

# Letters on Robert Service's Trotsky

17 November 2009

On "In The Service of Historical Falsification: A review of Robert Service's Trotsky: A Biography"

I've just been reading your very interesting review some two weeks after finishing Trotsky's mammoth *The History of the Russian Revolution* while on an international family emergency visit. This is the eighth of his books that I've read, and I'm inspired to read more.

Yes, it is appalling that bias has again entered into another academic biography published by a major academic press that has not done any adequate historical research into Trotsky's writings. Reading his superb history left me with the impression of an intellectual giant who wrote with integrity, passion, and sincerity who presents 1917 as a living event of historical relevance to our own bleak times. Even if the conditions of 1917 can never be duplicated 100 percent, Trotsky does show that a particular form of historical and political conjuncture can result in radical change, a change in which the masses have an integral role. Finally, it was so refreshing to read the work of a writer who never despises the masses. Maybe some future surveys of Trotsky's writing could appear in the WSWS, for those who wish to explore an area that Service had deliberately chosen not to do.

Tony W

11 November 2009

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Thank you. This is long overdue. I only wish we could get this information out to the public that needs to hear it...before they purchase Service's book thinking they're getting a fair analysis of Trotsky's life.

Todd C

California, USA

11 November 2009

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I did enjoy this review. But this trend in academic circles has been going on for decades. A historian's first duty is to a revealed truth (normally something tied

to their improbable conception of human nature). Economists can tell you everything you want to know about Capitalism except what it is and how it operates. Founding all human activity on race, religion or mental states. One and all they abandon the notion of science. Like the priest in Europe in the Middle Ages, they provide a dull gloss to spread upon social conflicts and hierarchies. You will be very, very busy.

Chris

Ireland

11 November 2009

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Comrade North more than provided me with material to refute the *Times Literary Supplement* review of two books about Trotsky. Comrade North's work will bear close and careful re-readings and study. A Trotskyist who re-reads the TLS's review of two books about Trotsky is a glutton for punishment.

Larry L

11 November 2009

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Nicely done! Fred Williams' review was great too.

Orestes

12 November 2009

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I have read and re-read David's article. I am stunned—on every level. I have come across some filth, attacking Trotsky, in my time, but this! Some of the material in Service's book is reminiscent of poisonous Nazi propaganda, some, akin to the vile canon of the Stalinist lie machine.

It is not just Macmillan/Harvard University Press that has brought shame on itself. Is there no one at St Antony's College, Oxford, or any other place of learning who can/will challenge this abhorrent work? Is there no one in the academic fraternity who will disown this charlatan and defend the life and memory of the great revolutionary?

Service's overt and explicit hatred of Leon Trotsky,

and the character of his “irrational” utterances—on paper—is palpable; it made me shudder. Lies, inaccuracies, distortions, falsehood and bile.

I think Mr. Service (also Thatcher and Swain) is feeling the first twinges of the “Return of History.”

Kathryn

Manchester, UK

12 November 2009



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