

individualism of Ukraine, combined with a recent assault on both by the Soviets in the form of the Holodomor also acted strongly against the widespread formation of pro-Soviet partisan groups. Finally, particularly in 1941 and early 1942, Nazi anti-Soviet propaganda was largely successful in Ukraine.

Perversely, after Stalingrad and Kursk, as the front lines again moved westward into and through Ukraine, larger parts of the country fell directly under direct Wehrmacht control. The higher density of German forces made partisan activity increasingly difficult, so that the high point for the pro-Soviet partisans can be said to have been from mid-1942 to mid-1943, or the period when the whole country was occupied, and in the deep rear, of the Eastern front. Of particular interest is Gogun's revelation that the best place to be occupied in Ukraine, if there can be said to be a "good" place, was in the area occupied by the Romanian armed forces, particularly in Transnistria, in which the main problem appeared to be rampant corruption by the occupying authorities.

Gogun's work is a valuable contribution to the historiography on this topic, particularly with the relative dearth of scholarship on Soviet partisans in Ukraine, and a tendency by interested scholars to focus more on the Bandera Army and the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists.

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Vladlen Loginov, *Vladimir Lenin: How to Become a Leader*. trans. Lewis White; ed. Geoffrey Swain. London: Glagoslav Publications, 2019. 328 pp.

As we approach the centenary of Lenin's death, the casual reader may well wonder whether anything new remains to be said about the revolutionary founder of the world's first socialist state. The

distinguished Russian historian Vladlen Loginov, who has spent the last six decades researching and writing on Lenin, makes a strong case for why his subject merits a fresh look in the twenty-first century. As Loginov remarks in his introduction to this present volume (the English translation of the first volume of Loginov's recent Russian-language biographical trilogy), the very fact that the published recollections of party comrades (and rivals) cannot even agree on the color of Lenin's eyes suggests that there is still work to be done and lingering misconceptions to be dispelled (for the record, an 1895 police report describes Lenin's eyes as brown).

In our present era of academic hyperbole, when scholars take great pains to assert the path-breaking novelty of their arguments and contributions, Loginov's self-described aims in this volume may seem, at first glance, underwhelming: "This book's intention is ... to present some material for consideration, a few details of [Lenin's] biography hitherto unknown to the reader, to apply some additional touches to Lenin's portrait" (24). Such modest claims, however, belie the author's larger purpose. Loginov sets out to present an intellectual rehabilitation of Lenin—not so much by relying on hitherto unknown archival revelations, which are relatively thin on the ground here, but by returning to well-known sources and using them in a new way. Reading oft-used sources against the grain, Loginov attempts to clear away the accumulated layers of misunderstanding that have built up around Lenin following a century of "over-politicisation of his image" by admirers and detractors alike (23). In revisiting the familiar narrative of Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov's formative years (from his birth in 1870 to his adoption in 1901 of the revolutionary moniker by which the world would come to know him), Loginov seeks to reclaim Lenin from the hyper-politicized distortions to which his life and legacy have been subjected. Loginov is writing on two fronts, as it were: both against party-minded hagiographers who crafted an unrealistic image of Lenin as a holy relic of the cause, and against polemical Western (and post-

Soviet) critics who have laid at the feet of the fallen idol all the ills and crimes of the modern age.

Though the subtitle suggests this volume might be a helpful guide for would-be revolutionaries, Loginov's real focus is on how young Vladimir Ulyanov, born to a comfortable and educated middle-class family in the Russian province of Simbirsk, developed into a radical revolutionary and became the acknowledged leader of the Russian Marxist movement. As Geoffrey Swain puts it pithily in his useful introduction, the question before us is "when did Lenin become Lenin?"⁽¹²⁾ For Loginov, the answer lies not in the vagaries of Lenin's unique genius, nor in the supposed pathologies of his character. To make sense of the future Lenin's political and intellectual development, Loginov argues, we must understand him in the context of the specific familial and social structures in which he came of age in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The maternal and paternal lines of Vladimir Ilyich's family included upwardly mobile strivers who had risen from relative obscurity to carve out for themselves a respectable space in tsarist society. His father, Ilya, was the son of a serf who rose to be superintendent of education in Simbirsk. A dedicated public servant and idealist, Ilya was what Russians called a man of the (eighteen) sixties—a believer in the power of education and enlightenment as the means to personal fulfilment and social improvement. Such optimism was increasingly out of step in the reactionary 1880s. As a teenager, Vladimir Ilyich witnessed his father's career brought to a premature close and his life's work undone by the connivance of small-minded bureaucrats, an experience that Loginov credits as part of the young Ulyanov's road to radicalism (indeed, all five siblings who reached adulthood became revolutionaries). Classic treatments by Nikolai Valentinov and Leopold Haimson have emphasized the dual role of family trauma and intellectual discovery as key elements in Vladimir Ilyich's conversion to revolutionary consciousness. Important though they were, the arrest and execution of Vladimir Ilyich's older brother, Aleksandr

(Sasha), for his involvement in a plot to assassinate Alexander III in 1887, and his subsequent discovery of the writings of the nineteenth-century radical novelist Nikolai Chernyshevsky, should be read as contributory elements to a confluence of factors that ultimately led the budding radical to reject the political and socioeconomic status quo. Vladimir Ilyich's conversion to the gospel of revolution was not of the Damascene variety; rather, as Loginov maintains, his "system of beliefs was formed over a relatively extended period" (123). If Vladimir Ilyich's first encounter with Marx's writings proved a revelation, no less important were the countless hours he spent sifting through zemstvo statistical reports, whose data demonstrated the economic stratification of the Russian countryside and convinced him that Marxist theories could be applied to the Russian condition. Loginov stresses, too, that the ultimate transformation of Ulyanov into Lenin was not the work of books alone. Vladimir Ilyich was shaped as much or more by the real-life experience gained from participating in underground reading groups as a student at Kazan University and working in the public defender's office in St. Petersburg, to say nothing of his extracurricular activities as an agitator in the factories and working-class slums of the capital in the early 1890s. Nor can the formative experience of administrative exile in Siberia be underestimated. Echoing Moshe Lewin, Loginov points out that the heavy-handed overreaction of imperial authorities to the perceived threat of political unrest served to radicalize young men and women of Vladimir Ilyich's generation; the regime itself thus bears some responsibility for driving would-be reformers further down the path of revolutionary opposition. Drawing on Vladimir Ilyich's own writings and correspondence from the time, Loginov shows how these opportunities for exchange and observation with intellectuals and workers alike allowed Ulyanov to embrace an outlook grounded less in abstract theory and more firmly in Russian reality. Far from the ideologically rigid dogmatist intolerant of all who would dare to disagree with him, Loginov's

Lenin emerges here as a flexible strategist, albeit one concerned always with how political struggle might be waged most effectively in the political and material context of Russian reality. In this light, Loginov's treatment of his subject's well-known, bitter ruptures with the so-called "economic Marxists" and with old comrades like Georgii Plekhanov and Petr Struve take on a new and fresh cast.

Despite some typographical missteps (Valentinov's name is spelled three different ways in as many pages), Lewis White's translation is fluid and crisp and Swain's introduction does an excellent job of positioning Loginov's work in the long trajectory of Lenin biographies. This book will be read with great interest by students of the Russian Revolution and would pair well with Tariq Ali's recent *The Dilemmas of Lenin* (Verso, 2017). We can only hope that the publishers will make the remaining volumes of Loginov's trilogy available to an English-reading audience.

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Igor Torbakov, *After Empire: Nationalist Imagination and Symbolic Politics in Russia and Eurasia in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Century*. Stuttgart: *ibidem*-Verlag, 2018. 347 pp.

In *After Empire*, Igor Torbakov questions the characterization of modern-day Russia as a Westphalian nation-state. Drawing on scholarship from the fields of linguistics, history, geography, and international relations, Torbakov's political analysis of Russian nationalism demonstrates how imperialist institutions still shape the Russian imagination and the affairs of the modern Russian elites. To do so, he analyzes the various concepts of Eurasia, the entangled histories of Russia and Ukraine, and the politics of history in the Russian sphere of influence.

To establish the initial framework supporting his position, Torbakov employs the premise of "Eurasianism," a theoretical