Worth reading: “The Old Man” by Christopher Hitchens

written by Gertrude Ezorsky | December 27, 2009

If you missed “The Old Man,” Christopher Hitchens’ review of Verso’s reissue of Isaac Deutscher’s trilogy about Leon Trotsky, http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200407/hitchens do read it. The review describes Trotsky's accomplishments not generally known, for example, his activities as a brilliant war correspondent in the Balkans. But most important of all is the discussion of Trotsky’s polemics against the communist policy in pre-Hitler Germany. Trotsky warned that in communist policy the real enemy was not the Nazis but social democracy. Naming this as a catastrophic error, Trotsky called for a united front of social democrats and communists against the Nazis. If Trotsky’s policy had been followed we might have been spared the horrors of Nazism. Hitchens quotes Irving Howe as saying that these polemics by Trotsky were the greatest polemics of all time.