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Courtois draws from François Furet and refers to him in several places as well as to Mona Ozouf and Raymond Aron, but also to some writers who are not considered to be completely reliable. He indirectly points to the totalitarianism of the French Revolution, the topic addressed by some earlier writers, for example, by Jacob Talmon (*The Origins of Totalitarian Democracy*, first published in 1952). The logical question, then, is why the honour of being called the inventor of totalitarianism is conferred on Lenin and not on a French revolutionary.

Perhaps the answer to this question should be sought in the author's definition of totalitarianism. It is understood above all as the monopoly over politics of a single party headed by a charismatic leader; in that way, the party becomes the state, absorbing the state prerogatives of government and administration; it is also the monopoly of a single ideology that commands all areas of knowledge and creativity (through methodology) – from philosophy, history and science to art, as well as the media (through censorship); it is also the monopoly of the party-state over all means of the production and distribution of material goods in order to suppress private ownership; and

last but not least – the terror of the masses used as an instrument of rule (p. 24). It may be assumed that the author believes that it was only with Lenin that totalitarianism achieved all the features required to fit the definition, although he refers to the French revolutionary roots of totalitarianism more than once in the book.

It is known that Courtois has drawn a parallel between the Nazi “race genocide” and what he calls, following Ernst Nolte, “class genocide”, and that he has advocated the establishment of an equivalent of the Nuremberg Tribunal which would try the communists responsible.

There is also a personal touch to the book, because the author used to be a communist (like Furet, at that), and of the Leninist-Maoist type (1968). He evokes his memories and describes the feelings he had as a young man and then, much later, during his visit to Moscow in 1992. Stéphane Courtois (born in 1947) is a French historian and university professor, Director of Research at the French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS) and Professor at the Catholic Institute of Higher Education (ICES). He specializes in the history of communist movements and regimes.

CATHERINE MERRIDALE, *LENIN ON THE TRAIN*. LONDON: PENGUIN BOOKS, 2016, 353 p.

*Reviewed by Rastko Lompar**

Months before the centenary of one of the most influential and controversial train rides in history, the British historian and writer Catherine Merridale published her take on Lenin's trip to Russia in April 1917. The book is not aimed at fellow historians, but rather at the general public eager to learn more about the events surrounding and preceding the ascent to power of a man who left his mark on the history of the world like few others. The author followed

no clear path when describing events, and therefore the book is neither chronologically nor thematically organized. The structure is quite loose and resembles much more that of a novel than of a history book. The description is also rich with author's personal observations and impressions as well as numerous hypothetical excursions. That does not, however, mean that it is not based on

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a solid foundation of historical sources and literature. It certainly is. Merridale clearly chose this manner of writing in order to make the book more appealing to the general public. That choice dictated the type of sources that were used: archival documents are overshadowed by memoirs, hard data and statistics with colorful quotes and bitter allegations. The book is impeccably written and difficult to put aside.

Although the book, as the title suggests, is about Lenin, the narration does not always follow the Russian Bolshevik in his humble exile in Zurich. The story is told by multiple historical figures, from the British spy Samuel Hoare and the French diplomat in St. Petersburg Maurice Paléologue to other Russian revolutionary figures. Little space is devoted to the "ordinary man", the worker or the soldier; he is relegated to the margins. The main protagonist is always in sight, but often in the background. Therefore the main storyline serves as scenery on which Lenin emerges triumphantly when he arrives on the Finland Station in St. Petersburg. So, what is Merridale's Lenin like? She admits she does not want to describe the complete personality of the Russian revolutionary. No space is given to his alleged love of music, young children or dogs; she does not attempt to portray him as a man of flesh and blood. "I want to find the man with the consuming, merciless cold fire," Merridale explains. The Lenin she depicts is completely devoid of petty human traits, he is ascetic and fully devoted to his cause. Sleep and food are almost a burden to him. He is a "coiled mass of energy" which is "thinking only of revolution". He is not keen on compromises and authority, as his feuds with the most notable Marxists (Plekhanov, Bebel etc.) of his time showed. His total dedication to the cause is what drives him, and what makes him take a risky and dangerous German offer of safe passage to Russia, which his compatriots from the ranks of the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries declined.

In Merridale's portrayal of Lenin one can point out two very important characteristics of the future Soviet state. Firstly, his readiness to use violence in order to transform society, and secondly, his propensity for excessive legislation and bureaucratization. The author does a good job in pointing out why Lenin cannot be disassociated from the Soviet crimes and terror, as his apologists often do. Already in Switzerland he was absolutely committed to transforming the "imperialist war" into a civil one. If that meant the death of thousands, so be it, thought the future Soviet dictator. Merridale describes Lenin fuming at the thought of the pacifist left, which he saw as treason of the proletariat. The second point author proves whilst describing the train ride to Russia. Lenin forbade his followers to smoke in the carriages, and so they had to go to the only toilet to smoke. However, that created big problems for those passengers who wished to use the toilet, for they were forced to queue with the smokers. Lenin's solution to the apparent toilet crisis was equally confusing as it was humorous. He issued two types of tickets, one for those that actually needed the restroom, the other for smokers. This did not improve the situation greatly, but it did lead the Bolsheviks into a debate about which physical urge should have primacy.

Merridale also covers the main controversies surrounding Lenin's trip to Russia, namely how involved Germany was in the whole affair, and whether Lenin was financially supported by the Germans. The author very skillfully places Lenin's trip in the context of German wartime subversive propaganda. The German foreign ministry was convinced as early as 1915 in the value of sparking unrest in the enemy's vulnerable spots. Both the British and the Russian empires were susceptible to separatist propaganda (in Ireland, India or in the Baltic and Caucasus), while France was to pacifist ideas (Germany funded four leading pacifist French journals). Therefore, by the end of

the war, the Germans spent more than 382 million marks on various covert actions in the enemy's rear. In the Russian case, another useful tool was the left, both in the country and in emigration. The main German agent tasked with carrying out revolution in Russia was the famous Bolshevik Alexander Parvus (Israel Lazarevich Helphand). His mission was to unify all anti-war Russian leftists and topple the tsarist regime with their help. However, it proved much more difficult than Parvus had hoped. The seven million marks he received proved of little use, for most Russians (Lenin included) refused his proposal. The Germans did provide the Bolsheviks with a sizable sum, hoping to sway Russian public opinion towards peace. The train Lenin took was not full of gold, as many contemporaries alleged, but the Bolshevik leader was aware of where some of the party's financing came from. However, he could not admit it for he had already been attacked by his adversaries

(both from right and left) as a German spy and a saboteur. He chose to lie. As Merridale concludes: "Instead of trusting the masses with the truth about his German funds, Lenin opted to lecture them. Instead of confiding in them, he lied." Lenin acted with the support of Germany, but he was not a German agent, their causes were complementary but not identical. When Lenin arrived in St. Petersburg a German agent sent a cheerful message to Berlin: "Lenin's entry into Russia successful. He is working exactly as we would wish." What they both wished was for Russia to exit the war, but their visions of its future were drastically different.

In conclusion, *Lenin on the Train* provides the readers with a riveting description of events surrounding the Russian Bolsheviks' ascent to power. The book is well written and hard to put aside. What it lacks in original research it makes up in compelling storytelling.

PASCHALIS M. KITROMILIDES, *RELIGION AND POLITICS IN THE ORTHODOX WORLD. THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE AND THE CHALLENGES OF MODERNITY*. LONDON AND NEW YORK: ROUTLEDGE, 2018, 130 p.

*Reviewed by Aleksandra Djurić Milovanović**

The relationship between religion and politics, church and state, in different historical periods was complex and prone to change. The newly-published book *Religion and Politics in the Orthodox World* by Paschalis M. Kitromilides, a historian specializing in particular in the Enlightenment in Southeast Europe and Professor at the University of Athens, covers these complex relationships in the Orthodox world. The book was published in 2018 in the Routledge special series Religion, Society and Government in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet States. Foreworded by Ioannis Zizioulas, Metropolitan of Pergamon, and furnished

with the author's preface and introduction, the book is divided into seven chapters. In his foreword, the Metropolitan points to the chronological coverage of the book "analyzing changes endured by the Orthodox Church in the transition from the Ottoman imperial role to the age of nationalism" (p. vii). Professor Kitromilides follows the evolution of the Church in several important historical periods, especially the period of forming new nation-states in Southeast Europe. Using the example, or the case study,

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