# Stalin Era Intellectuals

## Culture and Stalinism

## Edited by
## Vesa Oittinen and Elina Viljanen

First published in 2023

ISBN: 978-1-032-11420-0 (hbk)
ISBN: 978-1-032-11421-7 (pbk)
ISBN: 978-1-003-21983-5 (ebk)

## Chapter 10

# The Anti-Fascist Cultural Theory of Nikolai Bukharin and the Concept of Socialist Humanism

*Vesa Oittinen and Elina Viljanen*



DOI: 10.4324/9781003219835-10

The funder for this chapter is University of Helsinki.

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

# 10 The Anti-Fascist Cultural Theory of Nikolai Bukharin and the Concept of Socialist Humanism

*Vesa Oittinen and Elina Viljanen*

## Introduction

Bukharin was foremost a politician who worked for the world revolution and promoted socialism in the USSR based on his Marxist economic theory. He was, however, not an 'economist' and instead stressed the important role of culture in this process. Towards the end of his career, his definition of socialist culture and what he saw as the dialectical process of an ongoing global socialist cultural revolution more systematically explained also his political views and actions.

Bukharin was born in 1888 into a Muscovite academic family,[1] with both parents being schoolteachers who invested in their son's classic humanist education at one of Moscow's best gymnasiums (Cohen, 1974, pp. 8, 20). Since his rehabilitation, Bukharin has been, once again, viewed as one of the most erudite and educated Bolshevik leaders in the true academic sense of the word (Velikhova, 1988; Pinchuk, 2020). As a theoretician, Bukharin nevertheless was mostly self-taught. His political career developed quickly without leaving much time for more serious studies. After first joining an illegal student movement associated with the social democrats since 1905, the 17-year-old Bukharin then became a member of the Bolshevik faction of the Russian Social Democratic Workers' Party in 1906. During his student years (1907–1910) at the Juridical Faculty of Moscow University, where Bukharin studied economics, he was already a leading figure in the Moscow Bolshevik organisation. Arrested in 1909 and 1910, Bukharin then emigrated first to Germany and later Poland and worked among émigré social democrats while starting to publish his own Marxist theory of economics (Cohen, 1974, pp. 9–43). Already in the early stages of his career, Bukharin stressed that socialism should not be understood as an economic project for reorganising material production only, but also as a cultural goal.

The present chapter focuses on the anti-fascist motives in Bukharin's vision of socialist culture, which he began to develop in the mid-1930s and which added an important new angle to his conception of socialist culture. Bukharin theorised on questions of culture throughout his career. He turned to cultural matters more systematically after his removal from leading political posts in the new Soviet Union. Earlier in the 1920s, Stalin had supported him as a tool against Trotsky after Lenin's death. But soon after Trotsky's dismissal in 1928, Stalin turned

DOI: 10.4324/9781003219835-10

against Bukharin. Stalin now adopted the ultra-Left positions of Trotsky, and Bukharin was denounced as the leader of the 'right deviation'. He was expelled from the Politburo and Comintern in 1929. He then occupied minor positions, most famously as editor of the daily newspaper *Izvestiya* in 1934, a role he used to become one of the most visible Soviet critics of fascism. According to him, a situation had emerged in which the old liberal democracies in the West were no longer able to counter fascism, and the only alternative to fascist barbary was socialist humanism (Bukharin, 1935).

The immediate *political* context of Bukharin's anti-fascist writings and conception of socialist culture was Comintern's turn towards building a broad anti-fascist Popular Front, a strategy officially adopted at the VII Congress in 1935. However, this strategy was preceded by discussions and critiques of the Communist Party's previous view of social democrats as a force not substantially different from fascism. This 'social fascism' thesis reflected the influence of ultra-leftist ideas in Comintern's strategy. The hard-line policy had the disastrous effect of preventing the creation of a broad-based coalition against fascism, thus contributing to Hitler's rise to power in 1933. Comintern's new strategy was visible in the *Front populaire* of France in 1936–1938, Soviet support for Spanish anti-fascist forces and the corresponding Soviet cultural collaboration with Western anti-fascist intellectuals. It is worth noting that the 'star' of Comintern's epochal VII Congress was Georgi Dimitrov (1882–1949), a communist of Bulgarian origin. Thus, the initiative for the new strategy did not come from Stalin or those immediately surrounding him. Stalin in fact offered few if any analytical assessments of the social or ideological character of fascism throughout the 1930s (see Kotkin, 2017).

To understand the role of anti-fascism in Bukharin's cultural theory, it is necessary to look more closely at the largely unexplored profile of Bukharin as a cultural theoretician and amateur philosopher of socialism and to put it in proper context.[2] In summarising his own interpretation of Marxist dialectics in the prison manuscript *Philosophical Arabesques* (1937), Bukharin goes as far as to suggest that the idea of dialectics appears as a higher form of cognition and the basis of culture (Bukharin, 2005, p. 107). After the seventh congress of Comintern in 1935 and the abandonment of the social fascism thesis, Soviet politics began to more strongly support the Popular Front tactics. It is relevant to ask whether Bukharin's conception of socialist culture and the idea of the Popular Front had any correspondence.

Before his execution in 1937, Bukharin managed to produce in prison four lengthy manuscripts. One of them, 'The Degradation of Culture in Fascism' (*Degradatsiya kul'tury pri fashizme*), was either lost in the archives or else was destroyed on Stalin's orders. Fortunately his other large manuscript, *Socialism and Its Culture*, has survived. It shows that on the eve of his death, Bukharin reconfirmed his belief that not only are there important historical reasons for the emergence of socialism, but that it offered the only consequential alternative to fascism given the global economic situation: 'Concrete analysis shows us that the victory of socialism is inevitable, because fascism cannot solve

a single basic contradiction of capitalist society but only intensifies those contradictions' (Bukharin, 2006, p. 12).[3] In *Philosophical Arabesques*, the most important of the prison manuscripts of 1937, he borrows from such leading Soviet Marxist philosophers as Valentin Asmus (1894–1975) and Abram Deborin (1881–1963) to criticise Oswald Spengler (1880–1936) and German *Lebensphilosophies* as the basis of fascist ideology. Bukharin's criticism of Bergson's anti-intellectualism and his claim that irrationalism constitutes a major feature of fascist thought is analogous to György Lukács's (1885–1971) thesis that irrationalism is one of the main traits of fascist ideology. Lukács's well-known work *The Destruction of Reason* (*Zerstörung der Vernunft*) was published only in 1954, but it had been conceived already in the first half of the 1930s, at the same time that Soviet philosophers had begun analysing the work of Spengler and colleagues.

Indeed, Bukharin was one of the first Bolshevik leaders who understood the nature of fascism and the threat it posed. In his writings, he was skilful in popularising, politicising, simplifying and synthetising various philosophical arguments by Soviet and international Marxists. However, the context of Bukharin's writings on socialist culture, his concept of socialist humanism, his earlier support of War Communism, his idea of proletarian dictatorship, and the violent development of the Stalinist regime and rising authoritarianism have posed a real problem for scholars (see Kononov, 2021, p. 106). It has been pointed out that while Bukharin was among the few Bolsheviks interested in the concept of humanism in general (Vodolazov, 2014), his concept of socialist humanism in particular strongly contrasted with his undemocratic politics (Kun, 1992). Further, his notion of socialist humanism did not prevent his failure in leading the opposition against Stalinism (Pavlyuchenkov, 2008). In sum, Bukharin appears in the mid-1930s as a theoretician strangely detached from the realities of the emerging Stalinist society. Bukharin's biographer Stephen Cohen (1938–2020), Bukharin's widow, Anna Larina, and Boris Frezinskiy each offer a somewhat apologist portrait of Bukharin by asserting his opposition to Stalin. Cohen goes so far as to claim that Bukharin's critique of Nazism in his later writings was in fact a way to oppose Stalinism in an Aesopian manner. This argument is not convincing, even if the newest historical findings suggest that there was much more opposition to Stalinist politics within the Communist Party than previously supposed in the 1930s and that Bukharin found himself both unwillingly and willingly at odds with Stalin and Stalinism.[4]

These problems need further research. In this chapter, we would like to address the following, more focused question: Is it possible that anti-fascism and the Popular Front movement opened for Bukharin some new practical prospects within the general situation created by Stalinism? It should be kept in mind, though, that the complicated nature of the situation in the 1930s, which had compelled Bukharin to regard the central role of Stalin as a *fait accompli*, could not be changed. This is plain from the way he discussed Stalin's 'historical role' in the construction of socialism in his prison manuscript *Socialism and Its Culture*.

## Scholarly Disputes about 'Bricolage'

Was Bukharin a Marxist scholar of merit or 'only' a politician? The question is perhaps not pertinent when speaking of a Marxist intellectual, which already *per definitionem* should have been able to combine science and politics. As for Bukharin, he was indeed connected to both domains in his own way. His theoretical work can be described as a *bricolage*. This is a term used by social constructivists, among others, to refer to the ability to devise quickly improvised solutions from any available ingredients. When comparing Bukharin's writings with the texts of professional Soviet philosophers and cultural theoreticians of the era, Bukharin forms an interesting prism through which to view Soviet Bolshevik intellectual history. The feature of 'bricolage' certainly gives to Bukharin's writings a more 'clever' touch than the other Soviet leaders were able to offer, but on the other side it contains the danger of not being able to preserve a consistent methodological perspective.

It is Bukharin 'the politician' that caused him to alter the focus of his cultural theory in the 1920s and 1930s. He recycled his ideas in slightly modified form in different contexts, an exercise typical of all 'successful' Soviet cultural theoreticians in the early decades of the Soviet Union. The recycling of ideas is also clear in the development of his outlook on fascism. Anti-fascism became an overriding question addressed in his later writings on socialist culture, in which he not only synthetised but also modified many of his earlier views. For example, although Bukharin was perhaps the first Bolshevik to refute racist theories, he did not recognise racism as a special feature of fascism until much later. Another example is offered by his philosophy of practice/praxis. He favoured American pragmatism as a philosophical movement in 1923 when writing about 'a new psychological type' (a new proletarian intelligentsia) that the Soviet Union needed to form among its cultural cadres. According to him, the new psychological type of worker should combine the comprehensiveness of theoretical analysis on the developments of the old Marxist intelligentsia seasoned with American practical skills. (Bukharin, [1923], 1993, pp. 50, 57.) He later, in *Philosophical Arabesques*, began to oppose pragmatism, most possibly due to the role played by John Dewey, its leading philosopher, in the 'Commission of Inquiry into the Charges Made against Leon Trotsky in the Moscow Trials' in March 1937. He now connected American pragmatism with fascism (Bukharin, 2005, p. 120).

The bricolage quality of Bukharin's work was also due to the fact that throughout his career, he found himself in the middle of political power struggles within the Bolshevik Party, which occurred first in relation to Lenin and later Stalin. These struggles have been the focus of Bukharin research. It is possible to say that Bukharin's political thought during his career oscillated between Bogdanov and Lenin. This was noted many times already during Bukharin's lifetime. When Lenin in the early 1920s reproached Bukharin for his overly mechanistic views and 'scholasticism' (i.e., anti-dialecticism), he made it explicitly clear on several occasions that these faults were due to Bogdanov's pernicious influence.[5] While Bukharin certainly borrowed from Bogdanov's mechanistic and systemic

philosophical conceptions of culture, it would be a mistake to simply lump him together with Bogdanov as a politician, as Stalinists tried to do after 1937.[6]

Bukharin's bricolage approach impacted his ideas on socialist culture as well. Lenin's point of view, which he formulated in opposition to Bogdanov and the Proletkult thesis of a 'purely proletarian culture', was that Marxism, and consequently, the new culture based on Marxist politics represents the quintessence of all previous human culture. In a draft resolution from October 1920, Lenin expressed his views with all possible clarity:

> Marxism has won its historic significance as the ideology of the revolutionary proletariat because, far from rejecting the most valuable achievements of the bourgeois epoch, it has, on the contrary, assimilated and refashioned everything of value in the more than two thousand years of the development of human thought and culture. Only further work on this basis and in this direction, inspired by the practical experience of the proletarian dictatorship as the final stage in the struggle against every form of exploitation, can be recognized as the development of a genuine proletarian culture.
>
> (Lenin, 1965, p. 316)

Bukharin argued that Lenin's proposal to conquer 'bourgeois culture in its entirety, without destroying it' was 'as impossible as "conquering" the bourgeois state' (Biggart, 1992, p. 234). Bukharin maintained to the end Bogdanov's views on culture as a system, his monistic worldview, his belief in scientific energetics, a view on specific proletarian values as the basis of a new culture, his mechanistic conception of dialectics and his 'Praxis Marxian'[7] attitude to theory and philosophy. Bukharin also based his view of socialist art on Bogdanovian thesis (1918) that '[t]he artistic talent is individual, but creation is a social phenomenon: it emerges out of the collective and returns to the collective, serving its vital purposes' (Biggart, 2016, p. 226).

Even before the archives were opened and Bukharin rehabilitated in the USSR, Stephen Cohen (1974, pp. 14, 20) had managed to demonstrate that although Bukharin began his political career as 'an uncompromising' representative of the Bolshevik left, he at the same time was on friendly terms with Lenin. In accordance with this viewpoint, the Soviet image of Bukharin in the Perestroika years re-envisioned him as a genuine representative of Leninism and someone who would have provided an alternative pathway to socialism in the 1920s. The regime under Mikhail Gorbachev tried in this way to dissociate itself from Stalinism (see Biggart, et al.1998, pp. 1–4). Soviet scholarship on Bukharin in the late 1980s reflected these changed assessments (Smirnov et al. eds, 1988; Zhuravlev and Solopov, eds. 1990, 3).

Since the Perestroika years, Boris Frezinskiy has sought a more balanced presentation of Bukharin's writings as part of Russian cultural history (Frezinskiy, 1993, p. 4). Not surprisingly, his interpretation went against the official perestroika-era Soviet view by considering Bukharin's theory of cultural revolution more closely aligned with Bogdanov's theory than with Lenin's theory (Frezinskiy, 2006, pp.

xlvi–xlvii). Accordingly, John Biggart (1992, pp. 131–158) went further than Cohen by suggesting that Bukharin was a key thinker who managed to introduce certain Bogdanovian ideas into Leninism, and in this way, Bogdanov's views became permanent features in the official ideology of the Stalin era. Nadezhda Kovalenko (2021a,b) has recently argued that, on the contrary, Bukharin was more closely aligned with Lenin's ideology than with Bogdanov's because he had accepted Lenin's proposition that the construction of culture begins after the political revolution. As Biggart (1987, p. 229) points out, the Lenin–Bogdanov controversy must be approached within the context of the social and political crisis of the early NEP years: given the perceived threat of a 'bourgeois restoration', the creation of an ideological orthodoxy became expedient for purposes of political control.[8]

Like Lenin, Bukharin nevertheless emphasised the necessity of keeping the Communist Party leadership in place during the transition period of the cultural revolution and regarded the role of a Marxist elite as necessary in the education of the proletariat. But sharing with Bogdanov and the Collectivists who followed him the fear of a bourgeois degeneration of Soviet culture, Bukharin had opposed since 1923 the employment of bourgeois intellectuals in higher education and research. He was thus laying the groundwork for what took place in 1928 when the Communist Party began to support the hegemony and supervision of proletarian cultural associations as well as universities and research institutes. Bukharin envisioned and constructed cadres from the proletarian class to supervise and school workers from an ideological perspective (see Bukharin, [1923], 1992). In other words, Bukharin shared Bogdanov's view on the class-based character of the new culture, but he replaced Bogdanov's concept of a purely proletarian culture with the vision of a more broadly conceived socialist culture. Bukharin's idea of a socialist culture was neither Leninist nor Bogdanovian in origin; rather, it was a newly fashioned cultural theoretical synthesis of both, which he developed further in a new international political context.

Bukharin, however, also took seriously Lenin's criticism of his incorrect understanding of dialectics in the 1921 textbook *Historical materialism* (Sheehan, 2005, pp. 10–11).[9] Lenin's criticism was shared by others. In 1922, the journal *Pod Znamenem Marksizma* published a review of Bukharin's *Historical Materialism*, in which S. Gonikman (1922, pp. 79–80) noted that Bukharin's 'dialectics' had nothing to do with Marx and Engels. Instead, he had formed his own mechanistic conception of dialectics out of a mechanical theory of equilibrium, which he used as an analytical method.

The general criticism led Bukharin to a serious study of Engels' *Dialectics of Nature* and Lenin's *Philosophical Notebooks* (published in the *Leninskii sbornik* series in 1929–1930, with Bukharin being a member of the editorial board approving the series), the history of philosophy in general and the work of Hegel in particular (Sheehan, 2005, p. 11). The *Notebooks* gave a picture of Lenin as an altogether different type of philosopher than his 1909 work *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, where Lenin had strongly criticised Bogdanov, his 'rival'

in the Bolshevist fraction. For Bukharin, Lenin's *Notebooks* and especially his commentaries on Hegel's *Science of Logic* seem to have been something of a revelation. To the list of publications of hitherto unknown texts on the classics of Marxism, we must still add Marx's *Economic–Philosophical Manuscripts*, which were published in 1932 and revealed a previously unknown 'existential-humanistic' side of Marx.

In the rather extensive article 'Marksizm i sovremennoe myshlenie' (Marxism and Modern Thought), published in a book by the Academy of Sciences in honour of the 50th anniversary of Marx's death (1933), Bukharin already took greater note of the Hegelian roots of Marxism (Sheehan 2005, p. 12). Nevertheless, these developments towards a more dialectical way of presenting his thoughts do not mean that Bukharin had become a Hegelian in any true sense of the term. On the contrary, as Soboleva (2020) points out, although the whole pathos of Bukharin's *Arabesques* was directed against the 'sins of mechanical materialism', his epistemology remained Bogdanovian.[10]

The German scholars Wladislaw Hedeler and Dieter Uhlig (2005, pp. 404–405) note that by developing the 'dialectical' side of his thinking, Bukharin attempted to overcome that dichotomy between philosophy and sociology that Gramsci had identified as the real problem in Bukharin theory of historical materialism. At this point, certain parallelism is evident in the writings of Bukharin and Gramsci, the 'praxis philosopher' *par excellence* (see Oittinen, 2009). In providing a sketch of what we could call his own 'praxis philosophy', Bukharin writes:

> Science […] tells us that in historical terms, the starting point was the active, practical relationship between humanity and nature […]. How can one assert that the external world is unknowable (both as a whole and in parts), that the object of labor is incognizable, when this object is turned into another in line with the wishes of a subject who supposedly knows nothing about it?
>
> (Bukharin, 2005, pp. 113, 116)

This being the case, one should nevertheless be cautious in accepting the idea of Bukharin as a certain 'Gramsci in progress'. Bukharin's path to 'practical Marxism' was very different from that of Gramsci, who had direct contact with the Italian neo-Hegelian tradition of Benedetto Croce and remained more 'historicist' than Bukharin, who still adhered to considerable aspects of his earlier mechanistic views in his later theoretical work (see Oittinen, 2006).

In *Arabesques*, when making his final synthesis, Bukharin used 'dialectical criticism' to dispute the religious idealism of Nikolai Berdyaev and modern idealistic philosophy in general, especially vitalism (Bukharin, 2006, pp. 191–192). He now accused Bogdanov, too, of an outlook that was ultimately overly idealistic. When describing society and the social–historical process of cognition, Bogdanov had failed to base his view of 'socially organised experience' on a 'generalising of experience of the "real world"' located outside the

subjects, as materialist dialectics demand. Instead, Bogdanov had followed an idealist view that the

> objective external world would disappear, while links and relations 'of general significance' (for example, scientific laws) would be transformed into a kind of social product to which nothing corresponded in the real world. These links and relations were themselves declared to be the objective world; the scientific picture of the world was transformed from a reflection of the world into the world itself.
>
> (Bukharin, 2006, p. 209)

However, Bukharin does not offer any comprehensive analysis of the mechanistic and non-dialectical character of Bogdanov's doctrine. Moreover, it seems to fit his style of choosing to merely re-use Bogdanov's ideas when formulating his own theory of socialism. It is quite characteristic of Bukharin's 'bricolage' approach that ideas from both Lenin and Bogdanov remained for him relevant to the goals of building a new socialist society.

For Bukharin, the proletariat was a 'cultural' phenomenon existing in his own era, not at some point in the socialist future. In comparison to the ideas of Proletkult, who searched for a communist culture by developing familiar items and customs from the 'everyday life' of the proletariat, Bukharin saw nothing ideal in everyday proletarian life, since such a life was that of an oppressed people who had not been able to fully develop from a cultural standpoint.

How, exactly, would the new proletarian culture then become a reality? Bukharin's writings from the 1920s on culture are marked by simple juxtaposition: collectivism as an antithesis to individualism (see Bukharin, 1927, p. 28). In his early articles on culture – '*Problema kul'tury v epokhu rabochey revolyutsii*' ('The Problem of Culture in a Worker's Revolution', 1922), '*Proletarskaya revolyutsiya i kul'tura*' ('Proletarian Revolution and Culture', 1923) and '*Diskussiya po voprosu o postanovke kul'turnykh problem*' ('Discussion on the Question of Posing Cultural Problems', 1923) – Bukharin circulates the idea that bourgeois culture had been the privilege of the leisure class since capitalism does not allow for the full development of proletarian culture. He did not, however, advocate any kind of quick destruction of bourgeois culture. Instead, he saw the instrumental value of the old cooperative intelligentsia in Russia, and he highlighted the 1920s' cultural politics as a transition phase (Bukharin, 1922, p. 6; Bukharin, 1923, p. 97; Bukharin, [1923], 1993, p. 42). In another article, '*Sud'by russkoy intelligentsiy*' ('The Vicissitudes of the Russian intelligentsia', 1925), Bukharin nevertheless makes clear his judgement of the non-Marxist intelligentsia when he writes that 'a thinking cultured person cannot remain outside of politics' (Bukharin, [1925], 1993, p. 86).

## The Turn of 1934

The tone in Bukharin's writings on culture changed quite abruptly in the 1930s. Now, Bukharin sees the urgent challenge posed by fascism. He adds an anti-fascist

dimension to his concept of a communist culture, which results in a new qualitative synthesis, or at least in an attempt at such a synthesis. Bukharin gives the first coherent account of his new view on the current cultural situation in an article published in *Izvestiya* in three parts on the 6th, 18th and 30th of March 1934. The article was obviously already at the outset intended not only for a Soviet but also for an international public, judging from the fact that it was quickly translated into several languages. The English version, published in New York as part of the international pamphlets series by the Communist Party USA, is a 32-page brochure with the title *Culture in Two Worlds. The Crisis of Capitalist Culture and Problems of Culture in the U.S.S.R*. The quotes below are taken from it.

The text opens with a quick sketch of the current international situation, following Hitler's seizure of power of the previous year. Bukharin notes an intensive polarisation of classes and ideologies taking place throughout the world: 'the sharpening of the struggle between fascism and communism, as two class camps – two doctrines, two cultures […] are forming in military array' for a number of decisive battles in the 'world-historic sense' (Bukharin, 1934, p. 2). For this reason, fascism must be thoroughly studied.

There are admittedly some – Bukharin calls them 'petty-bourgeois Philistines' – who may still say that both the fascists and the Bolsheviks will establish a dictatorship, so essentially there is no real difference in principle between them. Bukharin counters this view, noting that 'these miserable people' have a fixation on the purely *formal* side of the matter, namely 'dictatorship' in general; they do not see that it is the reality of *class* underpinning any dictatorship that really matters – whether we are speaking of a dictatorship of the proletariat or of the capitalists (Bukharin, 1934, p. 4). Cohen's suggestion that Bukharin's critique of fascism was at the same time a hidden critique of Stalinism thus proves to be ill-founded in light of what Bukharin himself wrote. While he certainly was critical of Stalinism, matters were more complicated.

Further, Bukharin notes that fascism is in its essence a product of the general crisis of capitalism that had already produced profound changes in several parameters of bourgeois life. In the first instance, the attitude of the bourgeoisie towards technical progress had changed:

> The bourgeois philosophers began to chant melancholy tunes in a discordant chorus about the soullessness of machine civilization in general. The Keyserlings, our Berdyayevs and Co. (who are suspiciously close to the fascist staffs), and the inevitable 'dean of philosophy', Oswald Spengler, who preaches the doom of Europe and of Bismarck's 'socialism', have all begun to criticise technique as such: not the capitalist application of technique (that would be a criticism of the very *foundations* of capitalism and capitalist exploitation), but technique itself.
>
> (Bukharin, 1934, p. 5)

Bukharin then quotes Spengler's recently (1931) published *Der Mensch und die Technik*, in which Spengler predicts an end for all machine technology and the

'Faustian human being' as its creator. Bukharin offers the following comment: 'Such funeral reactionary tunes have become the ideological fashion. The great optimism that was formerly felt concerning technological progress has undoubtedly disappeared. "Faith" in it has been undermined by the whole trend of the general crisis of capitalism' (Bukharin, 1934, p. 5).

Other signs of a fundamental change in the bourgeois world outlook are, according to Bukharin, a turn towards agrarian forms of life at the expense of further industrialisation, a tendency towards creating a more self-sufficient economy in respective countries and the crisis of the liberal bourgeois–parliamentary state, which includes the growth of corporative structures (Bukharin, 1934, pp. 6–7). As a consequence,

> higher ideological structures develop on this basis into a whole philosophy of the 'totalitarian' state, of the cooperation of all, of the leadership of the elect, in whom lies the spirit of God, of the realisation of metaphysical values, etc. In any case, the old liberal orientation has been broken completely; we have at present a transition to the operative, 'complete' dictatorship of finance capital – a terrorist dictatorship, which has absorbed a number of mass fascistic organizations.
>
> (Bukharin, 1934, p. 8)

While the period of liberalism corresponded to a 'rosy dream', which found its expression in Kant's categorical imperative, the philosophers of reaction, most notably Nietzsche, began to undermine this ideology. For Nietzsche, it no longer makes sense to speak of the equality of all human beings based on prior liberalist thought. Socialism notes Bukharin, quoting an especially sinister passage from Nietzsche's work, 'is for the most part a symptom of the fact that we are treating the lower classes *too humanely*, so that they get a taste of the happiness forbidden to them' (Bukharin, 1934, p. 10). On the following page, Bukharin quotes Othmar Spann, 'the philosopher of Austro-German fascism', who 'builds up a whole theory of society and government on the basis of a hierarchical demarcation between "well-born" and "low-born" members of society, returning to and theologizing old biological theories' (Bukharin, 1934, p. 11).

The perspectives of the USSR are altogether different. The contrast between a capitalist and a socialist culture is visible in all spheres of life. In the first instance, the productive forces are emancipated from the fetters of capitalism and petty private ownership of land, which opens wide 'the gates for the rapid growth of productive forces by adopting the principal progressive tendencies in technical development', meaning that, above all, socialism 'has freed all the latent possibilities of a live working force – that *decisive* productive force in all economy' (Bukharin, 1934, p. 14).[11] Further, in contradiction to fascism, which first and foremost isolates the 'nation' from all other nations, the Soviet Union 'has already been built up on an international basis' and is 'orientated towards a *world communist community'* (Bukharin, 1934, p. 15).

Bukharin's main point of focus in the *Izvestiya* article is, however, the concept of technics. While 'fascist and semi-fascist' scholars accuse the Bolsheviks

of fetishising the machine, their argument is incorrect, as it is based on a single criticism of 'technics in *general*', of 'machines as a purely technical principle' (Bukharin, 1934, p. 17). If there is any truth in the 'condemnations of the machine' by the bourgeois philosophers, Bukharin writes, it applies exclusively to the capitalist application of machines. Bukharin reverts here to a familiar topic in Marxist discourse. Marx had already in 1856, in a famous speech given on the anniversary of the *People's Paper*, mentioned machinery as one of the most conspicuous contradictions of capitalism. While in principle it could create wealth for all, in actuality machines result in overwork, pauperism, and starvation because their sole purpose is to create surplus value for owners. In the Soviet Union, socialism reverses all such relationships down to their very core. 'With *us*, the machine plays a great liberating role', Bukharin declares, before formulating the core thesis of his 'philosophy of technics': 'Under capitalism, the growth in technique mechanizes the toiler, i.e., stultifies him. Under socialism, this growth humanizes the machine, i.e., makes it a weapon in the hands of toiling masses' (Bukharin, 1934, p. 17).

## Main Traits of an Anti-Fascist Socialist Culture

According to Bukharin, the role played by technics clearly defines the character of a culture. This is a position one could expect from a historical materialist. But Bukharin nevertheless differs from those who saw the building of socialism only as an engineer's task. He is not a 'technics enthusiast', instead lamenting a certain one-sidedness in the current education of the emerging Soviet intelligentsia, which mostly consists of technicians, engineers, and agrotechnicians, leaving the humanities – 'art, philology, history, etc.' – in the background (Bukharin, 1934, p. 18). He further criticised people who are perfectly at home in the world of technology but who do not have the slightest idea about ancient Greek tragedy. However, Bukharin was able to take comfort in what Hegel once characterised as a historically necessary and unavoidable one-sidedness (Bukharin, 1934, p. 19). From the present-day viewpoint, it might be said that Bukharin was even here too optimistic when he assumed that the alienation between technical and humanistic spheres of culture would later become sublated. Actually, the alienation he identified remained throughout the entire history of the Soviet Union and was one of the main themes in Evald Ilyenkov's writings in the 1960s and 1970s.

For Bukharin, the new socialist culture would be determined by a Marxist system of labour relationships. It would modify the old bourgeois culture according to its own systemic principles both 'in the field of material production and in the field of spiritual production', which would develop on a common basis, since 'the building of a classless society' is the general line of the Party: 'This is one of the main reasons for the collectivism of the entire style of the culture, which is now forming and growing. This does not mean the destruction of individuality. But it does mean the destruction of individualism' (Bukharin, 1934, pp. 26–27). Unlike in fascist culture, which is based on forced dynamics that break society,

socialism is based on the dynamics of liberation, which will create a new spirit of community:

> Our culture is still very young, and it carries many birthmarks inherited from the past. But it is growing impetuously and unrestrainedly. It embraces hundreds of millions of people. It is becoming a world-wide historical liberating force, and it cannot fail to win.
>
> (Bukharin, 1934, p. 31)

In Bukharin's model of gradual communist emancipation, the Soviet investment in technical progress represented only the first stage in the process. He notes that the proletarian intelligentsia is constructing a new society and culture (Bukharin, 1934, p. 18). Only when 'socialist technique' has liberated the workers to also develop their spiritual culture would the fields of science and art start to blossom, not only because the workers would have more time to focus on classical humanism, the arts and science but also because they would be part of a new social system. Expressing his ultimate monistic idea of socialist culture, Bukharin writes that in this system workers would create new art and science 'in the collective chain of divided social labour, where each subject is bound up with the next, and all together, in the final account, work for the technical and economic construction of the growing socialist society' (Bukharin, 1934, p. 24).

Bukharin's conception of culture in general and of high culture (art) in particular had always been anti-elitist. It followed his broad definition of culture as production – not just 'cultural production', but all production in a socialist society. For him, high culture refers to a professional level of aesthetic and intellectual production, whereas culture in general is not just a privilege of the elite or professional artists. All individuals living in a socialist culture, where all benefit from a more equitable means of production, have enough spare time to create a culture based on their own creative artistic aesthetics in relation to how they view reality. This relationship is not that of bourgeois aestheticism. Instead, in a socialist society, artists have a constant connection to the developing reality. Soviet art as a product of socialist culture, according to Bukharin's cultural theory, symbolises individuals freed from economic worries who have enough spare time to develop themselves spiritually and as part of the collective (Bukharin, 2006, p. 122).

In *Philosophical Arabesques*, Bukharin explains how culture becomes qualitatively renewed as an entire system, with its parts being in a 'dialectical relationship' to one another, thus forming also a dynamic energetics of the 'totality' that can develop even further (see Bukharin, 2005, pp. 194–195). Like Lenin and Lunacharsky, Bukharin wrote articles about the highest achievements and products of bourgeois culture, selecting the philosophers, ideas and artistic works that he considered most notable of pre-communists like Heinrich Heine (Bukharin, [1932], 1988, pp. 177–191).[12] Just as for Lunacharsky, for Bukharin arts also have an emotional role in the constitution of society (for more on this idea, see Viljanen's chapter in this book).

According to Bukharin, the valuable content of art derives from social historical experience, which art presents as integral and generalised emotional unity, as a 'symbol' or a sensory 'image' (Bukharin, 1935a, pp. 192, 195–196, 201). Although Bukharin highlighted that the task of socialist realist art is to show the 'diversity of life' in the most generalised form, the unity in socialist art 'consists of a single aspect – that of building socialism', which was art's practical social role (Bukharin, 1935a, pp. 198, 247). He announced that the best thinkers of the bourgeois cultural past – Goethe, Beethoven and Hegel – the 'children of one mother', the French Revolution, were great universalists (generalists) of their social historical experience and its critical societal meaning:

> The music of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, the philosophy of *Faust* and the logic of heroic symphony of Beethoven coincide in their social-cultural and social-class essence. These are the culminating points, the verges, the limits to which the bourgeoisie rose during the periods of its greatest creative effervescence.
>
> (Bukharin, [1932], 1988, p. 143)

But for Bukharin, the products of bourgeois culture could not be adopted into socialist society *tout court.* Instead, bourgeois cultural achievements at their best merely represented the historical process that inevitably leads humanity toward socialism:

> It seems to us that poetry of the type of *Faust*, with different content and consequently of a different form, but still maintaining the extreme generality of *Faust*, must unquestionably find a place as a component part of socialist realism, and that it will create the most monumental form of socialism's poetry.
>
> (Bukharin, 1935a, p. 256)

In Bukharin's opinion, Russian writers did not yet understand the significance of the new socialist era:

> Potentially, we are everything. We are the heirs of thousands of years, of all culture handed down from age to age. […] We are the glorious vanguard of the workers who are changing the world, a grim army which is getting ready for fresh battles.
>
> (Bukharin, 1935a, p. 242)

Instead, Russian writers still represented a certain 'uncultured provincialism' (Bukharin, 1935a, p. 243). This critique reveals that in the first place, Bukharin used the word *kul'turnost'* to express culturality in its ideological and political meaning: by culturality, he was referring to the process of becoming more conscious of the world historical meaning and task of socialism. This belief is in line with his previous claim that a thinking person cannot remain outside politics. Culture in general and arts, in particular, are thoroughly political matters, making socialism a dynamic process.

To conclude, for Bukharin, bourgeois art and philosophy were first and foremost a method for understanding the very problems of the past system, for which the new socialist order would provide a solution. Bukharin's definition of culture became an umbrella concept encompassing all production, from scientific thinking to fine arts and technology: '[Socialist] production has become the creation of a prosperous and cultured life' (Bukharin, 2006, p. 14). Bukharin's understanding of culture and the arts represents the first concise outline of critical Marxist cultural analysis, which was developed more in-depth by such thinkers as Lukács and Gramsci. As Thompson (2013, p. 2) points out, Bukharin's interpretation of the critical Marxist theory, as is the case with Lukács, is premised on the need to change the mechanisms of social power to liberate the deeper, more genuinely human potentialities of people.

Piedro Omodeo aptly notes in his discussion of the history of science that the Cold War began in 1931 when a Soviet delegation of historians of science led by Bukharin set forth a Marxist approach to the discipline in the Second International Congress on the History of Science and Technology in London: the philosophy of science that they proposed focused on the material, social and economic roots of knowledge, that is, it stood in opposition to traditional historiography dealing with the internal developments of ideas and with the biographies of 'genial' figures, such as Galileo, Newton and the like (Omodeo, 2016, p. 14). 'The world is split,' Bukharin announced,

> [t]he powerful mountain ranges that are the result of the new world order are already being formed as the result of the creative effort of the victorious proletariat in the USSR. Marxism is beginning to conquer ever new spheres for itself. […] Marxism is being directly transformed into theoretical practice and the practical theory of the greatest of social revolutions. Against it, all the terrorist and militant forces of the old, dying world, led by fascism, all their allies, all their reserves, are massing in a furious class struggle.
>
> (Bukharin, 1935b, p. 10)

While Bukharin's idea of socialist culture is intimately connected with his monistic philosophical outlook, his materialist point of view became embodied in his ideas on collectivism and in the way he talked about unity, which pierces through his discussion of culture in *Socialism and Its Culture*, a manuscript written in prison in 1937 and serves as his cultural–political testament. The manuscript summarises the philosophical discussion of the 1920s on removing the barriers between spiritual and material cultures. It was one of the philosophical aims of the *novyy byt* (new everyday life) and its anti-formalism stance (for more, see Viljanen's chapter in this book).

Bukharin was an influential cultural politician already before he formulated his own cultural theory of socialism. Since the mid-1920s, all philosophically oriented thinkers with careers as cultural theoreticians in the Soviet Union endeavoured to testify one way or another that their intellectual production was related to practical socialist cultural production. While bold ideas, they at the same time

reveal the Achilles's heel of Bukharin's concept. In his prison manuscript of 1937, with its vision of a new socialist culture that has resolved all the contradictions of the bourgeois world, Bukharin actually elevates the Soviet Union to the status of a philosophical category. As a consequence, Bukharin's Soviet Union, defined through the idea of culture, becomes detached from the realities of the society that Stalin and his followers were busy trying to create, and it thus remained an abstraction.

## The Background and Context of Bukharin's 'Anti-Fascist Turn'

Above, we have outlined Bukharin's theory of culture both in the 1920s and after the 'anti-fascist turn' in the early 1930s. Let us still take a closer look at Bukharin's influences for the new draft of socialist culture he developed beginning in the mid-1930s.

Bukharin's anti-fascist ideas were in accordance with the People's Front tactics, which Comintern began to apply after the VII Congress in 1935 under the leadership of Dimitrov. The tactics yielded immediate, albeit short-lived results in France, where the *Front populaire* headed by Léon Blum was in power in 1936–1938. However, the stress on the importance of anti-fascism had consequences for the Marxist political theory, too. The necessity for a broad-based alliance against fascism meant that communists could not confine themselves to strictly defending only proletarian class interests but had instead to collaborate with other anti-fascist forces to defend democracy and the best traditions of the Enlightenment. In other words, the strategy and tactics of a democratic front meant that many previous ideas – which actually were of ultra-leftist provenience – about the absolute primacy of the proletarian class struggle had to be put aside.

But, in addition to Comintern's new strategy, certain ideas foreshadowing the turn in the mid-1930s can also be found in Bukharin's theory of fascism and his early theory of militaristic state capitalism. Before fascism garnered so much attention, he was the first Bolshevik theoretician to offer a systematic theoretical explanation of imperialism and the monopolistic and colonialist nature of state capitalism. In his book *Imperialism and World Economy* (1916), which preceded Lenin's much more influential work *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism* by months, Bukharin argued that the First World War had been an 'imperialist war' resulting from the international crisis of capitalism, or as Bukharin put it, 'a world-view disequilibrium of capitalist system'.[13] According to Bukharin, the rule of finance capital implied centralisation, imperialism and militarism and it led former liberal democracies towards a form of state dictatorship:

> A *strong power* has become the ideal of the modern bourgeois. These sentiments are not *remnants of feudalism,* as some observers suppose; they are not debris of the old that have survived in our times. This is an entirely new socio-political formation caused by the growth of finance capital. If the old feudal *policy of blood and iron* was able to serve here, externally, as a model, this was possible only because the moving springs of modern economic life

> drive capital along the road of aggressive politics and the militarisation of all social life.
>
> (Bukharin, [1919], 1929, pp. 127–128)

In his analysis of finance capitalism Bukharin also suggested that 'national state financial capitalism' also sought to maintain its influence through ideology:

> Thus the interests of finance capital acquire a grandiose ideological formulation; every effort is made to inculcate it into the mass of workers, for, as a German imperialist has correctly remarked from his point of view: 'We must gain power not only over the legs of the soldiers, but also over their minds and hearts.'
>
> (Bukharin, [1919], 1929, p. 109)

In his essay 'Towards a Theory of the Imperialist State' (1916), Bukharin offered further reflections on totalitarianism by theorising about the nature of state capitalism and the militaristic state, which he would later also attribute as central features of the German fascist system. Bukharin seems here to adhere to the discussion on militarism and 'totalitarianism', which was a familiar theme among leftist circles already before the First World War. For example, Jack London's famous novel *The Iron Heel,* which depicted a dictatorship of monopoly capitalists, was written already in 1908. In 1934, Bukharin insisted that fascism was a new phenomenon arising from these earlier anti-democratic tendencies, but had its peculiar traits. Bukharin insisted that the left had to struggle against fascism without making any compromises.

How did Bukharin's conception of fascism as a capitalist ideology develop? Besides developing his own economic theory, Bukharin's leftist philosophical sympathies influenced his analysis of fascism. The Russian intellectual traditions of the late Silver Age, a period of culture covering approximately 1890–1917, and the religious philosophical reception of Oswald Spengler's *Decline of the West* (1918) by the religious political philosopher Nikolai Berdyaev also formed important 'counternarratives' for Soviet Marxist cultural theoreticians. The notion of a decline of the West was offensive, though, to those Marxists who also believed in the triumph of socialism in cultural terms. For Bukharin, Berdyaev was a constant opponent. Berdyaev also denounced fascism. But he argued that the socialist state in general and the Soviet Union under the Bolsheviks, in particular, functioned much like a theocracy and had theocratic ambitions, making such a state a 'satanocracy' subject to rule by the Devil. He even anticipated the appearance of an Antichrist in 1924 (Berdyaev, [1924], 1994, pp. 419, 476).

The political left and the communists did not immediately understand the true nature of fascism when it first emerged in the 1920s. For a long time, they regarded it as some kind of aggressive form of populism. Still, in the 1920s, the rise of fascism was mostly viewed as a political phenomenon, one which imitated social democracy and the workers' movement but with the key differences being that it was nationalistic in tone, expressed an admiration war and supported a class-based

society. Indeed, the Italian fascist leader Mussolini had initially been a member of the Socialist Party and edited its main publication. This phenomenon had been most sharply analysed several years earlier by the Hungarian politician Djula Sas (1893–1943, pseudonym Giulio Aquila) in *Il Fascismo Italiano* (*Italian fascism,* 1922). Sas examined fascism's historical underpinnings and argued that its political victory was the immediate consequence of its 'social demagoguery', whereas it actually contributed to destroying the institutional infrastructure of the working class by serving industrial capitalists (Gregor, 2017, pp. 131, 135). Bukharin most likely became aware of Sas's analysis through Clara Zetkin, who repeated many of Sas's opinions in a speech entitled 'Der Kampf gegen den Faschismus' ('The struggle against Fascism') given at the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Communist International in June 1923 (Gregor, 2017, p. 137–138). According to Zetkin, Mussolini became a 'renegade from pacifist socialism' (Zetkin, [1923], 2017). Against the general opinion of the party, Mussolini began to demand that Italy should participate in the First World War. He soon began to admire violence and war, and after being expelled from the Socialist Party he began to organise his own *Fasci di combattimento*.

Researchers like Lea Haro view Bukharin as a supporter of the social fascism thesis, the ultra-leftist interpretation of the role of traditional social democracy first coined by Grigoriy Zinovyev (1883–1936) in 1924 (see Zetkin [1923], 2017, p. 565). Its main claim was that social democrats and fascists are fundamentally of the same ilk, as both work to preserve capitalism. During the 1920s, Bukharin seemed at least in some respect to support this pernicious thesis. However, as Wladislaw Hedeler writes, Bukharin's position was already ambivalent during this period:

> Although Bukharin even in the summer of 1928 at the VI Congress of Comintern supported this orientation [i.e. the social fascism thesis], he tried to avoid letting so radical and discriminating a formulation end up in the documents that Stalin had used in 1924 against social democracy, characterising it as the 'moderate wing' and 'twin brother' of fascism. Bukharin's opinion on this question was undecided. In his concluding speech […] he, true, spoke of 'social fascist tendencies' in social democracy, but he was opposed to the idea of throwing them in the same vessel when analysing the situation and defining tactics.
>
> (Hedeler, 2015, p. 331)

Hedeler notes further that Bukharin supported those delegates of the Comintern Congress, who, like the Italian communist politician Palmiro Togliatti, were of the opinion that the claims of the social democrats being nothing more than a 'a fascist workers' party' were wrong and should be removed from the documents (Hedeler, 2015, p. 331). Thus, contrary to what Haro (pp. 563–582) suggests, it can be pointed out that Bukharin's comments that the central features of fascism could be discerned among the social democrats can be read as a warning of unwanted prospects rather than a theory of social fascism as an existing political force.

When it comes to Stalin, he generally did not comment much on the issue of fascism during the 1920s and 1930s. He, however, clearly differed from Bukharin in that he did not question the Zinovyevist view. Only later in the 1930s did Stalin reconsider his position in line with Soviet foreign policy and become a supporter of the Popular Front, which was reflected also in his domestic politics (see Clark 2011, p. 174). According to Khlevniuk, Stalin was plotting a moderate course in both domestic and international affairs at the time. Cultivating an image of the 'motherland of socialism' as a prosperous and democratic country, he was hoping for a leftward movement by the Western European countries and a growth in pro-Soviet sentiments (Khlevniuk, 2015, p. 135).

Although a simplification, it can be said that Bukharin, in contrast to being a mere power-seeking politician like Stalin, persistently promoted certain ideas about socialist culture throughout his career. As a skilful bricoleur, he was also able to hold true to some of his core ideas in the changing political context from Leninism to Stalinism. Meanwhile, he realised already when Lenin was alive that while the proletarian cause had its economic and social historical theoreticians, the question of culture and the practical parameters of future society were far from resolved at the time. It is indeed hard to say whether it was this unresolved question about socialist culture and the rise of fascism or the fact that a cultural 'editorial' position was the only available post for him during Stalinism that made Bukharin an antifascist cultural theoretician of socialism in the 1930s.

Bukharin was one of the first Bolsheviks to see that the ultra-leftist thesis on social democracy being a parallel phenomenon to that of fascism was a huge mistake. Here, he followed Zetkin. They had both given speeches at the Comintern meeting in Moscow in June 1923 (Zetkin on the 20th and Bukharin on the 22nd[14]). Like Zetkin (and Sas before her), Bukharin linked fascism early on with the crisis of capitalism. According to Zetkin, fascism was 'an expression of the decay and disintegration of the capitalist economy and a symptom of the bourgeois state's dissolution' (Zetkin, [1923], 2017). She proposed that the reason for the popularity of fascist national socialism was the impoverishment of the bourgeois as a result of their 'proletarianization', as '[t]he war [had] shattered the capitalist economy down to its foundations'. Thus, the basis of fascism lay 'not in a small caste but in broad social layers, broad masses, reaching even into the proletariat' (Zetkin, [1923], 2017). Zetkin emphasised that the fascist leaders only flirted with the revolutionary proletariat and instead of class struggle offered nationalism. Bukharin's analysis of racism in *Philosophical Arabesques* as a peculiar feature of German fascism was based on these ideas. Although Bukharin had refuted racist theories as early as 1921 in *Historical Materialism,* he had not yet then linked them with fascism.[15]

Zetkin also developed several other important notions about the populist mass character of fascism. For example, Mussolini had tried to win over the Vatican since 1922, and Zetkin argued that in this way, fascists had sought to achieve popularity among women.[16] According to Zetkin, fascism had different characteristics in every country, based on specific circumstances, though in every country it contained two essential features: 'a sham revolutionary

program, which links up in extremely clever fashion with the moods, interests, and demands of broad social masses; and the use of brutal and violent terror' (Zetkin, [1923], 2017). She claimed that the reason why the bourgeoisie was keen to form an alliance with fascism was that the state was 'losing the financial strength and moral authority needed to maintain blind loyalty and subjugation among its slaves'. The bourgeoisie could 'no longer rely on the state's regular methods of force to secure its class rule' because 'for that, it would need an extra-legal and non-state instrument of force' (Zetkin, [1923], 2017). Zetkin called for proletarian struggle and self-defence against fascism and demanded a united proletarian united front.

What Zetkin did not analyse in much depth at this point was the ideological character of fascism. She simply noted that fascism was not only a military phenomenon but also a political and ideological one (Zetkin [1923], 2017). After the Nazi Party assumed power in Germany in 1933, both Marxists and communists began to pay attention to the more irrational features of fascist ideology. Bukharin, too, highlighted the connection between fascism and the imperialist stage of capitalism in his groundbreaking *Izvestiya* article from 1934, the English version of which we already have quoted above *in extenso.* The core of fascist ideology stemmed from the irrational philosophical currents of the nineteenth century and the Weimar Republic era. Bukharin identified Oswald Spengler as one of the ideologues of fascism. The substance of his critique of Spengler was that the crisis of capitalism had created a conservative anti-modernisation and anti-technological philosophical atmosphere. These ideas were not in fact Bukharin's own ideas. Abram Deborin had noted already in 1922 in his sharp critique of Spengler's rather ominous question 'The death of Europe or the triumph of imperialism?' that 'the "profound" metaphysics of Spengler-Danilevsky […] inevitably leads to the denial of evolution and human progress, to the collapse of science and any objective knowledge' (Deborin, 1922, p. 28).[17] Russian Marxists had a long history of critiquing Spengler, and an even longer history of critiquing such Russian religious idealists as Berdyaev, who found inspiration in Spengler's book.

Another Marxist writer in the 1920s, V. Varangya, had offered a criticism of 'Our Russian Spenglerists' (1922, pp. 28–33) as part of a collection of essays entitled *Osval'd Shpengler i zakat Evropy* (O. Spengler and the decline of Europe), published in Moscow in 1922 by a group of philosophers of the same idealist orientation as Berdyaev (J. Bukshpan, F. Stepun and S. Frank). Varangya was annoyed not only by Semyon Frank's (1877–1950) mystical way of expressing himself, but even more by the fact that the philosophers saw the end of a historical era at the very time when proletarian class was leading the cultural renewal of society (Varangya, 1922, p. 30). Deborin, too, wrote rather ironically:

> Socialist, or plebeian, as Spengler contemptuously calls it, ethics is imbued with humanity, [and] it preaches universal brotherhood, the happiness of the majority and peace between peoples. If such horrible things take place in reality, and this cannot be denied, then it is clear that we are on the eve of the end of the world, that culture is dying, that Europe is rotten […] [Spengler's]

> metaphysics of history can either be completely rejected or taken on faith (*ili zhe prinyat' na veru*).
>
> (Deborin, 1922, p. 14)

Varangya argued that the Russian idealist philosophers in question had predicted a new era of searching for God, of romanticist idealism, which had seemingly occurred in silence and at distance from recent historical events. In his view, Spengler's nationalism corresponded to the nationalist and messianic sentiments of certain Russian philosophers (Varangya, 1922, p. 32). When taking into account later Marxist analysis of Spengler as an ideologist of German fascism, it is especially interesting that Varganya noted that Stepun's idea, according to which Spengler's work was a sign of the deepening of new religious mystical life in Europe, was shared by all the authors in the essay collection (Varangya, 1922, p. 31). The later Soviet Marxists made this their counternarrative and argued that instead of heralding a renaissance of religion, Spengler's book was a sign of the rise of fascism. Just as curiously, Varangya announced that the proletariat was not afraid of Spengler's announcement of the death of culture, but that the proletariat would create its own 'working culture and freedom of culture from the ruins of the culture of the exploiters' (Varangya, 1922, p. 33).

In 1933, the Academy of Sciences of the USSR published a volume to mark the 50th anniversary of the death of Marx. The volume opened with Bukharin's lengthy essay 'Marks i kul'tura' ('Marx and Culture') and was immediately followed by Deborin's article 'Karl Marks i sovremennost' ('Karl Marx and the Present Times'). Here, Deborin focused on criticising conservative bourgeois thought as a contributor to fascism and repeated many of the points from his earlier assessments in the 1920s. He defined fascism as a movement that 'utilises anti-capitalist phraseology for the goals of a social demagogy', a 'utopia with a "feudal" taint', quoting such authors as Ernst Niekisch and Friedrich Hielscher, who had advocated a return to rural life as an antidote to the problems of modernity (Deborin, 1933, pp. 116–118). A similar critique of modernity from a conservative viewpoint can be found in the works of such philosophers as Othmar Spann, who accused Marx and Darwin of 'doing terrible damage to our culture by their mechanistic concept of evolution' (Deborin, 1933, p. 121). For Deborin, Spengler is 'one of the philosophers and ideologues of fascism' (Deborin, 1933, p. 122). A further fundamental trait of fascist ideology is a negative attitude towards reason and a defence of 'the aggregation of affects and primitive instincts […] In this respect, Nietzsche, Spengler, Bergson, Ludwig Klages, German Romanticism and modern irrationalism in general are the real masterminds and fathers of fascist ideology' (Deborin, 1933, p. 123).

A simple comparison shows that Bukharin had taken these characterisations of fascist ideology from Deborin and other Soviet philosophers. In the *Izvestiya* article of 1934, which we have quoted above from the English-language brochure version, Bukharin's criticism of Spengler repeated the same ideas, even expressions, found in the works by Deborin and others. Discussing the reasons for

Spengler's conservatism, he saw it as mirroring a common trend in the crisis of capitalism. According to him, the crisis of capitalism had created a conservative philosophical atmosphere that opposed modernisation and technological progress, as embodied in Spengler's thinking.

Compared to both Bukharin and Deborin, another Soviet philosopher, Valentin Asmus (1933, pp. 629–632) describes Spengler's ideological role in a more refined and moderate way in an article he wrote for *Bol'shaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya*, the Soviet encyclopaedia for which Bukharin served as editor-in-chief until his arrest. Asmus belittled Spengler as a philosopher but valued him as a writer. Asmus drew a parallel between Spengler's philosophy and what he considered Bergson's 'anti-intellectualism' (his intuitivism). Indeed, Spengler's philosophy did exhibit some Bergsonian traits. In addition, Asmus's foremost critical point was that Spengler's philosophy of history was most of all a criticism of historical naturalism, which he related to Spengler's anti-Marxism, a position that had clearly annoyed the Marxists in the early 1920s (Asmus, 1932, pp. 385–387).

The more interesting part of Asmus's review consists of his analysis of the contexts in which Spengler's book was written and where it became popular. Like Deborin, Asmus wrote that Spengler's thought portrayed the interests of Junkers and the crisis of capitalism, whereas the popularity of the book was due to the fact that the thoughts of the prosperous bourgeoisie had grown closer to that of the Junkers as a declining class after the war. According to Asmus, the popularity of the book between 1918 and 1921 was due to a shared, but also class-based, experience of humiliation after Germany lost the First World War. He argues that Spengler's book became popular because Germans wanted to see their own national loss as part of a crisis of faith in all Western culture, which offered them some kind of 'metaphysical consolidation' (Asmus, 1932, pp. 380–382). In addition, he claims that the pan-European popularity of Spengler's book softened the critical attitude towards Germany after the First Wold War (Asmus, 1932, p. 382). Asmus did not present Spengler straightforwardly as an ideologue of fascism, as later writers did during the period of high Stalinism. According to him, the new popularity of Spengler in the 1930s was due to the crisis of worldwide capitalist economics and the capitalist political system, and it contributed to the fascist leanings of the German bourgeoisie, making Spengler's book significant in the context of the 1930s.

Most Soviet Marxist philosophers, who in the 1930s wrote about the ideology of fascism, including Bukharin, did not manage to make the important distinction between pre-fascist currents of thought and fascism proper. Lukács, who at the time was writing his book *Zerstörung der Vernunft* (published only for the first time in 1954), for his part managed to do so. Lukács saw fascist ideology as the result of a history of irrationalism running 'from Schelling to Hitler', as he writes in the foreword. He argued, in accordance with the Soviet philosophers of the 1930s, that the bourgeoisie had in the nineteenth century given up on the ideals of the Enlightenment and reason. This trend became apparent in the work of Schopenhauer, soon followed by Nietzsche, German *Lebensphilosophie*, Bergson and Spengler. For Lukács, fascism and Nazism represented the logical end point

of this development. However, he described the openly fascist thinking of such men as Hitler or Alfred Rosenberg as being characterised by a militancy that departed from previous irrationalist currents of thought (see Lukács, 1974, pp. 199, 203 and subsequent pages).

## Conclusions: Bukharin, Stalinism and the World Revolution

In 1936, Stalin was preparing a new constitution and announced that the Five-Years' Plans would erase all the remnants of capitalism, and that the work would be completed by 1938 (*BSE*, 1938, p. 670). In 1937, Bukharin was arrested and dismissed from the party. Accused of treason, Bukharin was executed in 1938 after several show trials and ambiguous testimonies. If we understand Stalinism foremost as cultural and social parasitism in its endeavour to gain more power, then the cultural theory expounded by Bukharin in the book *Socialism and Its Culture* is not Stalinist *per se*. However, in systematically constructing his theory of socialism as the antithesis of fascism, Bukharin paints a black-and-white worldview that could readily be used for the purposes of Stalinist politics. In rendering his Bogdanovian monistic philosophical worldview into cultural practice covering all fields of production in socialist society, Bukharin offers a mechanistic socialist utopian culture which, although not 'totalitarian', nevertheless has an all-engulfing character. According to Bukharin, in fascism, all kinds of wholeness and 'the community' are mere fictions. There is a unity in capitalistic society 'produced by the market relations of the commodity producers', but the society 'fragmentises' in fascism, whereas in socialism everything comes together in a more ethically qualitative form (Bukharin, [1937], 2006, pp. 196–198). Bukharin's dream was the worldwide unification of socialist humanity, which was nonetheless not yet possible because socialism faced the constant threat of 'encirclement by capitalist states, some of which are not only hostile, but ferociously hostile towards us' (Bukharin, [1937], 2006, pp. 216–217). Bukharin wanted to fend off this perceived threat:

> Soviet power, the dictatorship of the proletariat, as a political form of society, cannot be relaxed, weakened or mitigated as long as all the remnants of hostile classes have not been thoroughly destroyed, no matter what kind of agents of the enemy forces there may be, no matter what the danger to socialism. The strengthening and consolidation of the Soviet state is therefore a historical precondition for the subsequent withering away of the state. Only then, when we can begin to melt down our swords, will the withering away of the state begin and the governing of people be replaced by the 'administration of things'.
>
> (Bukharin, [1937], 2006, p. 214)

The strengthening of the role of the state, of the party leadership (as a proletarian dictatorship) and of authoritarian ideology was necessary for paving the way to communism, but ultimately all these frameworks and norms would disappear

(Bukharin, [1937], 2006, p. 218). Although Bukharin disapproved of many of Stalin's concrete actions, the authoritarian approach embodied in the person of the General Secretary appears in Bukharin's view in the last instance as a necessary evil on the road to the society of future, as a kind of creative destruction tearing down the old capitalist world order.

## Notes

1 The later appointment of his father, Ivan Gavrilovich, as a provincial councillor in the Tsarist civil service guaranteed that the family was not poor at the time of Bukharin's university years.

2 Collections of articles on Bukharin were first published in Russia in 1987, when the Soviet Communist Party began to rehabilitate him, an endeavour championed for decades by his widow, Anna Larina-Buhkharina (1990, pp. 395–397). Bukharin's rehabilitation also produced some important materials for more critical study, such as Nikolai Moskovchenko's re-publication of Bukharin's work *Etyudy* (1932, 1988), a collection of Bukharin's articles, which had been published in various periodicals in the early 1930s, and a collection of articles by him entitled *N. I. Bukharin Problemy teoriy i praktiki sotsializma* (Smirnov et al., 1989). After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Boris Frenzinsky edited a notable collection of Bukharin's articles on culture entitled *Revolyutsiya i kul'tura* (1993, Moscow: N. I. Bukharin fund). Meanwhile, Stephen Cohen played a role in the publication of Bukharin's last three large prison manuscripts (written in 27 February 1937–15 March 1938): a textbook on *Socialism and Its Culture*, a philosophical work with the title *Arabesques,* an autobiographical novel called *How It All Began* and a cycle of poems entitled *The Transformation of the World* (*Poems on Centuries and People*). After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Boris Frenzinskiy edited a notable collection of Bukharin's articles on culture entitled *Revolyutsiya i kul'tura* (1993).

3 As Cohen aptly writes: 'For Bukharin, culture meant modern civilization; fascism was its mortal crisis and socialism its only possible salvation' (Cohen, 1998, p. xxi).

4 See the recent evidence by Russian scholars Aleksande Fokin and Alexei Gusev: https://www.leftvoice.org/dossier-the-soviet-left-opposition-and-the-discovery-of-the-verkhneuralsk-prison-booklets/ (accessed: 15 March 2021).

5 When Bukharin criticised Kautsky for not being able to analyse the crisis of capitalism in a dialectical manner in *Ekonomika perekhodnogo perioda* (Economics of Transition Period, 1920), Lenin added the following comments in the margin: 'Dialectical process! Exactly so! And not scholastics à la Bogdanov. The author [Bukharin] puts the dialectical process alongside the *Begriffsscholastik* of Bogdanov. But one should not put them beside. It is either – or.' (Lenin, 1929, p. 361)

6 Already a 1937 article in *BSE* (vol. 35) on '*kul'tura'* (culture), which the journal published in May, a few months after Bukharin's February arrest, insisted (p. 471) that both Bukharin and Bogdanov had argued for the primacy of a proletarian cultural revolution followed by a political revolution.

7 This attitude should not be confused with similar ideas expressed later by many West European or Yugoslav Marxists. Actually, Soviet Marxism did not distinguish between the concepts of 'practice' and 'praxis': both are covered by the Russian word *praktika*. Bukharin's 'Praxis Marxism' builds on what Engels wrote in *Ludwig Feuerbach* (1886) about the role of practice in solving theoretical problems ('the proof of the pudding lies in eating it') and is quite similar to the ideas of the pragmatists (which perhaps explains Bukharin's early interest in American pragmatism). For a more detailed analysis, see Oittinen (2017, pp. 29–41; on Bukharin, see especially p. 31 and subsequent pages).

8 In addition, Biggart notes that Bukharin, the most popular communist theoretician at the time, once again concerned Lenin during his declining years when he had to turn his attention to the problem of succession.

9 Lenin had already criticised Bukharin's *Economics of the Transition Period* in 1920, objecting to his use of Bogdanov's organisation theory and of the 'equilibrium model' of social change in preference to Hegelian dialectics (Biggart, 1987, p. 231).
10 Soboleva calls Bukharin's ontology and dialectics 'relational', with the basic assumption being that the relations between entities are ontologically more fundamental than the entities themselves. In contrast to Lenin, who had downplayed the social nature of cognition, Bukharin based his ideas on experience, believing experience to be a product of the *practical* activity of a socialised subject. However, in 'considering cognition as a social process' and highlighting 'the practical root of thought, its labour root' (Bukharin, 2005, p. 11), Bukharin continued to advocate a 'sociology of thought' (Soboleva, 2020).
11 The expression Bukharin uses here is interesting, since it recalls Marx's idea of man as the 'main force of production', which Marx mentions *en passant* in *Grundrisse* ('*die Hauptproduktivkraft, den Menschen* selbst'; see e.g. Marx, 2010, p. 351). However, *Grundrisse* was only published for the first time in 1941, after the death of Bukharin, so the formulation he uses must be regarded as his own interpretation of Marx's theory on human labour and productive forces.
12 The most interesting collection from the standpoint of Bukharin's concept of socialist culture, arts and science is *Etyudy* (1932).
13 The political subtext in both Bukharin's and Lenin's writings was also the competition with Karl Kautsky over how to define socialists and socialism and along with it further separation from the German Social Democratic Party.
14 Bukharin's speech was not about fascism at this point. It focused on the anti-religious policies of the Communist Party. See Bukharin (1923).
15 To quote Bukharin:

> 'We are considering here the question of whether there is a difference between the developmental level, cultural or otherwise, of white men and black men on the whole. There *is* such a difference; "white" men are at present on a higher level, but this only goes to show that at present these so-called races have changed places. This is a complete refutation of the theory of race. At base, this theory always reduces itself to the peculiarities of races, to their immemorial "character". If such were the case, this "character" would have expressed itself in the same way in all the periods of history. The obvious inference is that the "nature" of the races is constantly changing with the conditions of their existence. But these conditions are determined by nothing more nor less than the relation between society and nature, i.e. the condition of the productive forces. In other words, the theory of race does not in the slightest manner explain the conditions of social evolution. Here also, it is evident that the analysis must begin with the movement of the productive forces'.
>
> (Bukharin, [1921], 1928, pp. 127–128)

16 The Italian socialist priest Luigi Sturzo was among the first who fought against the alliance between fascism and the Roman Catholic Church.
17 Deborin also wrote the foreword to the Russian translation of Spengler's book in 1923.

## Bibliography

Asmus, Valentin ([1932], 1971) 'Filosofiya fashiziruyushcheysya germanii. Shpengler i problema spetsifichnosti istoricheskoy nauki'. In *V. F. Asmus Izbrannye filosofiskie Trudy*, 2. Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Moskovskogo universiteta, pp. 413–430.

Asmus, Valentin (1933) 'Shpengler'. In *Bol'shaya Sovetskaya Enstiklopediya*, 62. Moscow: OGIZ RSFSR, pp. 631–662.

Berdyaev, Nikolai ([1924], 1994) 'Novoe sredenevekov'e. Razmyshlenie o sudbe Rossii i Evropy'. In Nikolay Berdyaev (ed.), *Filosofiya tvorchestva, kul'tury i iskusstva*. Moscow: Izdatel'stvo 'Iskusstvo', pp. 406–485.

Biggart, John (1989) 'Bukharin and the Origins of the 'Proletarian Culture Debate''. *Soviet Studies*, 39(2), pp. 229–246.

Biggart, John (1992) 'Bukharin's Theory of Cultural Revolution'. In Kemp-Welch, A. (ed.), *The Ideas of Nikolai Bukharin*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, pp. 131–158.

Biggart, John, et al. (1998) *Bogdanov and His Work: A Guide to the Published and Unpublished Works of Alexander A. Bogdanov (Malinovsky), 1873–1928*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Biggart, John (2016) 'Bogdanov's Sociology of the Arts'. In Pia Tikka (ed.), C*ulture as Organization in Early Soviet Thought. Bogdanov, Eisenstein, and the Proletkult*. Helsinki: Spherical Book, pp. 7–22.

Bogdanov, Aleksandr (2003) *Empiriomonizm. Stat'i po filosofii*. Moscow: Respublika.

BSE (1937) 'Kul'tura'. In *Bol'shaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya*, 35. Moscow: OGIZ RSFSR, pp. 468–473.

BSE (1938) 'Kommunizm'. In *Bol'shaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya*, 33. Moscow: OGIZ RSFSR, pp. 662–707.

Bucharin, Nikolai (2005) *Philosophische Arabesken*, hg. und kommentiert von Dieter Uhlig und Wladislaw Hedeler. Berlin: Karl Dietz Vlg.

Bukharin, Nikolai (1922) 'Burzhuaznaya revoliutsiya i revolyutsiya proletarskaya'. *Pod znamenem Marksisma*, 7–8, pp. 61–82.

Bukharin, Nikolai (1923) 'Speech at Session of Enlarged Executive of C.I.'. *From International Press Correspondence*, 3(45), pp. 440–441. Transcribed and marked up by Einde O'Callaghan for the Marxists' Internet Archive https://www.marxists.org/archive/bukharin/works/1923/06/speech-ecci.htm (Accessed: 10 January, 2022).

Bukharin, Nikolai ([1925, 1926], 1928) *Historical Materialism. A System of Sociology*. 3rd printing. New York: International Publishers.

Bukharin, Nikolai (1927) *The Economic Theory of the Leisure Class*. London: Martin Lawrence Limited.

Bukharin, Nikolai ([1932], 1988). 'Geine i kommunizm'. In Velikhova, E. P. (ed.), *N. I. Bukharin. Izbrannye trudy. Istoriya i organizatsiya nauki i tekhniki*. Akademiya Nauk SSSR, Institute Istorii Estestvoznaniya i tekhniki Lenigradskiy otdel. Leningrad: 'Nauka' Leningradskoe otdelenie, pp. 12–26.

Bukharin, Nikolai (1933) 'Uchenie Marksa i ego istoricheskoe znachenie'. In Akademiya Nauk SSSR (ed.), *Pamyati Karla Marksa. Sbornik stat'ey k pyatidesyatiletiyu so dnya smerti*. Moscow: Izdatel'stvo AN SSSR, pp. 7–99.

Bukharin, Nikolai (1934) 'Crisis of Capitalist Culture'. *New Masses*, 4 December 1934. Paul Flewers (ed.). Available at: https://www.marxists.org/archive/bukharin/works/1934/capitalist-culture.htm (Accessed: 8 January 2021).

Bukharin, Nikolai (1935a) 'Poetry, Poetics and the Problems of Poetry in the USSR'. In Scott, N. G. (ed.), *Problems of Soviet Literature. Reports and Speeches at the First Soviet Writers' Congress*. Moscow and Leningrad: Co-operative Publishing Society of Foreign Workers in the U.S.S.R, pp. 185–260.

Bukharin, Nikolai (1935b) 'Teaching and Its Historical Importance: N. I. Bukharin'. In N. I. Bukharin, A. M. Deborin, Y. M. Uranovsky, S. I. Vavilov, V. L. Komarov, and A. I. Tiumeniev (eds.), *Marxism and Modern Thoughts*. Ralph Fox (trans.). London: George Routledge & Sons, Ltd, pp. 1–90.

Bukharin, Nikolai (2005) *Philosophical Arabesques*. New York: Monthly Review Press.

Bukharin, Nikolai (2006) *The Prison Manuscripts. Socialism and Its Culture*. London and New York: Seagull Books.

Clark, Katerina (2011) *Moscow, the Fourth Rome. Stalinism, Cosmopolitanism, and the Evolution of Soviet Union 1931–1941*. Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press.

Cohen, Stephen F. (1974) *Bukharin and the Bolshevik Revolution. A Political Biography 1888–1938*. London: Wildwood House.

Deborin, Abram (1922) GIbel' Evropy ili torzhestvo imperializma?'. *Pod znamenem marksizma*, 1(12), pp. 8–28.

Deborin, Abram (1933) 'Karl Marks i sovremennost'. In Akademiya Nauk SSSR (ed.), *Pamyati Karla Marksa. Sbornik stat'ey k pyatidesyatiletiyu so dnya smerti*. Moscow: Izdatel'stvo AN SSSR, pp. 101–162.

Gregor, A. James (2017) Interpretations of fascism. New York: Routledge.

Haro, Lea (2011) 'Entering a theoretical void: The theory of social fascism and stalinism in the German Communist Party.' *Critique*, 39(4), pp. 563–582.

Hedeler, Wladislaw (2015) *Nikolai Bucharin – Stalins tragischer Opponent. Eine politische Biographie*. Berlin: Matthes & Seitz.

Hedeler, Wladislaw and Uhlig, Dieter (2005) 'Die 'Arabesken' Nikolai Iwanowitsch Bucharins in ihrer Zeit'. In Nikolai Bucharin (ed.), *Philosophische Arabesken*. Berlin: Dietz Verlag, pp. 389–439.

Jensen, Kenneth (1978) *Beyond Marx and Mach: Aleksandr Bogdanov's Philosophy of Living Experience*. Dordrecht, Holland: Spengler Publishers.

Khlevniuk, Oleg (2015) *Stalin. New Biography of a Dictator*. Nora Seligman (trans.). New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press.

Kononov, Ivan F. (2021) 'Proekt marksistskoy sotsiologii Nikolaya Bukharina'. *Sotsiologicheskie issledovaniya*, 9, pp. 105–116.

Kotkin, Stephen (2017) *Stalin, vol. II: Waiting for Hitler 1928–1941*. Allen Lane/ Penguin.

Kovalenko, Nadezhda V. (2020a) 'Diskussiya N. N. Bukharina s Ya. A. Yakovlevym kak istochnik po vzglyadam Bukharina na puti razvitiya nauki i obrazovaniya posle ravoliutsiy'. *Dialog so vremenem*, 72, pp. 92–107.

Kovalenko, Nadezhda V. (2020b) 'Stat'i N. I. Bukharina o Proletkul'te kak istochnik po ego kul'turnuyu i politiku Sovetskogo gosudarstava'. *Istoriya*, 11(9), p. 95.

Kun, Miklosh (1992) *Bukharin: ego druz'ya i vragi*. Moscow: Respublika.

Lenin, Vladimir. *Collected Works*, vol. 38: Philosophical Notebooks 1895–1916. https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/cw/volume38.htm (Accessed: 10 January 2022).

Lenin, Vladimir (1929) *Zamechaniya na knigu N. I. Bukharina: 'Ekonomika perekhodnogo perioda'*. May 1920, in Leninskiy sbornik X, Moscow, Leningrad.

Lenin, Vladimir (1965) 'On Proletarian Culture'. In *Collected Works*, vol. 31. Moscow: Progress Publishers.

Lukács, Georg (1974) *Die Zerstörung der Vernunft. Bd. II: Irrationalismus und Imperialismus*. Darmstadt: Luchterhand.

Marx, K. (2010) *Grundrisse*. In Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (eds.), *Collected Works*, vol. 28. London: Lawrence & Wishart.

Omodeo, Piedro D. (2016) 'After Nikolai Bukharin: History of Science and Cultural Hegemony at the Threshold of the Cold War Era'. *History of the Human Sciences*, 29(4–5), pp. 13–34.

Oittinen, Vesa (2009) 'Preface'. In Vesa Oittinen (ed.), *Aleksandr Bogdanov Revisited*, Aleksanteri Series 1/2009. Helsinki: Aleksanteri Institute, pp. 7–20.

Oittinen, Vesa (2017) 'Praxis' as the Criterion of Truth? The Aporias of Soviet Marxism and the Activity Approach'. In Andrey Maidansky and Vesa Oittinen (eds.), *The Practical Essence of Man. The 'Activity Approach' in Late Soviet Philosophy*. Chicago, IL: Haymarket Books, pp. 29–41.

Pinchuk, N. V. (2020) 'Filosofskie idey N. I. Bukharina kak sovetskogo marksista v 1917–1928 godakh'. In *Vestnik Riazanskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta* im. CA Esenina 1(66), pp. 13–27.

Sheehan, Helene (2005) 'A Voice from the Dead'. In Bukharin, Nikolai (ed.), *Philosophical Arabesques*. Clark, Renfley (trans.), Shriver, George (ed.). New York: Monthly Review Press, pp. 7–30.

Smirnov, G. L., Zhuravlev, Morozov and Naumov, V. P., eds. (1988) *N. I. Bukharin. Izbrannye Proizvedeniya*. Institut Marksizma-Leninizma pri TsK KPSS, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoy literatury.

Soboleva, Maya (2020) 'Ontologism in the Theoretical Philosophy of Bukharin'. *Studies in East European Thought*, 20 May 2020.

Thompson, Michael J., ed. (2013) *Georg Lukacs Reconsidered: Critical Essays in Politics, Philosophy and Aesthetics*. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc.

Velikhova, E. P., ed. (1988) *N. I. Bukharin. Izbrannye trudy. Istoriya i organ`tsiya nauki i tekhniki*. Akademiya Nauk SSSR, Institute Istorii Estestvoznaniya i tekhniki Lenigradskiy otdel. Leningrad: 'Nauka' Leningradskoe otdelenie.

Vodolazov, G. G. (2014) 'Al'ternativy istorii i istoriya al'ternativ (Bukharin protiv "kazarmennogo kommunizma")'. *Sotsiologicheskie issledovaniya*, 8, pp. 105–113.

Zetkin, Clara ([1923], 2017) 'The Struggle Against Fascism'. In Taber, Mike and Riddell, John (eds.), *Fighting Fascism: How to Struggle and How to Win*. Chicago, IL: Haymarket Books.

Zhuravlev, V. V. and Solopov, A. N. (1990) *Bukharin: Chelovek, politik, uchenyy*. Moscow: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoy literatury.