

One other factor must be taken into account, one which illustrates the autocracy's unfailing ability to dig its own grave, in this case by confirming its potential enemies in their convictions. As the brother of a convicted terrorist Volodya was himself an object of increased government surveillance. The first key problem was his educational career. As a top student Volodya would have been entitled to walk into the best of universities. However, it took a long struggle for his headmaster, Fyodor Kerensky, to get him admitted to the local university in Kazan. Within months, he was expelled. Once again the hagiographic tradition had Volodya as a youthful student protest leader who was thrown out for his radical activities. Once again, we do not know for sure but there is no evidence to back up claims of precocious leadership. The thought that a young, newly arrived student would take the lead in radical protests is most unlikely though he might well have taken part. In any case, once disturbances had broken out, the authorities expelled all students considered to be potential as well as actual risks, such as those with terrorist brothers, as well as actual activists. Whatever the precise details, we do know that Volodya was expelled from Kazan and a regular career was almost closed to him, like thousands of others, throwing them further into radical and revolutionary activities as 'straight' career paths closed off in front of them.

As it turned out, expulsion was not the final nail in the coffin of Volodya's university career. Though he was not allowed to attend classes, he was later permitted to study law by correspondence at the University of St Petersburg.

LENIN BEGINS TO EMERGE: LIFE AND ACTIVITIES

The eight years following his expulsion from Kazan in 1887 were among the most significant of Lenin's life. Like any young person he developed rapidly in that time, between the ages of 17 and 25. It was not only in the intellectual and political sense that he matured but also in the personal and moral sense. The chrysalis of Volodya increasingly fell away and Lenin slowly, but not yet completely, emerged. The period is of particular interest because Lenin was still an ordinary person, albeit a tremendously intellectually gifted one. He lived a more normal, everyday existence than at any time subsequently in his adult life. Though we do not have a mass of material on these years they are

the last ones in which we can look at Volodya/Lenin as an ordinary person.

What characteristics can we discern? What kind of life did Lenin lead? Paradoxically, the most accurate way to describe his way of life at this moment would be to say that he led the life of a gentleman, in the sense that he did not have to earn a living but lived on inherited family money and rents, but a gentleman with radical tendencies. His awakening political sense brought him to dabble increasingly in radical circles but, as yet, he was far from being what he later described as a professional revolutionary. In fact, he seems to have engaged on a massive programme of self-education, formal and informal. The formal side led to superb results in his law degree. The informal side built up a massive curiosity about the world, about society and about the state of knowledge of that epoch. He became a voracious reader and we will examine the results in due course. Before that, there are a number of points we can make about Lenin's developing personality.

In 1886–8 the young Volodya had received a number of severe jolts, each of which would certainly be called 'traumatic' today. In January 1886 his father had died unexpectedly of a brain haemorrhage. Following that there was Alexander's arrest in March 1887, followed by his execution two months later. Consider this conjuncture in Volodya's life. On 17 May 1887 he began his final school exams which continued until mid-June. Three days later Alexander was hanged. In the harsh climate of the nineteenth century no concession was made for private grief. Today, all kinds of representations would have been made and postponements organized. This was not open to Volodya Ulyanov. Instead, he had to deal with his emotions and get on with his exams, which he did with great success. The experience did not appear to have fundamentally altered his personality in the direction of bitterness or cynicism, which would have been quite understandable in the circumstances. Lenin did claim later that it was in 1886 that he broke with religion and became a confirmed atheist – no halfway measures even for the young Lenin – but, otherwise, he remained much the same person he had been before in terms of his character. Despite the trauma, at the end of the exam period he was, as we have already seen, awarded a gold medal, the first of several significant intellectual achievements.

Sadly Volodya's triumph over adversity was not the happy ending to his troubles. His acceptance and then expulsion from Kazan University

was next in line and there were, as we shall see, further personal blows to be suffered a little further ahead. However, Lenin's development continued to be extraordinarily normal from the point of view of personality, though exceptional in the sense he was drawn more and more onto the path of revolution.

It was not, however, inevitable that Volodya/Lenin should have become a revolutionary. Exclusion from university was followed by police surveillance and a refusal of permission to travel abroad or, indeed, to Moscow or St Petersburg. For the next few years Lenin was trapped in the provinces and, for long periods of time, in the countryside. His uncle's estate at Kokushkino was replaced, in 1889, by a small estate inherited by his mother at Alakaevka, near Samara. For two years the only city in which he spent any time was Kazan. It appears that his mother harboured hopes that she might persuade her son to become a farmer. Volodya certainly spent time working on the Alakaevka estate but his recorded reason for not taking up the rural way of life is interesting. According to Krupskaya, he commented later that 'My mother would have liked me to have taken up farming. I started but soon realized that things were not going right. Relations with the peasants were abnormal.' [Krupskaya 35] What did Lenin mean? Most probably, he was complaining that it was impossible to have free and equal relations – person to person – with the peasants. It was already almost half a century since Turgenev had fallen foul of the authorities over his *Sportsman's Sketches*, which suggested the peasants were human beings too, but, for Lenin, relations between peasants and gentry remained strained. What a difference it would have made to the world had Volodya become a farmer and Lenin would never have been heard of!

It is also a rare, indirect admission by Lenin of the significance of his nominally noble and landowning status. In cold-war historiographies, and in some more recent ones, critics of Lenin have made a great deal of his landowner status and inherited title to infer that he was an aristocrat in the western sense. However, this really shows a profound misunderstanding of the situation. In Russia, titles, like that of Lenin's father, were given for state service, for being promoted as a civil servant. This was a long way from the life of the true aristocratic elite chronicled by, for example, Tolstoy in *Anna Karenina*. Lenin's sisters were not presented at grand balls, nor were they courted by devil-may-care army

officers. Their way of life was, as we have seen, privileged but much more modest than that of the aristocracy. Lenin was not above occasionally using his title and status, especially when appealing to the authorities for permission to move out of the provinces, but it never amounted to very much. Lenin's upbringing was more akin to that of the comfortable middle class rather than the aristocracy.

If Volodya was not cut out for farming the same is not true of his other career near-miss, the law. In 1890 and 1891 the pace of his qualification as a lawyer speeded up. He was granted permission to visit St Petersburg to take his exams as an external student. He took his first exams in September 1890, intermediates in April–May 1891 and his finals in autumn 1891. In his finals he obtained first place with excellent marks and was awarded a first-class degree in law in January 1892. This has to be seen as a stupendous achievement for someone who never attended a regular class or course of lectures. Once again, it showed the developing intelligence and capabilities of Lenin's mind.

He was not, however, much interested in putting those mental qualities to use in a law career. He was employed fitfully as an assistant in a legal practice in late 1893–4, but his real interests were elsewhere. Deep in the soul of Volodya Ulyanov, Lenin continued stirring, becoming more and more restless. When he was able to visit cities he made contact with revolutionary circles. When confined to the countryside, he immersed himself in revolutionary literature.

After his initial burst of eclectic reading, including his life-changing encounter with Chernyshevsky in late 1888, the emerging Lenin was taking a more explicitly Marxist path. At about the same time as he 'read and re-read' [Weber 3] Chernyshevsky's *What is to be Done?* he also read Marx's *Das Kapital*, with considerably less dramatic effect. The new direction coincided with his involvement with a small Marxist circle in Kazan led by N.E. Fedoseev. Luckily for Volodya, the family moved shortly afterwards, in May 1889, to Alakaevka and he thus avoided being arrested when police moved in on Fedoseev's group in summer. [CW 33 452] Nonetheless, his Marxist reading continued and he translated *The Communist Manifesto* in late 1889. In summer 1890 he read Engels' *The Condition of the Working Class in England* and is recorded as having practised singing 'The Internationale' in French with his beloved sister, Olga, further evidence of the extraordinary solidarity of the Ulyanov family and of its increasingly radical hue.

One persistent, hostile 'explanation' of why people become revolutionaries is that they are social misfits who find it difficult to relate to real people rather than to abstractions of class, gender, race or whatever.³ As far as Lenin is concerned nothing could be further from the truth. He had very close, warm, lifelong relationships with his family. It was family tragedy that had sparked his revolutionary interest and it was, most likely, the memory of Alexander that added limitless fuel to his hatred of tsarism and of Russian backwardness, as the radical intelligentsia saw it. According to what Lenin told Krupskaya later, part of his contempt for liberalism may have arisen from the same incident because, as a result of Alexander's 'disgrace' in the eyes of the local community the Ulyanov family was shunned. When Maria Alexandrovna needed a riding companion to enable her to make the first stage of her journey to visit Alexander in jail, no one would accompany the mother of a convicted terrorist. 'Vladimir Il'ich told me that this widespread cowardice made a very profound impression on him at the time. This youthful experience undoubtedly did leave its imprint on Lenin's attitude towards the Liberals. It was early that he learned the value of Liberal chatter.' [Krupskaya 17]

The execution of Alexander was not the last family tragedy of the formative years. While Volodya was in St Petersburg to take his exams in 1891 his sister Olga was also there studying and keeping an eye on him. On 20 April she wrote to reassure her mother that Volodya, who was prone to illness especially at moments of stress, was bearing up well.

I think, darling Mamochka, that you have no reason to worry that he is over-exerting himself. Firstly, Volodya is reason personified and secondly, the examinations were very easy. He has already completed two subjects and received a 5 in both. He rested on Saturday (the examination was on Friday). He went early in the morning to the river Neva and in the afternoon he visited me and then both of us went walking along the Neva and watched the movement of the ice. [Weber 4]

The idyllic picture of family affection was soon to be shattered. Only a month later, on 20 May, Olga died of typhoid at the age of only nineteen. Maria Alexandrovna came to St Petersburg for the funeral and, on 29 May mother and son travelled back to Samara, spending the rest of

the summer quietly in Alakaevka remembering not only Olga, who had just died, but also, perhaps, the first daughter named Olga who had died shortly after her birth in 1868. Lenin's life was marked by family tragedy, family affection and family solidarity throughout his life. One of the hardest consequences of his future exile was that he was out of Russia when his mother died in July 1916. On his return to Russia in the heat of the Revolution and his sensation-causing proposals for Party tactics, one of the first things he did was visit the graves of his mother and Olga.

Olga's poignant letter of 20 April 1891 also reminds us of two other aspects of the developing Lenin's outlook, his love of nature and his tendency to stress-related illnesses. While abroad for the first time in 1895 he showed great appreciation of the grandeur of the Swiss landscape, describing it, in a letter to his mother, as 'splendid. I am enjoying it all the time ... I could not tear myself away from the window of the railway carriage.' [CW 37 73] He spent many hours walking in the mountains, an occupation he returned to whenever he was in Switzerland. He was also ill while he was there. Before his departure from Russia he had suffered a bout of pneumonia. In Switzerland, as he wrote to his mother in July 1895, he 'landed up at a Swiss spa; I have decided to take advantage of the fact and get down seriously to the treatment of the illness (stomach) that I am so fed up with ... I have already been living at this spa for several days and feel not at all bad.' [CW 37 75] Ironically, as we shall see, his fast-approaching exile in Siberia helped him regain his health.

In addition to his immediate family, Lenin also had a circle of devoted friends, which amounted to a kind of extended family, with Nadezhda Krupskaya in the forefront. Her description of their first meeting in February 1894 is well known but remains very evocative. The occasion was a Shrovetide political gathering disguised as a pancake party.

I remember one moment particularly well ... Someone was saying that what was very important was to work for the Committee for Illiteracy. Vladimir Il'ich laughed, and somehow his laughter sounded quite laconic. I never heard him laugh that way on any subsequent occasion. 'Well,' he said, 'If anyone wants to save the fatherland in the Committee for Illiteracy, we won't hinder them.' [Krupskaya 16]

Lenin's sarcasm did not put her off. They became friends, attending meetings together and walking together through the city of St Petersburg. He also helped her revolutionary preparation. Krupskaya noted that, by the time of her meeting with him in February 1894, Lenin was already an expert in many conspiratorial techniques which he passed on to her. She tells us that in 1895

police surveillance began to increase. Of all our group Vladimir Il'ich was the best equipped for conspiratorial work. He knew all the through courtyards, and was a skilled hand at giving police spies the slip. He taught us how to write books in invisible ink, or by the dot method; how to mark out secret signs, and thought out all manner of aliases. [Krupskaya 22]

Krupskaya was not always the perfect pupil. After a group of six had taken a train journey out of St Petersburg during which they pretended not to know one another, they discussed how to preserve the group's essential contacts. 'We sat nearly the whole day discussing which contacts should be preserved. Vladimir Il'ich showed us how to use cipher, and we used up nearly half a book. Alas, I was afterwards unable to decode this first collective ciphery!' [Krupskaya 23]

Why was Lenin so adept at conspiracy? Krupskaya drops a very large hint about what was fairly obvious but taboo in Soviet times – the early influence of the populist tradition. 'In general', she wrote, 'one felt the benefit of his good apprenticeship in the ways of the *Narodnaya Volya* party. It was not for nothing that he spoke with such esteem of the old nihilist Mikhailov who had earned the name "Dvornik" ("the watchman") by dint of his prowess at conspiracy.' [Krupskaya 22]

Krupskaya also records that Lenin was admired by Lydia Knippovich, one of the most redoubtable former populists who had transferred her allegiance to the developing Marxist and social-democratic trend. 'Lydia immediately appreciated the revolutionary in Vladimir Il'ich.' [Krupskaya 23] The comment is all the more significant in that Lydia Knippovich organized the printing of many social-democratic works, including early pamphlets by Lenin, by means of the *Narodnaya Volya* printing press. Elsewhere, Krupskaya also records Lenin's frequent defence of populist elders, while in Siberian exile for instance, though he was completely opposed to their younger successors

who should, Lenin argued, have realized that the time had come to switch to social democracy.

By the end of 1895, despite her incompetence over ciphers, Krupskaya was the one Lenin trusted most with sensitive materials. At the moment of his arrest she had one of only two sets of proofs of the proposed newspaper *Rabochee Delo*. The other one appears to have been seized during the arrests. Krupskaya took the remaining copy to her old friend Nina Alexandrovna Gerd who held on to it until it was thought to be relatively safe to publish it some months later. So strong had the bond become that Krupskaya unhesitatingly applied for permission for her and her mother, at their own expense, to join Lenin in his Siberian exile, which they did. Very often Lenin seems to have found it easier to maintain friendships with women whereas he was constantly quarrelling with other men (and quite a few women) in the revolutionary movement. There were fewer long-term male associates. Sooner or later he broke with almost all of them, at least for a time.

Krupskaya claims that it was through her influence that Lenin first got closer to actual workers than had hitherto been the case, since the secret circles to which he had belonged were largely intellectual. Krupskaya, on the other hand, had for some years been a dedicated teacher in worker education at the Smolensk District Sunday Evening Adult School. She taught many of the workers who were in Lenin's developing worker study circle in the nearby Nevsky district. Krupskaya's deeper knowledge of working-class life brought her into closer contact with Lenin.

On Sundays, Vladimir Il'ich usually called to see me, on his way back from working with the circle. We used to start endless conversations. I was wedded to the school then and would have gone without my food rather than miss a chance of talking about the pupils or about Semyannikov's, Thornton's, Maxwell's and other factories around the Neva. Vladimir Il'ich was interested in the minutest detail describing the conditions and life of the workers. Taking the features separately he endeavoured to grasp the life of the worker as a whole – he tried to find out what one could seize upon in order better to approach the worker with revolutionary propaganda. [Krupskaya 21]

According to Krupskaya, Lenin had already developed what became the classic Leninist technique of agitation and propaganda. As she describes

the situation, 'Most of the intellectuals of those days badly understood the workers. An intellectual would come to a circle and read the workers a kind of lecture. For a long time a manuscript translation of Engels' booklet, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, was passed round the circles.' [Krupskaya 21] One wonders what they could possibly have made of a rather complex, not to say obscure, text of that nature. On the other hand Lenin did not shy away from complicated texts but went through them with the workers.

Vladimir Il'ich read with the workers from Marx's *Capital* and explained it to them. The second half of the studies was devoted to the workers' questions about their work and labour conditions. He showed them how their life was linked up with the entire structure of society, and told them in what manner the existing order could be transformed, The combination of theory and practice was the particular feature of Vladimir Il'ich's work in the circles. Gradually, other members of our circle also began to use this approach. [Krupskaya 21]

While one might doubt Lenin's technique was that clear-cut in 1894–5, the issue of linking theory and practice was one which was about to burst forcefully into the radical arena following the appearance, in 1894, of Arkadii Kremer's pamphlet *On Agitation*. Essentially, two related issues began to emerge. First, it was deemed to be time for the nascent social-democratic, that is worker-oriented and Marxist-influenced, movement to put less emphasis on analysis and more on revolutionary practice. By that was meant the attempt to build a mass movement not follow the example of isolated acts of terrorism which had traditionally been the hallmark of the populist *Narodnaya Volya*. Second, the issue of the relationship between so-called economic struggle and political struggle began to raise its head. Economic struggle meant, essentially, building organizations such as trade unions which would primarily pursue workers' economic interests. Political struggle implied action against the tsarist state and its repressive institutions. The relationship between these two aspects became increasingly controversial as the social-democratic movement emerged. As we have seen, Lenin already showed something of a 'Bakuninist' streak, that is he put great stress on political struggle and attacking the state though he seems to have always been sceptical about terrorism as a method of conducting such

struggle. In fact, one of Lenin's first major personal contributions to social-democratic theory and practice was in this area and we will return to it shortly. For the moment, however, we need to look at the content of Lenin's ideas as they had developed up to early 1895.

LENIN BEGINS TO EMERGE: IDEAS

In the first place there is no doubt that, whatever Volodya's earliest convictions, the emerging Lenin was definitely in the social-democratic camp. In particular, this meant that he accepted the orthodox Marxist line that the workers were the potentially revolutionary class. Alongside them the peasants played a subsidiary role and were, in any case, doomed to disappear as capitalism divided them into a minority of small landowners and a majority of landless labourers, sometimes known as the rural proletariat. Lenin's own ideas on this fundamental Marxist point had important twists and turns ahead but the basic orientation was already set. Lenin was in the camp of the workers and had little time for romantic ideas about revolutionary peasants.

Although many of Lenin's earliest writings have not survived there is ample evidence to show that, at least from 1891, he was criticizing the fundamental propositions of populism. For the first few years of his political career Lenin was an anti-populist polemicist. In 1891, in Samara, he took part in an illegal meeting at the house of a dentist named Kaznelson at which he opposed populist theory on the economic development of Russia. [Weber 4] Presumably this meant that he argued in favour of Russia having to go through the capitalist stage of development before it could attain socialism, it being a basic belief of the populists that perhaps Russia could avoid capitalism and build socialism directly on its already existing semi-socialist institutions.

However, there is an irony about Lenin's vigorous pursuit of the Marxist line. It was not what Marx himself thought was the case. As we have seen, Marx had been approached directly by Russian populist leaders on this very question. After much hesitation he replied that it was indeed possible that Russia might, under certain conditions, avoid capitalism. One could argue that on this issue the populists were more Marxist than Lenin.⁴

Be that as it may, and we will have to return to the issue again, for the time being the emerging Lenin was decidedly anti-populist. In early

1893, in his first surviving work, Lenin argued once more against the populist view that capitalism was not developing in Russia. Further works developed the same theme. The essence of his argument, as it appeared in a letter to a fellow social democrat, P.P. Maslov, was that 'The disintegration of our small producers (the peasants and handicraftsmen) appears to me to be the basic and principal fact explaining our urban and large scale capitalism, dispelling the myth that the peasant economy represents some special structure.' [CW 43 37]

1894 marks Lenin's emergence as a significant figure in the as yet tiny social-democratic circles. In early 1894 a police agent reported that, when the populist Vorontsov got the better of his Marxist opponent Davydov, 'the defence of his [Davydov's] views was taken over by a certain Ulyanov (supposedly the brother of the hanged Ulyanov) who then carried out the defence with a complete command of the subject.'⁵ His first major work, 'Who the "Friends of the People" are and how they Fight the Social Democrats', was completed in spring 1894. In autumn he was engaged in dialogue with one of the leading Marxist economists of the time, Peter Struve, who later became a liberal, criticizing certain of Struve's propositions on the Russian economy but joining with him in April 1895 to criticize the populists in a collectively written book of articles entitled *Material on the Nature of our Economic Development*.

A corollary of his polemics against populism and, although it was still rather embryonic, his tendency to defend 'orthodox' Marxism against heretics, was present in other of his lost writings. Krupskaya, in particular, points to Lenin writing a number of pamphlets for circulation in the Semyannikov and LaFerme factories in St Petersburg. However, this turn to worker pamphleteering also reflects the experience of his first trip abroad from May to September 1895.

ENCOUNTER WITH THE GREATS: LENIN'S FIRST TRIP ABROAD

It is fashionable to put thoughts into the head of historical characters, though no historian has the power to verify such speculations. But whatever Lenin was thinking as he left Russia, he could hardly have seen what fate had in store for him. It would be twenty-two tumultuous years before tsarism would finally collapse. In that time Lenin was destined to spend only a few more months in Russia proper. Indeed, over

the rest of the twenty-nine years of life ahead of him fewer than seven in total would be spent at liberty in Russia. It is also unlikely to have entered his head that he, rather than the great figures of social democracy at whose feet he planned to learn on this first foreign trip, would become the dominant character of the future revolution and the world's first Marxist ruler.

At the top of Lenin's visiting list was the 'father of Russian Marxism' George Plekhanov, who was living in exile in Switzerland. According to one account, Lenin was overawed in the presence of the great man. [Weber 8] Nonetheless, Plekhanov took to the new arrival. He looked 'not without warm sympathy, at the able practitioner of revolution he found in front of him'. Plekhanov recommended Lenin to Wilhelm Liebknecht, one of the leading figures of German social democracy whom Lenin visited later in his travels when he was in Berlin, as 'one of our best Russian friends'. [Weber 9] Before leaving Switzerland Lenin spent a week with him near Zurich, Paris, and a meeting with Marx's son-in-law Paul Lafargue, followed, then a month and a half in Berlin. He was only able to prolong his trip thanks to the generosity of his mother. He had run out of money by mid-July and was only bailed out by drafts sent in August and September which, ironically, came from Maria's state pension as the widow of a noble.

On 19 September he returned to Russia complete with illegal literature concealed in the false bottom of his suitcase. He also had a new mission, to help set up a paper aimed at workers and a more formal social-democratic group. The paper was prepared under the name *Rabochee delo* (*The Worker's Cause*) and the group was formed, with Lenin as a co-founder, under the cumbersome title of The League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class. However, both initiatives were abortive. The police were one jump ahead on this occasion and, in the night of 20–21 December 1895, the leadership of the League was arrested. Along with the others Lenin was remanded in custody. A new phase of his life was about to begin, one in which imprisonment and Siberian and foreign exile were to dominate.

VOLODYA/LENIN ON THE EVE OF EXILE

According to Trotsky, a fully fledged Lenin had already emerged as early as autumn 1893. 'It is, thus, between his brother's execution and the

move to St Petersburg [i.e. 1 September 1893], in these simultaneously short and long six years of stubborn work that the future Lenin was formed ... all the fundamental features of his person[ality], his outlook on life and his mode of action were already formed in the interval between the seventeenth and twenty third years of his life.' Was Trotsky correct? Before looking at the next phase of his life let us think who Lenin was by late 1895.

One thing which was, almost symbolically, evolving was Lenin's physical appearance. The unfamiliar look of the young Volodya gave way early in life to the well-known iconic figure with a bald head and short beard. The process had already begun in 1889, before he was twenty, when he first grew his beard which, at that time, retained a slightly reddish tinge. He also started losing his hair around then. By the mid-1890s he already appeared old before his time and this, as his associate Krzhizhanovsky pointed out, led to him receiving one of his longest lasting nicknames. Describing the meeting at which he first met Lenin, Krzhizhanovsky wrote 'He drowned us in a torrent of statistics ... His tall forehead and his great erudition earned him the nickname *starik*' ('the old man'). [Weber 6–7] One of the best descriptions comes from the memoirs of Potresov, who accompanied him on his travels in Switzerland. Looking back in 1927 on his first meeting with Lenin at around the same time, Potresov, who had become a political opponent of Lenin in the meantime, points to similar features but in a more hostile manner:

He had doubtless passed his twenty fifth birthday when I met him for the first time in the Christmas and New Year holidays ... Lenin was only young according to his birth certificate. One could have taken him for at least a 35–40 year old. The face withered, the head almost bald, a thin reddish beard, eyes which observed one from the side, craftily and slightly closed, an unyouthful, coarse voice.

The effect on Potresov was of 'a typical merchant from any north Russian province – there was nothing of the "radical" intellectual about him.' This last comment is very hard to understand unless Potresov meant he lacked urban, gentlemanly finesse. His concluding comment, which backs up this interpretation, is also interesting. 'No trace either of the service or noble family from which Lenin came.' [Weber 7] One

suspects Lenin would have taken such comments as a compliment on his ability to overcome his class background.

So, was Trotsky right? Had Volodya disappeared and been replaced by Lenin already? Not entirely. Some Volodya-style features, such as a respectful deference before the elder statesmen of the social-democratic and populist movements, remained. Lenin was not noted for deferential respect to anyone. Also, Lenin had not yet developed broad themes of argument. For the time being a well-grounded but repetitive intellectual critique of populism was his stock in trade, with a certain amount of attention to worker agitation beginning to develop. In no way did he stand out from the crowd as a potential leader, nor had he set out on his devastating course of splitting groups and splitting them again in pursuit of the finest degree of intellectual and doctrinal purity. It was in the next phase of his life, from his arrest through the fateful Second Congress of the Party in 1903 and on to the Revolution of 1905 and its aftermath, that Lenin truly emerged.