



Leon Trotsky (Critical Lives)

Paul Le Blanc

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The name 'Leon Trotsky' is a controversial one. For some, he was a betrayer or a totalitarian. For others, he was a revolutionary knight battling an oppressive system. However you view him, Trotsky was a one of the most important figures of twentieth-century Communism. A leader of the 1917 Bolshevik insurrection in Russia, he organized and led the Red Army to victory in the Russian Civil War – but was challenged and eventually defeated by his rival Joseph Stalin. Trotsky lived the rest of his life in exile until Stalin finally had him killed.

In *Leon Trotsky*, Paul Le Blanc delves deep to understand Trotsky's complex character, relationships, actions and ideas. Interweaving dramatic historical events with Trotsky's multi-faceted personality, this book explores his involvement with and opposition to the Soviet bureaucracy, and his efforts to revitalize the revolutionary wing of the labour movement. Revealed here are his urgent warnings of Hitler's rise and the spread of fascism, his penetrating understanding of the French Popular Front and the Spanish Civil War, and his analysis of the ominous beginnings of the Second World War. Throughout, Trotsky remained animated by the early ideals of the Communist tradition.

Drawing from a rich array of sources, Le Blanc offers a balanced portrait of Trotsky in a historical context that will be invaluable for students, scholars or anyone with an interest in political history and extraordinary lives.

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