

Philosophy in Russia: History and Present State

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Hegel characterised philosophy as a thought which seizes its moment. Heidegger described it as an opportunity to lead an autonomous and creative existence. If one takes these definitions as one's point of departure, one can say that philosophic thought in Russia developed in conformity with Hegel's scheme. It has been above all a form of historic awareness of a people.

I.

Philosophy entered Russia in the wake of Eastern Orthodox Christianity which was broadly distinguished from Western Christianity by the fact that within it there was no clear separation between philosophical knowledge and Christian faith. Over the course of the early centuries (and in point of fact, up to the sixteenth century), Russian philosophy developed within the context of a religious thought centred around the idea that true Christianity belonged exclusively to the Orthodox Church and to the messianic role of Russia as a third Rome.

After Russian political thought turned in a pro-Western direction in the seventeenth century, and in particular after the radical reforms put in place by Peter I, philosophic thought in Russia became decisively marked by the influence of the new European philosophies, notably French and German. The Russian Academy of Sciences was established, modelled upon the experience of European academies.¹ The universities which emerged in the country, beginning with the first in age and importance, the University of Moscow (1755), were equally set up according to the canons of the German universities, which placed the faculties of philosophy at the heart of the system of university education.

However, the influence of the new European philosophy was not exercised solely, or even in the most privileged fashion, through the academic channel. Western philo-

sophical ideas penetrated into literature, political writings and literary criticism: they became powerful catalysts and watchwords expressing the critical, democratic and revolutionary processes present within Russian society.

These twin philosophical traditions – Eastern Christianity and the new European thought – nurtured two distinct forms of national consciousness and development strategy for Russia, referred to under the names of Slavophilism and Occidentalism. The former (the Slavophiles) based their outlook around the idea of the specificity of Russia, of its essential Orthodox character and the mission to which it was peculiarly destined. The latter (the Occidentalists) were convinced of the universal nature of the values of modern European civilisation. But what this vast and long-lived debate bore witness to was a deficit of autonomy within the country, as it oscillated between ancient Byzantium and modern Europe, between Constantinople and Paris. This internal pull in two directions, this lack of a clear self-determination by Russia became the characteristic shape and emblem of its particular intellectual disposition, of a particular mode of existence derived from a lack of self-confidence, but it has equally been the source of Russia's greatest historical and cultural successes.

II.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, philosophy in Russia was institutionalised in the form of academic and professional activity. Despite this, its activity went well beyond university boundaries. Alongside the secular universities, there existed, to a comparable if not superior intellectual degree, establishments of religious education at which courses in philosophy were taught. Non-academic forms of philosophical reflection, which tended more towards literary studies, were also widespread. The philosophical community, built around university professorships, specialist publications and academic associations, naturally asserted its criteria of professionalism; for all that, it was far from being inward-looking, on the contrary sustaining lively and vigorous debate with other modes of philosophical reflection that were not part of the academic world. Furthermore, the boundary between the professional philosophy of the universities and non-university philosophy remained indistinct. As a general rule, philosophers wrote in a language accessible to all, expressing themselves abundantly in a literary style addressed directly to a non-specialist public, without passing by way of commentators or popularisers. It is worth noting that in Russia there still does not exist a strict boundary between a professional philosophy and a popular philosophy, even though one can mention many well-known authors whose works are not accessible without some special preparation.² The three orientations or schools which for a whole century have marked the philosophical landscape of Russia were formed in this period: the religious philosophy of the so-called 'Silver Age',³ cosmism and Marxism. Despite substantial differences and the reciprocal hostility of one movement towards another, these three currents held in common something which constitutes the distinctive mark of their Russian nature: that is to say, their anti-individualist flavour, their collectivist ideal (*соборность*, an Orthodox theological term translated generally as conciliarity, collegiality or symphonicity) which associates the good of the individual with the good of the country and the

people, and the good of the country (or people) with the good of humanity and the cosmos.

From a philosophical point of view, the most interesting and no doubt the most fertile current was the religious philosophy of the Silver Age. It held a preponderance in academic and professional philosophical circles, without for all that being exclusively involved with this milieu. Its founder and most eminent representative was Vladimir Solovyev, who is widely recognised and is no doubt the only incontestable philosophical authority in Russia. Having eminent skills in both philosophy and poetry, a man of vast culture with a compendious knowledge of the history of philosophy, Solovyev created an original system to which has been given the name of 'Unitotality (всеединство)'. This represents an attempt to realise a vast synthesis, bringing together, despite its eclectic nuances, widely diverse spiritual and intellectual ideas and traditions: embracing Orthodoxy and Catholicism, the Russian Tsar and the Bishop of Rome, philosophy, religion and art, rational thought and mystical spirituality, individualism and the divine principle. Solovyev's goal was the ideal of an integral knowledge, interpreting the natural and historical process as the restoration of a unity between the divine and the human.

Such attempts to unify philosophy and religion appeared at the end of the nineteenth century to be intellectually archaic, a position on the outer margins with respect to the dominant currents of European philosophy of the time. But, if the context in which the country found itself at that period is kept in mind, this attempt takes on a different significance. The idea by which Christianity in its true essence was not reducible purely to Orthodoxy, and which asserted that it was indispensable to comprehend and practise it as a fundamental unity embracing a wide diversity of forms represented not only a significant leap forward, but a real breach with the past for the Russian religious conscience. It signified the rejection of the mythic representations of a chosen God-bearing people and of the messianic role of Russia. Perceived in the light of the destiny visited upon European philosophy, this return to a religious philosophy was also both a recognition and a reaction in relation to the crisis of the Enlightenment ideal. Solovyev and those who followed his lead, though who were far from sharing all of his views,⁴ debated within the framework of this particular philosophical-religious paradigm ideas of great actuality in Europe, while handling with perfect competence the techniques of philosophical analysis. The first two decades of the twentieth century, when Solovyev's school and spirit were dominant within the field of Russian philosophy, have been among the most productive within the nation's history: it was precisely at that moment that Russian thought found itself closer to European philosophy than it had ever been before, and it conceived itself as belonging to a common intellectual space with the thought of Europe.

The fate of the Silver Age religious philosophy was dramatic. The paths taken by the State and by this philosophical school diverged radically. The most prominent representatives of this current of thought became ideological opponents of the Soviet regime established in October 1917 and were driven into exile in 1922.⁵ Though scattered abroad in various different countries, they remained faithful to their philosophical and historical convictions and continued to labour in the same direction and the same spirit. The events sweeping across Russia and the world served only to confirm in their eyes the correctness of their ideas. One curious outcome which may well

deserve some specific research in itself was that this group of philosophers never really became integrated into the European philosophical environment, where they formed instead a foreign entity with their own intellectual associations, their own journals, universities, publishing houses ... In this way it was effectively Russian philosophy itself which was in exile: it survived in the countries of Europe, but as a fragment of the old Russia, as a pale manifestation of its arrested dreams.

Cosmism represents a surprising phenomenon. It is sometimes referred to in a broad sense, incorporating under this term various forms of pantheism and of the extension to the absolute of the unity of the universe. In one sense, Russian philosophy also encompassed a cosmist tendency. However, what is meant here is a philosophy conceived and disseminated in an exclusive manner within a non-professional, paraphilosophical environment, and which realised an alliance unique in its type between the free rein of fantasy and a trust in the power of scientific knowledge. According to its fundamental precept, the idealist aspirations of humanity, including the ardent desire for immortality, can be achieved not so much through social transformation and the spiritual development of the individual personality as through a transfiguration of the cosmos and of man's place within it. This current of thought was constructed through a number of different doctrines, among the more popular of which were the 'Philosophy of the Common Task' of Nikolai Fedorov, and the doctrine of the noosphere of Vladimir Vernadsky.

Fedorov, a geographer and librarian, developed a set of ideas that were brought together by some of his disciples in a two-volume work entitled *The Philosophy of the Common Task*. He considered that the appearance of man had changed the evolutionary processes of nature into one directed towards the perfecting of the world in a manner that was conscious, moral and in response to a religious impulse. He perceived a common cause for humanity in the task of bringing about the resurrection of the dead and the return to life of all humans ever having lived on earth, so as to reach, at the ultimate point of this process, a state of immortality. It should be emphasised that Fedorov did not conceive of the resurrection of the dead and immortal life in a figurative sense, but in a direct and literal sense as a concrete task, the only one he thought worthy of man. This was certainly how this doctrine was understood by Konstantin Tsiolkovsky, the famous space research pioneer, who was a passionate proponent of a programme of colonisation of the cosmos by human beings, arising out of the notion that the earth would become too small to accommodate the mass of resurrected individuals. Tsiolkovsky was interested in space travel as a naturalist and a pioneer, but also constructed a philosophy and a system of ethics of cosmic naturalism. His description of the cosmos takes as its starting point the idea of spiritual atoms and, through a progressive process of perfection that operates over the course of evolution, tends towards an ultimate point at which occurs the transition of humanity from a form of corpuscular existence towards a form of energetic or 'luminous' existence. It is difficult to say whether this conception should be considered as an offshoot of the philosophy of the 'common task', but the fact remains that it was under the inspiration of Fedorov that Tsiolkovsky became the father of Russian astronautics.

The doctrine of the noosphere of the academician Vladimir Vernadsky is one of the most brilliant intuitions of Russian scientific philosophical thought of the twen-

tieth century. Borrowing the term 'noosphere' itself from Teilhard de Chardin and Edouard Le Roy, Vernandsky associated it with his particular concept of the biosphere. His idea derives from the recognition of the fact that the impact that human beings have had on nature has become a geological force. This implies the formation, transcending the terrestrial biosphere, of a new layer called the *noosphere*. Thus the growth of the power of humanity is not essentially linked to the mass of the latter, but to its knowledge-generating activity, which has come to encompass the whole world. Hence, reason and the rational organisation of life are reckoned as a prolongation of the process of evolution. This is a concept which has not been systematically developed and exists essentially in the form of a general idea: but it is one that continues to provoke minds and is still in fairly broad circulation today in learned and philosophical circles.

Cosmism has known various fortunes over the course of the twentieth century, without ever entirely disappearing but not attaining broad diffusion across the whole country either. The first human space flights brought it some increased attention and the term 'cosmism' went into broader circulation. Since that time, the ideas spawned by cosmism have attracted the attention of professional philosophers (Coll., 1996, 2000, 2004; Kyrakina, 1989, 1993).

As for Marxism, interest in it in Russia was originally both intellectual and ideological. The intellectual interest, however, did not persist very long. The work of many thinkers who started out as Marxists became subsequently drawn into the ambit of religious philosophy. On the other hand, the ideological aspect of Marxism proved longer lasting. Thanks to its unbridled social energy and its quasi religious drive, Marxism elicited an acute response in Russian revolutionary circles, notably among the Bolsheviks. It opened new horizons to the emancipation movement that was surging through the country, transforming a bundle of isolated heroic acts into a historic action on a global scale. Marxism's most radical Russian adherents seized on two ideas in particular: the one projecting a world-wide Communist brotherhood and the one showing the way to achieving this brotherhood through class struggle and the dictatorship of the proletariat. These ideas effectively became symbols of their faith. All the other aspects of Marxism, including its philosophical dimension, were viewed through the prism of these ideas. The methodological cornerstone of Marxist philosophy was considered to be its dialectic, inherited from Hegel and developed to a more radical extent than his. The Russian Marxists (particularly Plekhanov and Lenin, and especially the latter) had no intention of being converted into disciples of the European Marxists who had already forged a reputation. From the beginning they considered themselves to be the guardians and combatants for an authentic Marxism and led a ruthless struggle against what they considered were distortions introduced by the subsequent interpreters of Marx and Engels. Revelatory from this point of view is the criticism directed towards the ethical socialism of Eduard Bernstein, which was reproached for its excessively Kantian interpretation of the link between ends and means within the Communist movement. Thus, Marxism in Russia was essentially confiscated by the Bolshevik party, which placed a jealous guard on it. And yet, at least for the philosophical component of Marxism, until the arrival in power of the party a certain level of freedom of judgement was permitted.⁶ But things radically changed after 1917.

III.

To understand the specificities of Russian philosophy and the Russian mentality in general, one has to understand the place occupied within it by the problem of rationality. It is a well-known fact that Western Europe, not only as a geographical and geopolitical construct but also as a spiritual entity, arose out of an amalgamation of Christian values and values inherited from the ancient Graeco-Roman civilisation, centred upon rational thought and the rational regulation of societal relations codified through Roman law. It is precisely this amalgam of Christianity and rationalism which made possible the rise of medieval philosophical thought, the appearance of Scholasticism and its highly developed culture of logic derived from Aristotle (which was not fully appreciated until the twentieth century), the emergence of experimental science, the industrial revolution and the modern technological civilisation, or further, the rule of law. It is widely held, however, that none such existed in Russia. Certainly, Christianity is at the heart of Russian culture, but it is an Eastern, Orthodox Christianity, which did not assimilate the value accorded to rationality in the ancient world. From the point of view of many philosophers, beginning with Petr Chaadaev and including certain contemporary Western Slavists, this fact explains the fundamental specificities of Russian history, and of the inability of Russia, which continues until the present day, to join the course of human civilisation.

This reasoning seems soundly based. Indeed, the religious philosophy which held a dominant place in Russia at the beginning of the twentieth century kept up, through its leading representatives, a constant battle against the idea of '*ratio*', of 'abstract knowledge', against which it promoted the idea of *logos* as a higher, super-rational means of understanding the nature of being. Thus, from this way of thinking, the problem was not limited to the religious source for the principal current of Russian philosophy of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (medieval philosophy in Western Europe and many modern philosophical notions were also of a religious nature); the difficulty came rather from the fact that the rational component of these philosophical constructs was undervalued in favour of faith, intuition and spontaneous feeling. The reality, however, was very much more complex.

It turns out in fact that in the twentieth century a great interest in Western European rationalist notions did emerge in Russian philosophy. There appeared some very influential Russian rationalists such as, among others, the Kantians Alexander Vvedensky, and Bogdan Kistiakovsky. German neo-Kantism aroused great interest: both the young Sergei Rubinstein, who became later a classic figure of Russian psychology and philosophy, and the young Boris Pasternak, later a classic figure of Russian poetry, went off to Marburg to study under Hermann Cohen. Gustav Shpet went to study philosophy as a 'rigorous science' under Edmund Husserl. The positivist Ernst Mach was also very popular within the philosophical community. There began appearing Marxist philosophers presenting themselves as heirs of European rationalism. At the turn of the twentieth century, in-depth study of Hegel's philosophy was being pursued as much by the Marxist Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov, alias Lenin, as by the religious philosopher Ivan Ilyin.

We should not simply stop at this growing interest for the rationalist ideas of the West. The critique of Western rationalism traditionally embedded within Russian

philosophy and culture was not expressed solely through the rejection of the *ratio* in favour of faith and intuition. It also became, in many cases, the starting point for a new conception of rationality and rationalism. Nowadays, we tend to accept a historical conception of rationality, where this evolves through the transformations operating in culture and science. In this perspective, contemporary philosophical literature is discussing the idea of a non-classical rationality (Stepin, 2001; Lektorsky and Gaidenko, 1995, 2001). There are good grounds for affirming that Russian philosophy has brought a significant contribution to this new, non-classical conception of rationality. Research in this direction in fact began from the beginning of the twentieth century. The idea of a non-classical, para-consistent logic can be found in the works of Pavel Florensky (1914; Sidorenko, 1997). The first example of non-Aristotelian logic (called 'imaginary' by its author) was due to Nikolai Vasiliev (1911, 1989) who anticipated the ideas of various non-classical contemporary logics, such as polyvalent, para-consistent or intuitionist logic. It is important to note that the idea of such non-classical logics was formulated for the first time in Russia within the context of religious philosophy. This new way of conceiving logical rationality has exercised a fertile influence on Russian mathematics (among the most influential schools of mathematical thought in the world) and has contributed to the development of intuitionism and constructivism (as well as to ultra-intuitionism) in mathematics and logic. These ideas found their extension in the second half of the twentieth century in the works of Russian logicians.

Despite all this, the growth of philosophic rationalism in Russian philosophy was not possible until after 1917. In general, when consideration is given to the way the national culture evolved after October 1917, weight is generally placed on the fact that the declared official ideology, which imposed a dogmatically interpreted Marxism, prevented any free philosophical thought. This viewpoint, which, as we will shortly see, is not without some justification, does not however reflect the full complexity of the facts.

The revolutionary object of a conscious construction of socialism derived from the Marxian interpretation of rationality and of its close association with scientific thought. Marx was effectively a humanist and a rationalist in the classical sense. His interpretation of humanism extended the representation developed by European culture into the modern era: man comes to be free by the extent to which he is able to control his natural and social environment and direct to his own ends processes which lie outside of him. But this implies a rational understanding of these processes and the possibility of predicting their outcomes. The humanisation of society and of man coincides in Marx with the rationalisation of social relationships, which must become 'transparent'. According to him, such rationalisation is only possible under a system of social relationships that are scientifically and rationally planned in the interests of the entire society. In this way, every individual behaves rationally to the extent that he aligns his individual goals with the rationally conceived general good of the society. The degree of rationality is not determined by an individual but by the social whole. We can see today that the methods proposed by Marx for the realisation of the emancipatory ideal also rendered possible the establishment of a totalitarian social order. This applies above all to the idea by which it would be possible and necessary to drive social process 'according to reason', basing this on rational assess-

ment, and on the monitoring and total predictability of the results of this action: an idea predicated on the notion that the world of human social relationships, nature, and indeed humanity itself are open to rational projection and construction. The practical realisation of these ideas implies the emergence of an enormous bureaucratic apparatus, charged with shaping the lives of people and eliminating any deviation from what is considered to be 'rational'. If one adds to these ideas the specifically Marxist notion of the emancipation of man through a process of struggle which involves the elimination of entire social classes and the installation of a dictatorship, then there is no reason to be surprised at the emergence of a repressive totalitarian and anti-humanist system based on ideas that stemmed initially from perfectly humanist ones.

It is worth noting however that all the social and ideological consequences latent in the Marxist conception of rationality were not immediately obvious. The totalitarian system was still only taking shape in the 1920s. Many Russian philosophers were attracted by the idea of a redefinition of human relationships along rational lines and were highly critical of bourgeois individualism. They very much appreciated the work undertaken to eliminate illiteracy, to create a vast network of educational establishments, to resurrect the economy and to set up a network of scientific institutes (prior to the revolution, there was no 'large scale' science in Russia). During that period, Russian philosophy and human sciences did not confine themselves to developing the classical idea of rationality, but actively pursued a new conception of rationality, seeking to construct a new scientific knowledge, notably in the field of the human sciences.

The heterodox Marxist and empirio-monist Alexander Bogdanov developed a 'universal science of organisation', tectology, as a methodology of systems analysis in opposition to the elementalism and atomism of classical science. Bogdanov's ideas were not recognised and developed until after his death, when, in the second half of the twentieth century, a movement towards 'systemic' thinking sprang up within many sciences. In those same years when Bogdanov was evolving his ideas, Russia saw the growth of the structuralist methodology in linguistics (Roman Jakobson and others) and form-based methods in literary criticism (Boris Eichenbaum, Victor Shklovsky, Vladimir Propp and others), which subsequently became one of the sources of structuralism in philosophy and in the human sciences.

In the 1920s as well, a philosophical tendency appeared in Russia that brought together authors who were very different one from another and which presented two particularities. The first was linked to opposition both to the religious philosophical thought which had dominated in Russia before the revolution, as well as to dogmatic Marxism. This resistance to those systems of thought was expressed notably by the fact of situating culture at the heart of philosophical reflection, through language, literature, art and the different semiological and symbolic systems. The sphere of life, which was of marginal interest for both religious philosophy as it was for Marxist materialism interpreted in its primary mode, was considered by this new trend of thought as being central for the consideration of anthropological and ontological questions. The second defining characteristic of this movement was the establishment of close links between developments in philosophy and the new ideas that were emerging in the human sciences. At least three names should be cited in this context.

Mention must first be made of Mikhail Bakhtin and his study of the poetics of Dostoevsky. Bakhtin's ideas on the interaction between the Self and the Other through the process of dialogue, the complex dialectics of the 'consciousness for itself' and the 'consciousness for an Other', the dialogic and polyphonic structure of the consciousness and of culture, or further, the methodology of the growth of knowledge in the human sciences, were considerably in advance of their time and began to be truly studied in our country only from the 1970s – and later still in Western countries. Their importance resides certainly in the elaboration of a new methodology in relation to the human sciences, but even more to the creation of a new philosophical anthropology which, on the one hand, extends an anti-individualist tradition which is proper to Russia, and, on the other hand, establishes the unique and particular character of the role of the person. Today, throughout the West, there exists a whole 'Bakhtin industry'.

Next, the psychologist Lev Vygotsky, whose ideas have persuaded certain present-day Western researches that they mark a significant turning point in the evolution of psychology. Taking a certain number of ideas from Marx as his starting point, Vygotsky developed an original conception of consciousness, perceived as a process of communication linked to the development of inter-subject relationships, thus as a social construct anchored in a given cultural and historical context. These ideas have provided the basis for a psychological theory which has significantly contributed to the evolution of theoretical and experimental psychological research in our country and which today exercises a considerable influence throughout the world.

Thirdly can be mentioned Gustav Shpet and his attempt to link together phenomenology and hermeneutics for the first time. Shpet's ideas have influenced Russian psychology (he was the originator of ethno-psychology), linguistics (in particular the tenets of linguistic structuralism) and literary theory. He was one of the pioneers of the development of semiotics as a general science of sign systems.

However, the philosophical researches that were stimulated by the human sciences were interrupted by the transformation of Marxism into an official dogma and its elevation to the rank of a State ideology. Nevertheless, they were taken up again during a new phase of creative activity for Russian philosophy in the second half of the twentieth century.

IV.

The Soviet state was clearly and openly ideocratic in nature. Marxism was considered to provide the foundation for its legitimacy and recognised as the sole *Weltanschauung* imbued with incontestable scientific truth. Marxism, and especially Marxist philosophy, to the extent that one saw in it the very heart of the Marxist doctrine, was just as coercive as the articles of the law – if not more so. Furthermore, it was not Marxism in general which was officially recognised as the State philosophy, but the interpretation given it by Lenin, and which the ruling Communist party reproduced under the official title of Marxism-Leninism. All other philosophical trends, together with all other versions of Marxist philosophy, were proscribed. The oft-repeated affirmation that the Marxist-Leninist vision of the world assumed the role of a secular religion

in the Soviet Communist order is very close to the truth. However, this needs to be nuanced to the extent that this attribution applies unreservedly only to the Stalinist period. That is a nuance that should not be forgotten when considering the fate of philosophy under the Soviet state.

The official philosophical canon, in its function as the privileged ideological interpretation of the classic philosophical texts of Marxism-Leninism, beginning with works such as Engels's *Anti-Dühring* and Lenin's *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, was constituted in consequence of fierce ideological debates, directly linked to the power struggle at the head of the party. It took its definitive form in the work entitled *Dialectic Materialism and Historical Materialism*,⁷ whose author is generally considered to be Stalin. This short document, which became for fifteen years the Bible of Soviet philosophy, contained a presentation, relatively accessible to the popular reader, of dialectic and historical materialism, reduced to a series of points clearly set out and somewhat resembling the 'cribs' that students used, though these were cribs quite well composed. One could read there that Marxist philosophy was born of a synthesis between the materialism of Feuerbach and the dialectics of Hegel, that the world was material, that everything in it is interdependent and changing, that it is evolving according to the laws of unity, the clash of opposites and of the change from the quantitative to the qualitative, that the evolution of society represents an objective process, founded on the means of production of material goods, that the popular masses are the driving force of history, etc. The problem did not lie in these propositions, which, by themselves may appear reasonable, even banal. It lay rather in the fact that they were presented without the slightest questioning, as unconditional and definitive truths, in a manner as imperative as God handing down his commandments to Moses.

From a scientific point of view, this official philosophy was entirely sterile. Philosophical life had become reduced to such a low level that it was not unusual to see people of little education occupying dominant positions within it. But, as the saying goes, the disease is never entirely fatal. This simplified philosophy, raised to the status of dogma, was intended to be assimilated by all: it required therefore a considerable work of preparation aimed at establishing the Marxist-Leninist philosophy as the apex of human thought, together with a whole infrastructural network designed to inculcate it into the minds of the people. One witnessed the installation of a reinterpretation of the history of world philosophy in the light of Marxism, together with a rich variety of terms and problems, along with a reconstruction of Russian philosophy aiming at seeking out within it ideas related to the concept of inevitable progress as well as elements of materialism and dialectics. Institutes of philosophical research came to be created across the country.⁸ Faculties of philosophy were opened in the universities. Philosophy began to be taught in higher education establishments⁹ and in some secondary schools. Alongside journals in social and political disciplines, which published philosophy articles, a journal especially devoted to philosophy, *Вопросы философии* (*Philosophical Questions*) was set up in 1947 and incorporated into the Party's training network, which provided training to several million individuals. Thus, however destitute the official philosophy, the conditions in which it was practised proved favourable for the cultivation of thought.

V.

In the middle of the 1950s, Soviet philosophy went through an experience of qualitative rupture which formed part of the process of social de-Stalinisation. This can be succinctly described as a humanist turning point marking the beginning of a new era in the evolution of philosophy. The outcome of this process was that the critique of the cult of personality formulated at the time of the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union had acquired a direction which was going well beyond the intentions of the Party *nomenklatura*. It was interpreted as a return to the individual dignity of each person. One might in passing observe that one limiting factor in Western analyses of Soviet philosophy resides in the fact that these take no account of these two distinct stages, or else they do not realise their importance.

It may seem rather excessive to assert that the mid-twentieth century marks the beginning of a kind of philosophical Renaissance in Russia. For, to be sure, ideological censorship was still present. It was quite simply impossible to discuss a certain number of questions, including some in the philosophical field. The study of philosophy in the establishments of higher education was undertaken using textbooks of a fairly dogmatic content which aroused a persistent disgust not only for Marxist philosophy, but more generally for all sorts of philosophy. Western researchers studying philosophy education during the Soviet era often draw their conclusions from an analysis of these textbooks and other ideologically vetted texts. In actual fact, there existed between these texts and the live philosophical thought of this period an enormous gulf, of which all those who were taking part in the new philosophical movement were perfectly aware. The first to emerge as leading figures in this new movement were Evald Ilyenkov and Alexander Zinoviev, two young graduates of the Faculty of Philosophy of the State University of Moscow. Later, other philosophers were drawn into the orbit of their influence, some of whom founded their own philosophical schools.

The specific nature of the philosophical Renaissance in the Soviet Union between the years 1960 and 1980 lay in the fact that, from the beginning, it was associated with an orientation towards the philosophical analysis of knowledge, thought and science. This was not the result of pure chance. Firstly, the fields of philosophy studying knowledge and science (the theory of knowledge, logic, the philosophical problems of the natural sciences) had, contrary to social philosophy, only an indirect link to ideology and politics, such that opportunities for independent growth were much more significant. Secondly, towards the end of the 1950s, ruling circles within the Communist Party realised the deleterious character of ideological interference in matters of science – at least in the field of the natural sciences. Over the following decade, the evolution of socialism began to be associated with the unfolding revolution in science and technology. Yet the leading figures of this movement of philosophical renewal were in no way indifferent to problems on the human level. The realities of the existing social situation were not above their criticism, but they were less hostile to socialism itself as to its bureaucratic embodiment, at least insofar as it was established in the Soviet Union. But they deemed that the only feasible way of transforming that social reality was precisely through grounding it solidly in scientific knowledge, in theoretical thought and in philosophy as the reflective and

methodological base of this thought. The study of thought and the elaboration of an epistemology of science presented themselves from this point of view as a vital mission for philosophy, as its particular modality of social critique and of humanisation of reality. Such analysis of the logic and methodology of scientific knowledge began with an examination of the logical structure of Marx's *Capital*. Then, following on from this methodological research and its successive modifications, effort was directed towards comprehending the structure of theoretical knowledge in other scientific disciplines.

This 'epistemological turning point' in the new philosophy coincided with the intensive study development of cognitive processes in psychology (the cycle of work devoted to the study of thinking conducted by the schools of Rubinstein and Alexis Leontiev), and of symbolic logic (Vladimir Smirnov), together with significant work in the mathematical modelling of the processes of thought, in cognitive linguistics (Vyacheslav Ivanov), semiotics (Yuri Lotman and his school), research in the field of cybernetics (Andrei Kolmogorov), in the methodology of systems analysis (Igor Blauberg, Vadim Sadovsky, Erik Yudin) and the history of the natural sciences. Numerous theoreticians in the fields of mathematics and the natural sciences (the mathematician Andrei Markov, the physicist Petr Kapitsa, the biologists Ivan Schmalhausen and Vladimir Engelgardt [Engelhardt], among others) began to take a close interest in philosophy and took part in philosophical discussions of thematic issues related to their research. An intense level of interactivity developed between philosophers, scientists and a certain number of representatives of the social and human sciences. Conferences devoted to the methodology of science took place on a regular basis. Various different schools of philosophy came to birth and developed, and opened discussions with one another.

From the 1970s, substantial changes came about within this new philosophical movement. A certain number of researchers, somewhat disillusioned by the naïve scientism that had driven them from the end of the 1950s and into the 1960s, began to advance an anthropological problematic in a way that was independent of epistemological and methodological research. Several philosophers belonging to this anthropological school of thought became distanced from Marxism, assimilating the phenomenological and existentialist ideas of Western and Russian philosophy, and going so far as to interpret Marx's thought from an existential and anthropological point of view. We can thus summarise the principal trends and results of philosophical research in Russia during the second half of the twentieth century as follows:

- A. The logic and methodology of the sciences became the object of intensive study. Analysis of the logical structure of Marx's *Capital* enabled the delineation of the general characteristics of the Marxian method for the passage from the abstract to the concrete well before similar research was conducted in the West, in particular in the work of Louis Althusser. Marx's method was analysed by Ilyenkov, applying the principles of classic philosophical tradition and Hegel. Zinoviev extracted the various logical processes and conceptual techniques used in the *Capital*. Other research was conducted into Marx's methodological ideas with reference to a theoretical model which could be applied to the structure of theoretical knowledge in other sciences, especially in physics (V. I. Kuznetsov). The specificity of

the analyses of scientific knowledge with a logical-methodological framework observable in Soviet philosophy of this period lay in the emphasis being put on the genesis of scientific theory and on the logic of its historical development. Scientific theories were conceived as being open systems on several levels, taking in sets of relatively autonomous sub-systems and governed by relationships not bound by the principle of linear dependence. Such a notion introduced a striking contrast with regard to the standard model for scientific theories, the hypothesis and deduction based model which was dominant in the Western philosophy of science. It was in this context that was formulated the postulate of the historically changing bases of scientific theories, part of which process of change was the scientific vision of the world which substantiated the link between theory and the broader sphere of culture (Vyacheslav Stepin).

- B. There was seen to develop a multi-branched philosophical analysis of the natural sciences: the problem of causality in contemporary science, the concordance principle, the complementarity principle, the principle of observation, the reductionist principle, the problem of global evolutionism, etc. (Bonifaty Kedrov, Mikhail Omelyanovsky, Nikolai Ovchinnikov).
- C. The analysis of dialectics took a new turn. It was no longer envisaged as an ontological paradigm, but rather as a logic framing the evolution of theoretical thought, or in other words as a means of analysis and resolution of the contradictions of thought in the tradition of Hegel and Marx. Alexei Losev equally proposed an interpretation of dialectics in the spirit of a synthesis between Neo-Platonism and Hegel. Vladimir Bibler, in the context of an examination of the nature of creative thought, conceived dialectics as a tool for dialogic exchange between different theoretical and cultural systems arising out of the analysis of given propositions belonging to the history of science and culture. In this regard, he put forward a new interpretation of the ideas of Bakhtin on the dialogic nature of culture and consciousness, stimulated by the fact that Bakhtin's works of the 1920s were now actively being published and discussed.
- D. Ilyenkov derived an original theory of ideality and of its presence within the different spheres of human activity, and hence of collective activity. He conceived it as being an objective reality and autonomous with respect to the individual psyche. This conception conflicted with the philosophical tradition linking the domain of ideality to the individual consciousness. It equally stood out as heretical before the official definition of materialism in Soviet philosophy and presented a certain similarity with the theme proposed later by Popper and which accorded to ideality the status of a 'third world'. The substantive difference lay in the fact that, for Ilyenkov, ideal phenomena can exist only within the context of human activity.

This concept exercises a considerable influence both in philosophy as in certain human sciences, such as psychology. At the same time, it was criticised by the defenders of the official interpretation of Marxism, but also by certain representatives of the new philosophical movement. Thus, Mikhail A. Lifschitz proposed an interpretation of ideality as existing objectively in nature itself, whereas David Dubrovsky criticised Ilyenkov's notion by taking as his basis a philosophical interpretation of certain evidence derived from neurophysiology, information theory and cybernetics.

- E. The philosophy of action was the object of intensive development on two levels. Firstly, action was conceived as being a means for the understanding of man, of his creative nature and his capacity to overcome any given situation. In the second place it was perceived to offer a crucial methodological principle for the human sciences, as being capable of breaking down the wall between the outside world and the 'internal' or subjective world. In developing this problematic, philosophers have broadly drawn from the early works of Marx, as well as the German philosophical tradition from Fichte to Hegel. These philosophical interpretations led to the derivation of a psychological theory of action (Leontiev) linked to the tradition of Vygotsky and which became the context for both theoretical and experimental research. Georgy Shchedrovitsky formulated a *General Theory of Action*, by which he and his school associated cognition with a particular form of action, but also developed a methodology by which very diverse organisational structures could be conceived and created. The movement that has arisen out of this theory is very vigorous today, bringing together philosophers, specialists in methodology, psychologists, systems technicians and other specialists, who discuss theoretical questions while attempting to solve problems of practice (Tabachnikova, 2007).
- F. From the 1970s particular attention was focused on questions of philosophical anthropology. Whereas earlier, action was considered to represent the key to understanding humanity, subsequently a certain number of philosophers began seeking the specificity of the human existence in interaction, emphasising the irreducibility of this to action (Genrikh S. Batishev). Increased interest was aroused in existential states such as faith, hope and love (Vladimir I. Shinkaruk). Ivan Frolov analysed the problems of the meaning of life and the meaning of death within the context of the reciprocal relations between philosophy and the natural sciences. Merab Mamardashvili derived an anthropological notion at the heart of which was the individual consciousness and which borrowed many ideas from phenomenology and existentialism. Sergei Rubinstein formulated an original ontological anthropology in which consciousness does not stand apart from being but is part of this latter through man, and as such modifies the structure and the content of being: a conception thoroughly incompatible with the official interpretation of philosophical materialism of the time. In the context of the growing interest generated by the theme of man, questions of ethics began to become the object of specialised studies (Oleg Drobnitsky).
- G. A significant philosophical event was the publication of Losev's work *History of Ancient Aesthetics* (Moscow, 1963–1994, in eight volumes). The author commences from the conviction that the culture of ancient Greece and the Hellenistic and Roman cultures were characterised by a common aesthetic and cosmological orientation. He paints an original and complete panorama of ancient philosophy which one may legitimately consider as representing the characteristically Russian conception of the latter.

The growth in intensity of Russian philosophical life from the 1960s and 1970s onwards equally influenced other fields of philosophical knowledge, though to a much lesser extent than was the case for the theory of knowledge, logic and the methodology

of science. In the first place, interest in the history of philosophy saw a noteworthy surge. The methodological problems raised by historical research in philosophy were analysed by Theodor Oizerman, Alexei Bogomolov and Zakhar Kamensky. Philosophical historiography was enriched by studies on ancient philosophy, medieval philosophy, the philosophy of the Renaissance and modern and contemporary philosophy. Different currents of contemporary Western thought became the object of specific studies: phenomenology, existentialism, neo-Thomism, philosophical anthropology, critical rationalism, pragmatism, neo-positivism, hermeneutics, structuralism and so on. Serious studies on the formation and evolution of the concepts of Karl Marx emerged, along with specific works on the history of Russian philosophy. The history of Oriental philosophy became constituted as an autonomous discipline. Some very fine work was produced in the fields of the philosophy of culture and of aesthetics, while several publications were devoted to the problems of ethics.

During these years, Soviet philosophers, while still professing their attachment to the ideas of Marxism, were integrating into their research a very broad range of themes and ideas which, in many regards, stepped outside of the strict framework of Marxist philosophy and were often in contradiction with it. In reality, these years saw the constitution of various philosophical schools which became successfully developed. All stood in opposition to philosophical dogmatism. If some of them sought to actualise certain Marxian ideas so as to adapt them to the contemporary world, others adopted Marxist terminology to elaborate ideas close to neo-positivism, existentialism or phenomenology. Some philosophers who had been staunch defenders of the ideas of the early Marx began to coalesce these ideas with what had been acquired from nineteenth and twentieth century Western philosophy.

A considerable influence on the philosophical evolution and education of society was exercised by the publication in the years between 1960 and 1970 of the *Philosophical Encyclopaedia* in five volumes, a work of fundamental significance which enjoyed a publication run of unheard-of proportions for this kind of edition (around 60,000 copies). Despite its overtly Marxist perspective, it provided a relatively solid impression of world philosophy and contributed to the introduction into Russia of a large number of philosophical problems, concepts and names that were little known at this time. In this encyclopaedia, articles that were ideologically coloured and even serving a propaganda purpose stood side by side with contributions invested with great philosophical depth and scientific honesty. The journal *Вопросы философии* (*Questions of philosophy*) equally played a major role in Soviet philosophy, becoming over the course of time an attractive venue for a good number of our intellectuals, not just for philosophers.¹⁰ The *Philosophical Encyclopaedia* and the journal *Вопросы философии* provide overall a complete and objective picture of Soviet philosophy in the years 1960–1970, both in its achievements and its ideological limitations. Among the forms of scholarly endeavour which contributed to strengthening and furthering philosophical culture within society can also be cited the publication of classical texts, notably thanks to the ‘Philosophical Heritage’ collection, which began in the 1960s and which now includes more than 130 volumes.

VI.

At the beginning of the 1990s, and more particularly after August 1991, a situation became established that was new and generally favourable to the development of philosophy in Russia. The decisive contributing factor to this was the end of the monopoly of the Marxist vision of the world, or in other words the end of the centralised State control over ideology. Philosophy was able to become what it should always be, an unfettered intellectual endeavour, which contains within itself the determinants of its own truth and which constructs itself within the context of the academic community.

The transformations observable within the philosophical life of Russia over the last fifteen to twenty years may be synthesised along the following lines.

- A. Philosophical activity and the interest of society in this have grown to an amazing degree. The number of philosophical titles published has multiplied by a factor of thirty to forty. Philosophical literature today occupies one of the highest places in terms of sales figures. For copies published, *Вопросы философии* heads the table among the two hundred and fifty journals published by the Russian Academy of Sciences. In addition to the pre-existing departments of philosophy in all of the higher education establishments of the country, ten new faculties of philosophy have emerged, where philosophy specialists are trained over a five-year course of studies.
- B. The range of research themes has become considerably broadened. Fields of research have become re-established which were previously regarded with wariness, namely political philosophy, the philosophy of religion and applied ethics (ethics of non-violence and bio-ethics). At the present time there is practically no field of philosophy which is not the object of research in Russia (though this is not a reference to the quality, which is highly variable and at times leaves much to be desired, but to the range of the fields covered).
- C. The philosophical positions defended by authors have become diversified. Being no longer under the obligation to clothe their views in Marxist rhetoric, Russian philosophers have shown themselves to be extremely attuned to the schools, ideas and methods having currency within contemporary philosophy, as well as to their history. Regarding Marxist philosophy, it continues to exist as a school of thought, but on an equal footing with the others. In Russia (contrary to other former Communist countries), the end of Marxism's monopoly has not led to the adoption of virulently anti-Marxist positions and has not been accompanied by professional interdictions. Remarkably, the evolution of theoretical stances within the philosophical community had not led to a wholesale change of personnel, apart of course from the natural processes of renewal and the surge of new recruits. At the present time it is not really possible to say which tradition or philosophical school holds the dominant position in Russia.

We cherish all, as much the fire of cold numbers
As the gift of visions divine,
We take in all, as much French finesse of spirit
As German genius in its obscurity.

These lines of Alexander Blok, the famous early twentieth century poet, are a perfect reflection of the contemporary place of Russian philosophy, characterised by an amazingly omnivorous desire.

- D. The thematic and theoretical lacunae which were due to strictly ideological causes have been erased. This may be clearly seen in the renewal of work in the fields of Byzantine philosophy, religious philosophy of the European Middle Ages, and on contemporary authors and schools of philosophy previously filed among the critics of the Communist order. The most extensive unknown territory on the map of the official Soviet ideology remained however twentieth century Russian religious philosophy which was impossible to address, even for the purposes of criticism. The comeback of Russian philosophy from its enforced emigration has been altogether stunning, triumphal even: within a relatively short space of time it has seen the republication of the works of Berdyaev, Ilyin and Frank and numerous other authors (more than fifty volumes have been published within the single collection 'History of Russian Philosophical Thought', produced in the form of a supplement to *Вопросы философии*), arousing an enthusiasm going well beyond the bounds of purely professional interest. This has had the consequence of transforming both the image of Russian philosophy as well as the weight it carries within the whole sphere of learned disciplines in Russia.

From our point of view, philosophy in Russia has, generally speaking, overcome the retardations, limitations and distortions that were the consequence of the socio-political system controlling the country. At the present date it is in pursuit of new conceptual frameworks which will allow it to further its development and rediscover its proper place within world processes of philosophy.

Some are of the opinion that the principal productive sources for our philosophy may be Russian religious philosophy and contemporary Western philosophy. But it is difficult to hold to this opinion. Whatever the importance of appropriating the heritage of Russian religious philosophy, this heritage of itself cannot replace the imperative of creating an independent philosophy capable of responding to questions which did not exist at the time that religious philosophy was to the fore. We cannot simply aim at restoring the evolutionary line that Russian philosophy was following when it was interrupted by the 1917 revolution, for our country and the world in which we are now living has little in common with the situation prevailing in the first decades of the twentieth century. As for assimilating the classic texts of twentieth century Western philosophical thought, it is also a necessary and important task. But the relevance of philosophy for humanity, its role in society and culture, depend on the manner by which it enables understanding of the links existing between the universals, the 'eternal' problems, and a cultural and historical situation that is concrete, unique and specific to a given culture and at a given moment. Our Russian culture, both in its past, present and its future, needs to achieve a self-awareness. Such self-awareness is, as a general rule, the necessary condition for the development of each culture. Such is above all the task of Russian philosophy. Contemporary Western philosophy, together with the philosophical heritage of Russia itself, can bring a substantial contribution to this task, but cannot substitute for authentic reflection. One can even affirm that, for Russian culture to have a future, it is imperative that philo-

sophical thought of an original nature becomes embedded within our country. There is really only one way to learn to philosophise: seek solutions oneself to problems of philosophy, Absorbing one's heritage (and that of others) is indispensable but of itself insufficient, and the imitation of others is of little stimulus to creativity.

The problems facing contemporary human society are extremely serious. For the first time in its history, humanity is confronted with the possibility of its own disappearance. We are naturally referring here to the ecological crisis, but equally to the fact that the gigantic technosphere created by man calls into question the ancient practices that made man a self-conscious being, capable of taking decisions, assuming responsibility for them and controlling their consequences. Called into question are the traditional ways by which both the external reality and the being of man are understood, along with fundamental ethical values, the ways in which the modalities of knowledge, explanation and forward projection are represented, the way science should be conceived and its place in the world of human existence, the role and limits of rationality in the process of interpreting the world and in human activity. To this set of questions is linked a new conception of the relationships that exist between the different cultures and civilisations of the world as well as the rejection of a naïve notion of progress envisaged as a linear and undeviating movement traced out in advance. These subjects also link to a whole series of present-day problems in the philosophy of science, and notably to those arising out of the new paradigm of synergies, the thematics of global evolutionary processes, the harmonious evolution of nature and human society, and contemporary ecological awareness. Our philosophers look to their traditions for contribution when they focus on these themes and, over recent years, their researches have made considerable advances.

The examination of what has been produced by today's philosophy, both from the points of view of the contributing authors, the range of themes investigated, and the conceptual solutions proposed, bears strong witness to a firm desire to be part of a continuity in relation to the history of philosophy. The debates and the principal outcomes achieved by Russian philosophy over the last twenty years fundamentally serve simply to extend, develop, enrich and bring to fruition the best of the intellectual endeavour of the years 1960 to 1980. The life of philosophy in today's Russia is so intense and diversified that it is impossible to summarise in any short form its thematic richness, its new ideas, its avenues of growth. Suffice to recall that the number of books published annually by contemporary authors is counted in the hundreds. By way of example, let us draw out several problems from whose analysis in our opinion Russian philosophers have achieved a certain number of results. A number of authors have interpreted the rationality of knowledge and the act of knowing as a historical-cultural phenomenon and have described the various models and forms of this (Vladislav Lektorsky, Piama Gaidenko, Vladimir Shvyrev, Mikhail Rozov); others have addressed problems of social epistemology (Ilya Kasavin) and evolutionist epistemology (Igor Merkulov); new approaches have appeared in ethics (Abdusalam Guseinov, Ruben Apressyan), in bioethics (Boris Yudin) and in the philosophy of religion (Lev Mitrokhin). The traditions of research in the philosophy of the human sciences have been carried on with success, and a method of anthropological analysis of literature has been formulated by Valery Podoroga. Comparative philosophy is becoming an autonomous domain where different philosophical tradi-

tions are brought together (Nelli Motroshilova, Andrei Smirnov, Marietta Stepanyants and others). Among the major thematic and conceptual foci are found the problem of the dialogue of cultures, envisaged both as a fundamental category for understanding the nature of philosophical thought and as a historical perspective from which to view the period of globalisation (Anatoly Akhutin, Viktor Vizgin, Vadim Meshuev). An original conception of the complementarity of morality and law has been elaborated by Erikh Y. Soloviev. Utopianism is studied as a specific phenomenon of the modern era (Theodor Oizerman). Major works in the history of philosophy have been published, devoted to medieval hesychastic quietism (Sergei Khoruzhi), Stoicism (Aleksandr A. Stoliarov), the philosophy of Wittgenstein (Vladimir Bibikhin), the Orthodox aesthetics of Byzantium and ancient Russia (Vladimir Byshkov), the history of Russian philosophy (Mikhail Gromov), Indian philosophy (Viktoria Lyssenko, Vladimir Shokhin) and Chinese philosophy (Artem Kobzev, Mikhail Titarenko). Productive research has been undertaken in the philosophy of education (Alexander Ogurtsov, Nina Yulina) in political philosophy (Tatiana Alekseeva, Boris Kapustin, Konstantin Dolgov, Yuri Solonin). Once again, this list is in no way intended to be exhaustive: it takes in only a tiny part of the areas of interest of present-day Russian philosophers and of the results that they have obtained.

VII.

To conclude, a few remarks on the institutional organisation of philosophical life in Russia. If, broadly speaking, it shares the same structure as the majority of European countries it nevertheless possesses two aspects particular to itself that should not be overlooked.

The first concerns the faculties of philosophy. It was earlier mentioned that philosophy is taught in all establishments of higher learning in Russia and that it is a compulsory subject for all students. There are chairs and indeed departments of philosophy in each of these establishments. Besides this, in the major universities there are faculties of philosophy where philosophy is the object of specialist instruction. Philosophers are trained in the same way that, for example mathematicians or engineers are trained. For students accepted into these faculties, philosophy represents their single speciality. They study philosophy over the whole course of their five years of study and across the whole range of its constituent fields. They take lectures and participate in directed studies and seminars on the following subjects: ontology and the theory of knowledge, logic, philosophy of science, social philosophy, philosophy of religion, ethics, aesthetics, philosophical anthropology, philosophy of culture, political philosophy, history of philosophy (the ancient world, the Middle Ages, the modern era, nineteenth and twentieth centuries) and the history of Russian philosophy. Furthermore, students take ten to twenty specialist lectures within the speciality they have elected and have to compose three or four dissertations to show their scientific competence, as well as a research paper associated with the degree they are preparing, somewhat similar to a Master's dissertation. This corpus of study, complemented by a number of other subjects from general educational areas (a foreign language, mathematics, psychology ...), constitutes the programme of the faculty of

philosophy. These faculties (of which there are twenty at present in Russia) may be of very different sizes, comprising from 200 to 1000 students. In the largest and most famous of these, the Faculty of Philosophy of the 'Mikhail Vasilievich Lomonossov' State University of Moscow, which also includes a section of political science, there are more than 1200 students and more than 200 teaching staff, among them more than 70 professors, spread over twenty specialities.

The second particularity concerns the Institutes of Scientific Research under the aegis of the Russian Academy of Sciences. The principal and largest of these is the Institute of Philosophy in Moscow. The function of this Institute is to undertake research in the field of philosophy. It is financed by the State and brings together more than 300 researchers, of whom more than half have been awarded the higher Doctorate of State, which recognises their work output through scientific productivity (articles, research leading to monographs, translations and scientific commentaries). Research is undertaken in all the principal branches of philosophy, distinguished in terms of the subjects taken up; at the present time there are twenty-eight scientific subdivisions of the Institute and more than thirty theoretical seminar groups. The Institute's researchers publish annually more than one hundred books and around twenty editions of classic texts. This common endeavour, carried out by a group of researchers in collaboration devoted to different scientific disciplines, contributes to the creation of a learned environment which is mutually enriching and rich in creative possibilities. At the present time, the Institute of Philosophy and the Russian Academy of Sciences are seeking to link together in more coherent fashion this research with the teaching of philosophy.

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Notes

1. Its foundation dates from 1724. Peter I had been mulling over the project for several years and had discussed it in particular with Leibniz and Christian Wolff. Its first seventeen members, five of whom were philosophers, were all foreigners.
2. The writings of Merab K. Mamardhashvili and, in part, those of Vladimir S. Bibler most definitely are part of those texts which are difficult to understand, but whose authors enjoy a high reputation for their philosophy outside of purely professional circles.
3. The concept of a 'Silver Age' in Russia is associated above all with literature and poetry. This was the label that designated the new literary resurgence of the beginning of the twentieth century, so called in order to distinguish this period from the Golden Age of Pushkin. The term 'Silver Age' is also often given to the first two decades of the twentieth century. The expression 'Russian religious philosophy of the Silver Age' has become accepted as a way of both designating a period and of characterising from a qualitative point of view the religious philosophy observable in Russia between the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries.
4. The whole of Silver Age Russian philosophy developed subsequently and in response to the interpretation of Solovyev's opus. This is particularly true for the philosophies of Nikolai Berdyaev, Sergei Bulgakov, Ivan Ilyin, Lev Karsavin, Nikolai Lossky, the brothers Trubetskoi, Pavel Florensky, Semen Frank, Vladimir Ern and others.
5. During the first five years after the establishment of the Soviet regime, the philosophers continued

to be active, despite conditions that became progressively less favourable. Thus, Ivan Ilyin in 1918 defended his doctoral thesis *The Philosophy of Hegel* as a doctrine of concrete God and man, Berdyaev founded in Moscow the Free Academy of Spiritual Culture, Frank became dean of the Faculty of Philosophy and History at the University of Saratov. Nevertheless, they maintained a hostile attitude towards the new regime. In 1922, on orders from Lenin, a list was drawn up of around two hundred representatives of the intelligentsia, comprising writers and professors, who were to be expelled from Russia without right of return. The formal pretext was provided by the publication of the anthology 'Oswald Spengler and The Decline of the West'. Among the philosophers exiled were Boris Vysheslavtsev, Berdyaev, Ilyin, Lossky, Karasavin and others. They were despatched from Petrograd to Hamburg in the autumn of 1922 on board a ship subsequently known to history as the 'philosophers' ship'. Other Russian philosophers took other, certainly less spectacular, routes to emigrate from Russia after 1917.

6. One could mention Anatoly Lunacharsky's search for God or the attempts by Bogdanov and other authors to adapt Marxist philosophy to positivist concepts.
7. It was initially published in the form of a sub-chapter (§ 2, Chapter 4) of the Short History of the (Bolshevik) Communist Party of the Soviet Union (1938).
8. 1929 saw the creation of the Institute of Philosophy, a research institute subsequently (1936) merged into the new Academy of Sciences of the USSR. It represents at the present time the major centre of philosophical research in Russia. Institutes and philosophy sections were subsequently created in the Academies of Science of all the constituent republics of the Soviet Union.
9. Departments of philosophy began to be established in the universities and, within the largest of these, faculties of philosophy. The former disseminated no more than general courses in philosophy, regarded as one of the subjects of a general education. The faculties offered teaching covering a broad range of philosophical disciplines – ontology, theory of knowledge, logic, ethics, aesthetics, history of philosophy, social philosophy, philosophy of religion, philosophical anthropology, philosophy of science – and had the responsibility of training specialists in philosophy. From the 1930s on and right up to the present, the expansion of research centres and philosophy departments has gone on unceasing. It has been the same for the teaching of philosophy which, at the end of the 1950s, became a compulsory subject in all higher education establishments, whereas philosophy (and since 2006, the history and philosophy of science) forms part of a compulsory examination for access to schools of doctoral studies.
10. In 2008, for the sixtieth anniversary edition of the journal, a substantial volume was published containing a selection of the best articles that had appeared in the journal over the years (Lektorsky 2008). This volume offers a very accurate picture of the gains made by Soviet, then Russian, philosophy over the last few decades.

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