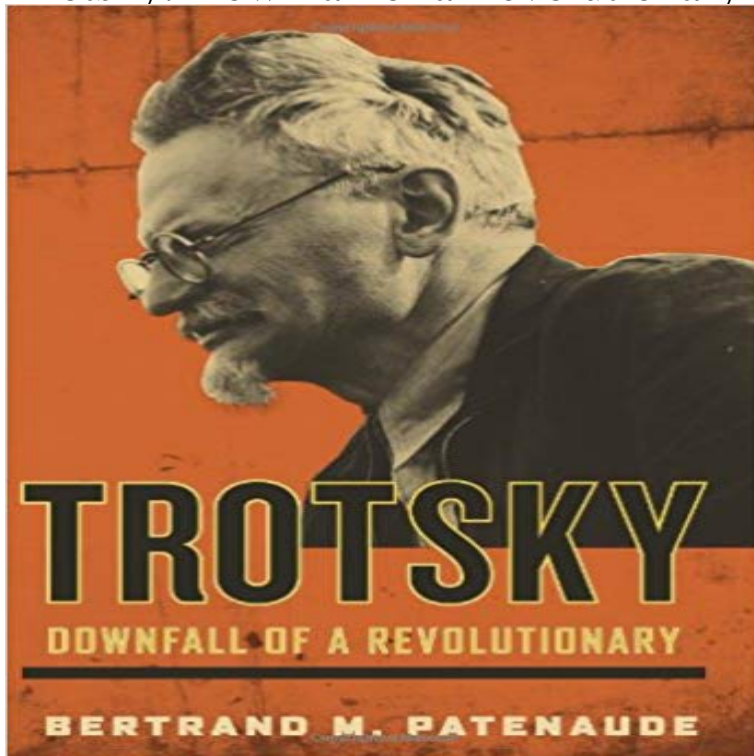


Trotsky: Downfall of a Revolutionary



Few political figures of the twentieth century have aroused as much passion, controversy, and curiosity as Leon Trotsky. Trotsky was that rare combination of the man of ideas and the man of action. His role in history—his epic rise and fall, his fiery persona, his violent end in Mexico in August 1940—holds a fascination that transcends the history of the Russian Revolution. Based on extensive firsthand research, this groundbreaking biography examines Trotskys remarkable life from the perspective of his last exile in Mexico. Bertrand M. Patenaude masterfully interweaves the story of Trotskys final years in Mexico with flashbacks to pivotal episodes in his career as a young Marxist, revolutionary hero, Red Army chief, Bolshevik leader, outcast from Stalins USSR, and ultimately heretic of the Kremlin, targeted for assassination by its secret police. He vividly recounts the contentious Dewey Commission hearings and the passionate debates among liberals and Communists in the United States and Europe over the Moscow Trials and the charges made against Trotsky. Drawing on Trotskys private correspondence and diaries, as well as the testimonies of his American bodyguards and secretaries, Patenaude sheds new light on Trotskys tumultuous friendship with painter Diego Rivera; his affair with Riveras wife, Frida Kahlo; and his torment as his family and comrades became victims of the Great Terror. Patenaude also turns to KGB files to document Stalins efforts to eliminate the man he considered his nemesis—including a failed commando raid on Trotskys home three months before his death. Gripping and tragic, Trotsky brilliantly illuminates the fateful and dramatic life of one of historys most captivating and important figures.

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