

det politiska läget, de centrala aktörerna och platserna i det tidiga 1800-talets Christiania. Bokens andra halva ägnas åt de efterföljande händelserna samt debatten i media och i den norska politiken och kultursfären. I det avslutande kapitlet låter författaren diskutera händelserna som en del i det norska nationsbygget. Flera förutsättningar krävdes för att händelserna den 17 maj 1829 skulle komma att leva vidare. Dessa har Torbjörn Nilsson på ett skickligt sätt lyft upp och beskrivit i sin bok.

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MATS BERGLUND

Andrej Kotljarchuk & Olle Sundström (red.), *Ethnic and Religious Minorities in Stalin's Soviet Union: New Dimensions of Research* (Huddinge: Södertörns högskola 2017). 283 s.

Throughout its imperial history, Russia was made up of a tapestry of nationalities and religious denominations. The institutionalized primacy of the Russian language and the Christian Orthodox church contributed to the homogenization of the vast Eurasian empire, yet the overall picture had not changed much by the early Soviet period. But in the 1930s there entered a new vehicle of homogenization in the form of the Stalinist doctrine of *Homo Sovieticus*. Often intertwined, ethnic identity and religious allegiance tend to run counter to unification efforts and are seen by authorities as mediums of otherness or, in multi-ethnic settings, as unwanted diversity. The Stalinist purges of the later 1930s eradicated even the semblance of diversity that conflicted with official ideology. It is, therefore, important to ask how ethnic and religious minorities fared through this challenging time.

*Ethnic and Religious Minorities in Stalin's Soviet Union* includes ten essays that originated in two conferences held in Umeå in 2011 and 2013 on ethnic minorities and the Great Purge. Case studies of various minorities are presented after the framework of Stalinist terror is outlined from the perspective of ethnic policy.

Hiroaki Kuromiya maintains that even after decades of research we have only an incomplete picture of the Great Terror, which he studies as an example of "total counterintelligence." Having kin abroad, minorities became prime suspects of national disloyalty. In fact, they were predefined as perpetrators. Andrey Savin shows that a preconceived assumption of a link between ethnicity and class hostility sufficed to mandate restrictive minority policies, often executed at the discretion of local authorities. It is noticeable that Germans were not exempt from such policies even at the

height of the Soviet–Weimar collaboration (pp. 48–49). In his analysis of “Fifth-Columnism” Victor Dönninghaus interestingly concludes that “it was not so much nationality that was the main criterion for repression but rather birth, having lived abroad or any other kind of ties with these foreign countries” (p. 83).

In the first of three case studies that emphasize ethnicity as the operational variable, Andrej Kotljarchuk examines press propaganda designed to blacklist Nordic minorities as security threats. The fact that Norway granted asylum to Trotsky in 1935–1936 added ammunition to the press. Although the USSR advocated the right of nations to self-determination, closing down minority schools was considered a valid part of counter-espionage activity. The true melting pot of the Soviet Union was Transcaucasia, in particular Georgia with her separatist legacies. Marc Junge and Daniel Müller investigate how the Great Terror might have fit the nation-building strategies of the dominant nation of a multi-ethnic Soviet republic. “[M]ass deportations of the ‘diaspora’ groups from the borders to the hinterland” due to security concerns (p. 124) are reminiscent of the Turkish justification for the policy that led to the Armenian genocide. This study is exceptionally well elaborated and persuasively shows how those in charge in Tbilisi managed to make their own national and social aspirations part of the xenophobic framework launched in Moscow. Eva Toulouze analyses the situation in the (Upper) Volga area, a place as multi-ethnic as the Caucasus while home to considerably more populous, and therefore stronger, ethnic contingents. She concludes that although “ethnicity was not an issue” in the Bolshevik project, Great Russian chauvinism, suspicious of all otherness, was “the default position of most Russians” and made it possible to “rehearse” (!) in the region the methods employed in the Great Terror (pp. 168–169).

The third bloc of studies addresses the tribulations of religious minorities. With the exception of Oksana Beznosova’s study of the Ukrainian Evangelicals, all chapters focus on indigenous religious practice in the European North and Siberia. Beznosova introduces the early Soviet hierarchy of denominations as threats to the new, atheist order. A community’s support for the religious organization, the strength of its vertical structure and its potential to mobilize the young were considered critical when making policy for minority communities. If the overall power of the congregation was perceived to be negligible, it could enjoy the “religious NEP” of the early 1920s in relative peace, or even serve the Bolsheviks as a front organization to disrupt other more dangerous religious organizations (pp. 178–179). Repression began shortly after Stalin’s definite seizure of power, mostly using indirect means such as exceedingly heavy taxation, and continued during the Great Terror. According to Beznosova it is impossible to assess to what

extent religious beliefs were responsible for persecution as charges against churchmen usually rested on other than spiritual grounds. Eva Touluze, Laur Vallikivi and Art Leete present a study of the complex situation in the Eurasian North, where indigenous peoples were subject to the Soviet version of the civilizing mission. Their spiritual life was supposed to vanish spontaneously in the face of progress. When recurrent conflicts indicated that this was not going to happen, vast regions were reconceptualized as sites of natural resources rather than human habitats. Tatiana Bulgakova and Olle Sandström show how shamans initially managed to co-exist with the emergent Soviet regime in the Far Eastern Khabarovsk *krai*. Everything changed with collectivization designed to eradicate the preconfigured shaman-kulak partnership. Interestingly, if erstwhile shamans abstained from their spiritual activities, they could be rehabilitated as citizens (p. 242). It also appears that “from what we know, the struggle against shamanism in Khabarovsk *krai* was to a large extent carried out [...] by the indigenous people themselves” (p. 251). Cultural scholar Yana Ivaschenko delivers a picture of what is now left of shamanism in Khabarovsk *krai*. Her analysis understandably differs from the other chapters. From the perspective of the historian, perhaps the most relevant is her conclusion that “shamanism became extinct by the 1970s, not primarily because it was banned, but due to the fact that against the background of all the changes and innovations it was becoming a socially unpopular and non-prestigious phenomenon among the bearers of the tradition themselves” (pp. 275–276).

The studies presented in this volume offer new insights on the conflict between multiethnicity and freedom of religion, on the one hand, and on totalitarian ideology founded on big-nation chauvinism, on the other. Appropriate illustrations reproduced in high quality make this a reader-friendly volume. However, the absence of a general or theorizing conclusion is a missed opportunity, especially with a non-specialist audience in mind. One might also wonder if the book is as coherent as one could wish. The predominance of “Northern” and “indigenous” perspectives is perhaps understandable given the topic of the conferences that served as its point of origin. Still, given its wide-ranging title, more case studies from beyond these areas should have been included. For example, Catholicism and Islam, and West Slav nationalities, are addressed at best in passing. Nevertheless, *Ethnic and Religious Minorities in Stalin's Soviet Union* is bound to attract a wide readership of specialists and non-specialists alike.