Bärbel Reetz

Lenin's sisters - Novel

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About

Lenin’s Sisters is a tale of women on the move, passionately committed to the grand utopian schemes of their times – Socialism, Marxism, and psychoanalysis – and of their successes and failures in times of dramatic social upheaval.

Sofia marries Vladimir, and receives the blessings of the Czar as the daughter of his general. But the young girl doesn’t love her husband. But a marriage is the only way to study abroad – without a husband she’d never get a passport, would never be able to leave the country. Sofia Kovalevskaya is just one of many young women who emigrated from Russia in the mid-19th century and onwards, who became politically active and liberated themselves from the old social structures. Their goal was to radically alter political and social conditions in Russia.

Bärbel Reetz has meticulously researched the biographies of »Lenin’s sisters«, the women she places alongside the man with the name associated more than any other with the Russian Revolution. These »sisters« are artists, academics, scientists, politicians, adventurers like Marianne von Werefkin, Sofia Kovalevskaya, Alexandra Kollontai and Isabelle Eberhardt, revolutionaries like Vera Figner and Raissa Adler, psychoanalysts like Mira Gincburg.

Bärbel Reetz, born in 1942, lives in Berlin. She has won several literary prizes for her works including the Bettina-von-Arnim-Prize in 1994.