, “Mother says glancing slyly at me: ‘And Lyova was brought over from the farm all ready-made.’”²⁹ This is not an accidental touch but a hint at a magical, far-reaching coincidence of chronologies. The connection between the two narratives, “the engineer's” and Lyova's, is further developed elsewhere in the text:

I used to sit down beside him and gently curl his thick, auburn moustache around my finger, or examine his hands, those unmistakable hands of the artisan. Their skin was all covered with little black spots that he had got from cutting millstones. His fingers were as tenacious as roots, but not hard. They were broad at the tips but very supple, and his thumb turned far backward, forming an arch. Each finger was self-conscious, and lived and acted by itself, but together they formed a very effective labour-union. I was still quite young, but already I could feel that that hand did not hold a hammer or a pair of pliers as other hands did.³⁰

The focus on the hand of the master is fraught with ideological overtones. According to Engels (1896), it was the hand with its mobility and suppleness that allowed apes to evolve into human beings in the process of engaging in labour. In speaking of “the labour union” of Ivan Vasilyevich's fingers, Trotsky is replacing Scriptural genealogy with Marxist-Darwinist motifs.

Trotsky recounts how he fell ill as a child; he was saved by no other than the omnipresent Ivan Vasilyevich. Together with two good Christians, Ivan Vasilyevich helps the child through the rite of passage from his parental house to the great new world. This is tantamount to the passage from the Old Testament to the New:

My mother was not very orthodox, but on the Sabbath day she would not travel to town. Ivan Vasilyevich accompanied me. We put up at the house of Little Tatyana, our former servant, who had married in Bobrinetz. She had no children, and therefore there was no danger of contagion.³¹

Tatiana's childlessness is a meaningful detail, a technical precondition allowing the boy to enter a new family. His Judaic mother, who remains in the kingdom of the Sabbath, is replaced with a good-hearted Christian:

Dr. Shatunovsky examined my throat, took my temperature, and as usual asserted that it was too early to know anything. Tatyana gave me a beer-bottle in the interior of which a complete little *church* had been constructed out of tiny sticks and boards. My legs and arms ceased to bother me. I recovered. When did this occur? Not long before the beginning of *the new era in my life*.³²

And so, as was the case with many other terrorists, a pivotal moment in Trotsky's biography occurs at a time of temporal death and resurrection.

In describing the beginning of this new era, Trotsky explains that this was the year when he first learned about measuring time and the calendar; that is, about history manifested as a chronological sequence:

And so 1885 became the first numbered year in my consciousness. It put an end to the *formless, prehistoric, chaotic epoch of my earlier life*: from now on I knew a chronology. . . . *It marked an era*.³³

Thus, the onset of the new, Christian *era* marked for Trotsky the end of the prehistoric one, that is, that of *Judaic chaos*. The concept may well have been borrowed from the autobiographic 1925 prose work *Shum Vremeni (The Din of Time)* by Osip Mandelstam.³⁴ Just as he had done earlier, Trotsky coordinates the stages of his own development with the onward movement of the elemental revolutionary forces to which fate itself surreptitiously links him:

It was a year of crop failures, of crises, and of the first large labour disturbances in Russia. But it was the incomprehensible name of the year that had struck me. Apprehensively I endeavoured to divine the hidden relation between time and numbers. There followed a series of years which moved slowly at first and then faster and faster. But 1885 stood out amongst them as an elder does, as the head of the clan. . . . A year later I began to study.³⁵

The spiritual leap from chaos, implicitly Judaic, into civilization and history, implicitly Christian, is accompanied by the accumulation of proletarian knowledge. The boy spends hours in his beloved machine shop, listening to the conversations of grownups. His horizons expand "by the hour rather than by the day." Trotsky borrows this turn of phrase from Pushkin's "Tale of Tsar Saltan," where it describes the miraculous growth of the child hero ("*I rastet rebenok tam/Ne po dnyam, a po chasam*"); in *My Life*, too, the expression is in tune with the motif of metamorphosis. One of the workers, Ignat the stoker, who has gotten a job at a factory in town, is telling his former machine-shop mates,

. . . about the city and about the work, conditions, machinery and wages he had found there.

"Of course, it's a factory," began Foma meditatively.

“A factory isn't a machine-shop!” observed Philip. And they all looked thoughtful, as if seeing beyond the machine-shop.

“Is there much machinery in the city?” asked Victor eagerly.

“A whole forest of it!”

I listened with all my ears, and saw in my mind's eye a factory with machines in it as thick as trees in a forest; machines to the right, to the left, before, behind; machines everywhere . . .³⁶

Images such as “a forest of machinery” were among the mandatory clichés of Russian Marxist rhetoric when it came to depicting capitalist industrialization, the concomitant growth of the proletariat, and the promise of a proletarian revolution. It seems that the author's memory here had been adjusted to Marxist ideology in retrospect. However that may be, after his acquaintance with the “base” provided by the economy, the prodigal son of the landlord-farmer encounters the cultural “superstructure”: it is the workers who introduce Lyova to the theater (remember Ivan Vasilyevich's spinet and wooden shoes!); they stimulate his love of poetry and of literary creation. It is only natural that this wonderful change should be associated with Christmas:

It must have been during Christmas week of 1886, because I already knew how to write at the time, that a troop of mummers tumbled into the dining-room one evening while we were at tea. It was so sudden that I fell on the divan from fright. I was quieted, and listened avidly to “Czar Maximilian.”³⁷ For the first time a fantastic world was revealed to me, a world transformed into a theatrical reality. I was amazed when I learned that the main role was being played by the working man Prokhor, a former soldier. Next day, with pencil and paper in hand, I penetrated into the servants' quarters after dinner, and besought Czar Maximilian to dictate his monologues to me . . .

Be that as it may, I had tasted of the tree of knowledge. Life was unfolding, not merely daily but even hourly. From the torn divan in the dining-room threads stretched to other worlds.³⁸

In order to follow the direction of the mysterious threads, we need to take note of one more meaningful symbol which casts a magical ray upon the future fate of the hero. The child's only toy from the world of machinery and industry had been made by the same Ivan Vasilyevich; judging by the context of its description, it, too, had been presented to Lyova around Christmas time: “One winter evening our [engine-driver]³⁹ Ivan Vasilyevich cut a little railway car with wheels and windows out of cardboard and pasted it together.”⁴⁰

This gift was to have a long and glorious life.⁴¹ The embryo railway car launched by the “engineer” Ivan Vasilyevich grew into a world-famous locomotive, the one known as “Trotsky's armoured train.” Trotsky spent over two years in it, rushing in all directions along the railways of the Civil War. A whole chapter of his autobiography, entitled “The Train,” is devoted to it; the image of the train becomes the author's chief metaphor throughout the book. Even human psychology is represented in railway terms: the psyche has “its own buffers, brakes, and safety-valves, an extensive and well-devised system which stands guard against untimely and . . . drastic shocks.”⁴²

The train becomes an awesome technical reincarnation of Trotsky himself. The Bolshevik army commander is personified by the tons of metal: “The train linked the front with the base, solved urgent problems on the spot, educated, appealed, supplied, rewarded, and punished”⁴³; “[t]he train was the initiator”; “[t]he train earned itself the hatred of the enemies and was proud of it”⁴⁴; “[t]he train was always informed of what was going on in the rest of the world,”⁴⁵ perhaps even in the spheres beyond, as reflected in the phrase that brings back the child’s mysticism of the old sofa: “The train was for them [the Red Army soldiers] a messenger of *other worlds*.”⁴⁶

Like his first teacher, Trotsky does not limit himself to the role of the “engineer”; he builds and repairs trains throughout the expanse of Soviet Russia. At Lenin’s request, he assumes the responsibility for Russia’s entire transportation system.

The truly mystical culmination of the autobiography is a brief moment fraught with fateful meaning not only for the author, but for the entire world. It is the night of the October coup, the late evening hours on October 25 and the early hours of the next day. The Winter Palace in St. Petersburg has already been stormed by the insurgents. We should remember that it is also the eve of the Congress of the Soviets and of Leon Trotsky’s birthday:

Late that evening, as we were waiting for the opening of the Congress of the Soviets, Lenin and I were resting in a room adjoining the meeting-hall, a room entirely empty except for chairs. Someone had spread a blanket on the floor for us; someone else, I think it was Lenin’s sister, had brought us pillows. We were lying side by side; body and soul were relaxing like . . . taut strings. It was a well-earned rest. We could not sleep, so we talked in low voices. . . . There was a rare sincerity in his voice.⁴⁷

Considering his Freudian interests, it is unlikely that Trotsky was unaware of the self-evident sexual undercurrent of this scene. But even if its erotic connotations are left aside, such a close symbiosis of the two fathers of October cannot help pointing at the substantial, inner unity of Trotsky and Lenin. It was by Trotsky (1920) that Lenin was proclaimed the ideal embodiment of the Russian nation and of the Russian proletariat about to change the world.

We may sum up by saying that Trotsky in his autobiography represents his life as the unfolding of two parallel processes, one consisting of a deliberate self-detachment from his Jewish roots, and the other no less deliberately aimed at identifying with the Russian proletariat and with its leader. This act of self-identification is what entitles Trotsky to claim the moral right to become Lenin’s replacement and successor.

Notes

1. Leon Trotsky, *My Life: An Attempt at an Autobiography* (New York: Pathfinder, 1970), xxxv. The English text was first published by Scribner; the name of the translator was not indicated. Cf. the Russian original: *Moya zhizn’: Opyt avtobiografii* (Berlin: Granit, 1930). The 1970 English translation which I use more or less corresponds to the 1930 Russian published text. In addition, in square brackets I occasionally provide the English equivalents of Trotsky’s Russian instead of the expressions used in the published translation. While Trotsky’s translator opted for the more positively coloured “uprising” as a term rendering

the Russian *vosstanie*, here and throughout Trotsky himself uses the word *perevorot* (“coup”). The italics are mine. —*translator's note*.

2. Trotsky, *My Life* (see note 1 above), xxxv.
3. *Ibid.*, 5.
4. *Ibid.*
5. In the original, the camels “frighten you by their appearance” (“*svoim vidom*,” Trotsky, *Moya zhizn'* (see note 1 above), I, 50).
6. Trotsky, *My Life* (see note 1 above), 33.
7. Gavriila Romanovich Derzhavin (1743–1816) wrote his *Zapiski* (*Notes*) in the third person in keeping with the classicist canon. Gary Kern overlooks the archaic overtones of such usage in Trotsky: “The period of childhood poses a special problem for Trotsky, since the child is not a historical figure. Trotsky, in fact, feels that his childhood belongs to a different world, and he tried at first to write about it in the third person” (Gary Kern, “Trotsky's Autobiography,” *Russian Review* 36, no. 3 (1977): 299). Trotsky identifies with his former self only when it is “historical.” Stalin also often referred to himself in the third person in his speeches, especially beginning in the mid-1920s, but his reason was different: Stalin officially looked up to his own elevated “historical” self. Cf. my account of the games that Stalin played with pronouns in Mikhail Vaiskopf, *Pisatel' Stalin* (Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2001), 75.
8. Joel Carmichael, *Trotsky: An Appreciation of His Life* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1975), 17–24.
9. Joseph Nedava, *Trotsky and the Jews* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1972), 34–35.
10. Robert Wistrich, *Trotsky: Fate of a Revolutionary* (London: Robson Books, 1979), 13.
11. Leon Trotsky, *My Life* (see note 1 above), 84.
12. *Ibid.*, 7.
13. W. H. Chaloner and W. O. Henderson, “Marx / Engels and Racism,” *Encounter* 45, no. 1 (1975): 18–23; Leon Polyakov, *A History of Anti-Semitism*, trans. Miriam Cochan, 4 vols. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974–1985), *passim*; cf. also Robert Wistrich, “Socialism and Judeophobia—Anti-Semitism in Europe Before 1914,” *Leo Baeck Institute: Year Book XXXVII* (London: Author, 1992), 111–145.
14. Karl Marx, *К еврейскому вопросу* [Towards the Jewish Question] (St. Petersburg: Дешевая библиотека тов-ва “Знание”, 1906).
15. Georgiy Plehanov and Pavel Axelrod, two of Duehring's principal followers, later became the founders of the Russian Social-Democratic Party. Axelrod also became one of the chief proponents of Duehring's ideas in Russia, despite the idol's rabid anti-Semitism; see David Ryazanov, Foreword to Friedrich Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, transl. and ed. Clemens Dutt, and with a preface and notes by J. S. Haldane (written in 1883, first published in 1927, imprint New York: International Publishers, 1971), xvi–xix.
16. “The self-denial of the Jewish members of ‘The People's Will’ was so great that a member of the Executive Committee, a Jew, put on a red shirt and appeared among the crowd of the pogrom rioters in Kiev in 1881 Of course, such actions, erroneous from the democratic point of view, were also a crime in relation to the Jewish People. But we must remember that this self-immolation, this sacrificing of their own blood brothers were in the name of their spiritual brothers, in the name of the Russian People's freedom, in the name of the liberation of all workers.” (S. G. Svatikov, “Evrei v Russkom Osvoboditel'nom Dvizhenii,” in O.V. Budnitsky, ed., *Evrei i Russkaya Revoliutsiya: Materialy i Issledovaniya* (Moscow: Gesharim, 1999), 140. Here and throughout, unless otherwise specified, the translations from the Russian are by Helena Tolstoy.
17. Mikhail Vaiskopf (see note 7 above), 136–155, 258–266.
18. See Stalin, *Сталин И.В. Сочинения* [Works of Stalin], vol. 2 (Moscow: State Publishing House of Political Literature, 1946), 290–367
19. I. V. Stalin, *Sochineniya* [Works] (Moscow: Ogiz, 1946–1951), IX:99.
20. *Ibid.*, X, 343. Owing to his last name, which was odious to Stalin, Rafail Abramovich (Rein) is here a symbolic figure, to be contrasted with Lenin. At about the same time, in 1927, i.e., during the devastating attack on the opposition, the Party's official poet Demian Bedny said to Korney Chukovsky in a private conversation: “Have you noticed something about the opposition? It's that, first of all, they are all Jews, and, secondly, they are all emigrants:

Kamenev, Zinov'iev, and Trotsky. Whenever something happens, Trotsky announces, 'I'll go abroad.' And we simple Russians have nowhere to go! Our motherland is here, here our spiritual possessions." K. Chukovsky, *Dnevnik 1901–1929* (Moscow: Sovetskiy pisatel', 1991), 427; cf. Vaisskopf (see note 7 above), 264–266.

21. Sigmund Freud, "Family Romances," in James Strachey, ed., *Collected Papers* (New York: Basic Books, 1959), V: 74–78. See also E. Victor Wolfenstein, *The Revolutionary Personality: Lenin, Trotsky, Gandhi* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973 [1967]), 54–55. In particular, note the reading of Trotsky's account of his childhood as a set of grievances screamed out by an unloved child whom his family accepts only after his superior intellectual talents become obvious.

22. The original here reads: "no tenderness." (Trotsky, *Moya Zhizn'* (see note 1 above), I: 35).

23. Trotsky, *My Life* (see note 1 above), 17–18.

24. The published English translation renders this as "mechanic." Only two of Trotsky's biographers seem to have noticed the real significance of this figure; see Isaac Deutscher, *The Prophet Armed: Trotsky, 1879–1921* (London, Oxford University Press, 1954), 9–10; and Wistrich, *Trotsky* (see note 10 above), 12ff.

25. Trotsky, *My Life* (see note 1 above), 20.

26. *Ibid.*, 38–39.

27. These "ends," possibly suggesting polarization, do not appear in the English version.

28. *Ibid.*, 10.

29. *Ibid.*, 4.

30. *Ibid.*, 21.

31. *Ibid.*, 35.

32. *Ibid.*

33. *Ibid.*

34. Osip Mandelstam, *The Prose of Osip Mandelstam*, trans. and with a critical essay by Clarence Brown (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), 88.

35. Trotsky, *My Life* (see note 1 above), 36–37.

36. *Ibid.*, 22–23.

37. This Russian folk play was first transcribed in the mid-nineteenth century.

38. *Ibid.*, 40.

39. That is, a *machinist*. The published version has "mechanic."

40. *Ibid.*, 3–4.

41. Oddly enough, Lyova's elder brother, at home with his family for Christmas, enters a hopeless competition with the donor, boasting that one could make another such railway car in no time. He does not, however, manage to do it. Thus, the brother fails to triumph over the mechanic, just as, in an earlier episode where he is cast as an agent of the father, he fails to catch the horse-thieving coachman.

42. *Ibid.*, 63.

43. *Ibid.*, 411.

44. *Ibid.*, 420.

45. *Ibid.*, 418.

46. *Ibid.*

47. *Ibid.*, 327. As if to buttress the political felicitousness of this spiritual confluence, Lenin is shown extending the idea of desirable union to the lower social classes: "What a wonderful sight: a worker with a rifle, side by side with a soldier, standing before a street fire!" he repeated with deep feeling. 'At last the soldier and the worker had been brought together!' Trotsky feels the same way: at last, their many conflicts and differences of opinion notwithstanding, fate has brought him together with Lenin. The matrimonial overtones of the scene have a precedent in the book *A Dozen Knives in the Back of the Revolution* by the famous humorist Arkady Averchenko. The book had attracted Lenin's attention. In it, Lenin and Trotsky are pictured as a married couple, with Trotsky as the husband: "Trotsky... personifies the glorious, the strong, the masculine element in this surprising marital union. Lenin is the *madame*, representing the complying, weaker marital element." See Arkady Averchenko, *Diuzhina Nozhey v Spinu Revoliutsii* (Paris: Bibliotheque Universelle, 1921; reprinted Jerusalem: Bumerang, 1979), 36–37.