

After the eclipse: history of philosophy in Russia

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Published online: 13 January 2015
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Abstract The article provides a consecutive bibliographic account of the most salient trends and tendencies in research in the history of philosophy in Russia over the course of the last 20–25 years. We emphasise the dynamics of the research field, which is directly related to the changes that have taken place in Russian society. The afterword contains a general periodization of research in field of the history of philosophy in Russia and describes the basic characteristics of every period under consideration.

Keywords History of philosophy in Russia in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries · Comparative historical and philosophical studies · History of Russian thought

It is hardly possible to present a cohesive bibliographic and analytical overview of research conducted in the field of the history of philosophy in Russia over approximately the last 25 years within the confines of a single article. This is why we shall focus only on the most salient events and tendencies of Russian scholarship in the field. We are unlikely to be mistaken if we claim that modern research in the field has been driven primarily by the aspiration to alleviate the shortcomings of the Soviet history of philosophy, since it was, for the most part, of a restrictive and

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ideological nature rather than scholarly or educational, notwithstanding the popular series of publications and thoroughly written summaries.

Official Soviet science viewed the philosophical process as the opposition between “materialism” and “idealism,” represented correspondingly as the “line of Democritus” and “line of Plato”. The former was emphasized and lauded, the latter, derided and criticised as “reactionary” and “reflecting the interests of the exploiting classes”. This is in direct relation to another dichotomy—“bourgeois” philosophy versus “socialist” ideology. “Bourgeois” was the Soviet description of what virtually amounts to the sum total of modern-day European thought, labelled “Eurocentric” and therefore “decadent”. Thus, certain thinkers would be classified as “bourgeois” and banned as such even if they did in fact represent the Democritean tradition. The following passage from the six-volume Soviet History of Philosophy is cited herein as a panegyric to materialism typical for the epoch: “The best and most productive philosophical systems of the ancient East were either wholly materialistic in character, or contained materialistic elements” (Dybnik 1957, Vol. I, p. 71). Another good example of Communist Party misrepresentation is the popular book on Schopenhauer by Bykhovsky, who tells us that Schopenhauer’s philosophy was but “a weapon of ideological warfare used to thwart the scientifically justified historical optimism of the working people” (1975, p. 200).

Needless to say, this unmitigated bias, as well as the resulting restrictive measures, narrowed the scope of research in the field of history of philosophy. A large number of authors and philosophical schools were accessible only through ideologically sound excerpts from their works. More often, their ideas would simply remain out of circulation and only be available to those working on “restricted access” compilations for “administrative use” (to be used by state ideologues). In order to assess Soviet studies in the history of philosophy unambiguously, we would need to conduct a separate research study. The “total eclipse” diagnosis will most likely be premature; it would make more sense to speak of a simple “eclipse,” one that, despite obscuring vision for a while, provides the opportunity to view things in a different light in the future.

The history of western philosophy

Ancient and medieval philosophy

The fate of studies in ancient philosophy has been very closely related to that of classical studies in general. The latter found themselves on the brink of extinction in the USSR. It is little wonder, then, that under those circumstances Russian scholarship eventually found itself lagging behind its Western counterpart; the number of publications in the field of classic studies dwindled to a fraction of what it once was, and the standards of research in the history of philosophy plummeted. Ideological pressure resulted in the obliteration of entire academic fields, in particular those associated with the “line of Plato,” perceived by dialectical materialism as hostile to its own tenets. The only one who dared to write about the Platonic tradition in those years was Losev, whose eight-volume oeuvre titled *A*

History of Ancient Aesthetics (1963–1992) has long been the only source of information in this area.

By contrast, studies of the ideologically sound “line of Democritus” were perfectly legitimate in the eyes of the state ideologues, which is why the primary fields of classical studies in the USSR were as follows: early Greek philosophy (the Milesian school, the atomists and Anaxagoras for the most part), the philosophy of the Stoics and the Epicureans (viewed as the ancient proponents of materialism and atheism), and the history of science in classical antiquity. Soviet scholars working in these fields achieved spectacular results and also managed to raise a whole generation of gifted researchers whose works published in the 1980s and the 1990s have marked a transition to an entirely new period in the history of classical studies in Russia. The works of Lebedev (1989) on Heraclitus, Thales, and Anaximander, as well as his translation of the *Fragments of the Early Greek Philosophers*, Dobrokhotov’s research on the category of being as perceived by classical authors, the works of P. P. Gaidenko on the evolution of the concept of science, the research on Pythagoras and his school conducted by L. Ya. Zhmud, Stolyarov’s 1998 translation of the *Fragments of the Early Stoics*, whose publication commenced in, provided a firm foundation for the new Russian classical studies, setting the standard in academic studies for decades to come.

Nevertheless, the majority of themes that interested the scholarly community in the 1990s pertained to those formerly banned and thus largely unstudied. The two final volumes of A. F. Losev’s *History of Ancient Aesthetics* came out in 1988 and 1992, which contain philosophical essays on the Neoplatonists, the Gnostics, and the Christian theologians. They were written in a clear and accessible language and took into account the latest Western publications, which made them very popular with readers and gave many scholars the impetus to study the Neoplatonists more closely. Since there was virtually nothing to build upon, most researchers resorted to the strategy of annotated translation, which resulted in the publications of the major works of Plotinus, Porphyry, Iamblichus, Damascius, and Proclus, as well as Gnostic texts and the Hermetic Corpus. Christian authors received their due as well—all the pre-revolutionary translations of the Eastern and Western Church fathers were reprinted, and new translations were prepared for publication.

Once all these new texts were published in Russian, they were actively pondered and discussed. A large number of year books were published with articles by various authors on the diverse aspects of the Platonic tradition, from metaphysics and numerology to the philosophy of nature, such as *Cosmos and The Soul* by Gajdenko and Petrov (2005). The monographs of Shichalin (2000) and Mochalova (2008) consider the establishment and further history of the Platonic school, and the works of Vassilyeva (2001) and Boroday (2008) contain a brief summary of Plato’s philosophical system.

The increased interest in Platonism showed up the insufficient attention paid by the Russian scholars to Aristotle, causing the reputed Russian philologist S. S. Averintsev to exclaim, “Aristotle remains unread by the educated part of Russian society to date”. Indeed, even though the major works of Aristotle were published in the period between 1976 and 1984, he has been studied by relatively few researchers over the course of the last 20 years. The only monographs one might cite in this

field are the book by Orlov (2011) titled *The Philosophical Language of Aristotle*, as well as Pozdnev (2010) research, *Psychology of Art: Aristotle's Doctrine*. A number of results of more than 20 years of research in the field of classical studies have been compiled into an encyclopaedic dictionary *Ancient philosophy*, under the editorship of Solopova (2008).

Mediaeval philosophy was generally viewed as a uniform cultural phenomenon in the Soviet Union; scholars tried to avoid getting tangled in the specifics of individual theological doctrines to avoid being suspected of sympathising with the reactionary church ideology. However, in the 1990s the religious renaissance of the Russian society resulted in a great upsurge of interest in Patristics and mediaeval scholasticism. Some of the newcomers specialising in the history of mediaeval philosophy were individuals for whom the fourth century Trinitarian debates or the Augustinian doctrine of predestination became important episodes in their own spiritual biographies and were not merely an object of abstract scholarly study. This tendency results in a more careful treatment of religious and philosophical doctrines of Christian authors, and with time Russian scholarship eventually moved from general surveys and essays to the study of the writings of individual figures. The mid-nineties saw the publication of works on Johannes Scotus Eriugena, Boethius, Duns Scotus, Thomas Aquinas, Robert Grosseteste, Henry Suso, Gaius Marius Victorinus, Francisco Suárez, Meister Eckhart, and others. As new material accumulated, updated general studies have been prepared, for instance, V. M. Lurie's *History of Byzantine Philosophy* (2006), A. R. Fokin's *Latin Patrology* (2005), and Vdovina's (2009) monograph on seventeenth century scholasticism titled *The Language of The Non-obvious*.

Philosophy of the renaissance, modern philosophy, and contemporary developments

Soviet scholarship perceived Renaissance philosophy as a special period in the development of philosophical thought that represented a complete break with the legacy of the preceding scholastic tradition. It marked the shift from theocentricism to anthropocentrism and the nascence of the new natural science. Soviet researchers were especially interested in the humanists of the Renaissance, the political thinkers, natural philosophers, and scientists. A large number of monographs appeared on individual authors as well as the philosophy of Renaissance in general. The most prominent are: *Italian Humanists: Lifestyle and Way of Thinking* by Batkin (1978), *Thomas More: Utopian Communism, Humanism, and the Reformation* by Osinovsky (1978), *Philosophy of the Renaissance* by Gorfunkel' (1980) etc. This view of the Renaissance changed in the post-Soviet period: the epoch is no longer viewed as "the greatest progressive revolution in the history of humankind," and continuity with mediaeval culture has been pointed out more often. Scholars are presently interested in the religious and esoteric aspects of the Renaissance world view; should one fail to take these into account the interpretation of the period as a whole risks being exceedingly rationalistic. Thus, some of the research from the 1990s

recognises the important role played by astrology, alchemy, and magic during the formative stages of natural science as we know it today (Kasavin 1996).

With regard to study of modern philosophy, Soviet science emphasised the avant-garde, anti-scholastic ideas of the thinkers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. For example, Descartes' physics as well as his considerations concerning scientific method were regarded as truly creative, whereas his idealist metaphysics was seen to rely on the preceding tradition and was criticised therefore as reactionary. Similarly, Pascal was known in the USSR more as a scientist than a philosopher and a religious writer. Pascal's *Pensées* were published in a heavily expurgated version, and none of his other works was published until the mid-1990s (Streltsova 1994). Other philosophers of the Enlightenment were studied just as selectively; only those aspects of their works were taken into account which concurred with the Marxist worldview, and anything contradicting it was glossed over. The end of the Soviet epoch coincided with publication of the collected works of Descartes, Pascal, Locke, Hume, Leibniz, Voltaire, Diderot, Montesquieu, Rousseau, et al. A closer look at the works of these thinkers has proven just how poorly their views could be fit into the Procrustean bed of Marxist ideology. Modern and contemporary philosophy turned out to be very relevant under new social and political conditions: the concepts of human rights and liberties, the theories of social contract, separation of powers, and civil society directly corresponded to the demands and needs of the new epoch dawning in Russia. This is why the social existence of human beings became the key area of research in the 2000s (see, for instance, Abramov 2000; Mikeshin 2005; Dlugach 2005).

As for classical German philosophy, it was viewed with great ambiguity in the Soviet Union. On the one hand, a focus on Marx and Engels entailed detailed knowledge of the German classics. On the other hand, Lenin's, and then also Stalin's, interpretation of Marxism resulted in the complete rejection thereof. Up to the 1960s, the thought of Kant, Fichte, and Schelling was under rigid control. Official ideology only allowed Hegelian dialectics; indeed, Hegel truly assumed the part of "Minerva's owl" for the Soviet philosophers, and his works were published even in the darkest times. Studies in the history of German philosophy were only revived after the Thaw. The period 1963–1966 saw the publication, in six volumes, of the long-awaited collected works of Kant, as well as a series of works containing the results of related research, for example, those by Golosovker (1963), which considers the *Critique of pure reason* as vital to understanding the *Brothers Karamazov*. In the 1990s, N. V. Motroshilova (Moscow) and B. Tuschling (Marburg) decided to give the Russian reader a view of the "new Kant" and endeavoured to publish a bilingual collection of his most important works (1994–2001). Some previously unavailable works appeared, as well as the thinker's archive materials, including the unfinished *Opus postumum*. Salient research publications of this time include Solovyov's (1993) book on the relation between law and morality in Kantian philosophy, Vassilyev's (1998) work on the deduction of categories, and Kruglov's (2000) study on transcendental analytics and transcendentalism in general. The genesis of Kant's critical philosophy and its subsequent influence on the history of philosophy is also

studied (Dlugach 2010, 2011); Russian views on Kant and related critiques between the late seventeenth and the early twentieth centuries are of particular interest (Protopopov 2010).

Other representatives of classical German philosophy are studied on a much smaller scale, a circumstance explained in part by the long absence of translations of their works. For instance, the two-volume compilation of Johann Gottlieb Fichte's writings on science (*Wissenschaftslehre*) published in 1993 was prepared for publication as far back as 1917. The situation with the philosophical heritage of Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling is similar: his works on natural philosophy and the history of art were not published before the late 80s, and his later works a decade later. Noteworthy publications on Fichte and Schelling during the last 20 years include the small book by Gajdenko (1990) titled *The Paradoxes of Freedom in The Doctrine of Fichte*, Ivanenko's (2012) monograph on the genesis of Fichte's scientific method, Lazarev's (1990) comprehensive monograph titled *The Philosophy of Early and Late Schelling*, and the articles of P. V. Rezvykh, which provide an overview of various aspects of Schelling's work, from source studies to comparative history and conceptual traits.

The lack of any large-scale research of Hegelian thought has wholly different reasons behind it. During the Soviet period Hegel was not only the subject of in-depth speculation and conceptualisation for such thinkers as V. S. Bibler, E. V. Ilyenkov, and M. K. Mamardashvili, his works were also subjected to serious ideological distortions, which have not yet been quite overcome. Attempts to develop another view of the German thinker's philosophy have been few and far between (Bykova and Krichevsky 1993). The need for "a new Hegel" incites scholars to study the reception of Hegelian philosophy in Russia, as well as the Hegelian studies of the Franco-Russian philosopher A. Kojève and works by contemporary Western scholars.

As for the philosophy of the more recent period, Russian scholars are engaged primarily with translation. The publication of the first six-volume collection of Schopenhauer's works only began in 1999–2001, and the only related work that comes to mind is the book by Chuprov (1995), which provides a comparative analysis of the anthropology of Schopenhauer and Feuerbach. Much the same is true of the legacy of Kierkegaard, Bergson, and the Neo-Kantians. Even though new translations have been published regularly over the last 20 years, detailed study of these thinkers is only just beginning. In particular, the main study on Kierkegaard remains *The Tragedy of Aestheticism* by Gajdenko (1970). Only two works have been written about Bergson: Blauberg's (2003) book and the collaborative effort by Pivoev and Schreder (2008). Books on the history of Neo-Kantianism deserving mention are Sokuler's (2008) study of Hermann Cohen and the monographs by Soboleva (2001) and Demidova (2007) on Cassirer.

Friedrich Nietzsche occupies a special place of his own. He and Kant became true scourges of Russian religious philosophy of the nineteenth century. On the one hand, Nietzsche was seen as the harbinger of total nihilism; on the other hand, he was perceived as embodying the tragic thrust of human life and the herald of a new epoch. Certain of his works appeared in the late 1980s–early 1990s, with a two-volume collection of his most important works coming out in 1990. The ambiguous attitude

towards Nietzsche's legacy has brought forth a series of works on the reception and the critique of his ideas in Russia by Solovyov (1994), Dudkin (1994), and Bulanov (2006). However, perhaps the best testimony of a general readiness to revise the "Nietzsche case" is the publication of a complete collection of his works (2006–2013).

The history of Russian philosophy

In the autumn of 1922 two ships left the harbour of St. Petersburg, the *Oberbürgermeister Haken* and the *Preussen*, carrying into exile N. A. Berdyaev, S. L. Frank, N. O. Lossky, and many other thinkers. Those who remained were either arrested and shot, or deported to a prison camp and forgotten for many years. The Department of the History of Russian Philosophy at Moscow State University opened in 1943, becoming by 1955 the Department of the History of the Philosophy of the Nations of the USSR. Censorship marred works published during this period. Even the comprehensive five volume *History of Philosophy in The USSR* (Evgrafov 1968–1988), which had served to fill a number of substantial gaps, only mentions V. S. Solovyov out of all the "Russian idealists" of the nineteenth century. The fate of S. S. Khoruzhiy's work titled *The Worldview of Pavel Florenskij* is very typical indeed: it came out in samizdat in the 1970s and was published only in 1999.

A real upsurge of interest in the history of the Russian philosophy, reaching every corner of the country, occurred in the late 1980s and the early 1990s. This time marks large-scale re-edition and serious study of ancient and medieval Russian philosophical works (Zamaleev 1987, 1998). Books by M. N. Gromov appeared in the early 1990s (Gromov and Kozlov 1990; Gromov 1997), containing a study of the history and typology of the Russian philosophy, and 1999 saw the launch of a new series, works of religious and philosophical thought in Ancient Rus', including the works of Kyrik of Novgorod, Bishop Nicephor, and others. Around the same time, numerous works were published of nineteenth and early twentieth century thinkers: K. Leontiev, N. O. Lossky, the brothers S. N. and E. N. Trubeckoj, A. S. Khomyakov, P. Ya. Chaadaev, and many others. Researchers have been particularly interested in the "metaphysics of all-unity" (V. S. Solovyov, P. A. Florensky, S. N. Bulgakov, and S. L. Frank) and the representatives of the "new school of religious thought" (N. A. Berdyaev, D. S. Merezhkovsky, and V. V. Rozanov). It is hardly possible to provide an overview of the bulk of publications relating to the history of Russian philosophy, which is why we shall only consider works devoted to P. A. Florensky and V. V. Rozanov.

The initial meagre excerpts from P. A. Florensky's works, which were in high demand among Soviet specialists in semiotics and the history of art, had been published at the end of the 1960s. The first publications concerning his life as well as his views on culture and the philosophy of language date from the 1980s. Full-scale systematic research was out of the question, since most of P. A. Florensky's legacy had not been published yet. Individual works by the philosopher appeared in 1990, and the publication of the collection of Florensky's works prepared by his relatives A. S. Trubachev (Hieromonk Andronicus), M. S. Trubacheva, and P. V. Florensky began only in 1994. The first comprehensive monographs on P.

V. Florensky were authored by Upravitelev (1997) and Trubachev (1998) and dealt with the thinker's theodicy and anthropodicy. In the new millennium, the work on P. A. Florensky's legacy has been taken to a wholly new level. The journal *Entelechy* magazine was founded in 2000, each even-numbered issue of which is dedicated to P. A. Florensky. Conferences have been organised all across Russia; a number of collected works have been published including some previously unavailable works and archive materials. In particular, Florensky's *Assumptions Concerning State Organisation in The Future*, written in prison in 1933, came out in 2009, as well as records of interrogations and many other materials. However, 2012 became the truly pivotal year for research related to the thinker thanks to the appearance of the first volume of in-depth research materials focussed on Florensky's university years (Florensky 2012), as well as the first volume of Trubachev's (2012) extensive systematic work *The Way to God*.

As for V. V. Rozanov, apart from the publication of his individual works in the late 80s and early 90s, the publication of collected works in thirty volumes began as early as 1994 (the final volume came out in 2010). The publisher Nikoljukin (1998) is not only the author of numerous articles and forewords, but also a well-known biographer of the philosopher. Another prominent specialist in Rosanov studies is V. G. Sukach, the author of numerous biographic and bibliographic research works, including a monumental philosophical work by V. V. Rosanov, *On Understanding*, which had not been included in the 1996 edition of the collected works. The majority of Russian researchers tend to view V. V. Rosanov first and foremost as a "literary critic" and a "writer with an uncanny way of thinking". The *Rozanov Encyclopaedia* published in 2008 (Nikolyukin 2008) can be seen as a summary of the extant historical and literary research. Rosanov the philosopher attracts a great deal less attention. His social and political philosophy has been the subject of books by Pishun and Pishun (1993) and Pishun (1994); the "arrangement of life" according to Vasily Rozanov is described in Sinenko's (2005) monograph. The genesis and evolution of V. V. Rozanov's views is discussed by Sarychev (2007). Philosophical biographies include Fateev's (2013) book titled *The Life Story of Vassilij Rozanov*, with over 1,000 pages.

There has also been a recent upsurge of interest in the philosophy and theology among the Russian emigrants, as well as the history of "unofficial" Soviet philosophy. A good example of the latter is the series titled "Philosophy of Russia in the second half of the twentieth century" series, comprising publications about prominent thinkers of the Soviet epoch such as V. S. Bibler, E. V. Ilyenkov, M. K. Mamardashvili, G. P. Shchedrovitsky, and many others.

The history of Eastern philosophy

Together with many other research areas, the history of eastern philosophy was considered superfluous in the Soviet Union. The Buddhological research of F. I. Shcherbackoy and his school was halted in the 1940s. The situation remained unchanged until the beginning of the 1960s when the Bibliotheca Buddhica project was revived, and the translation of the Dhammapada prepared by V. N. Toporov went

into publication. Around the same time, the Chair of the Eastern Philosophy at the Institute of Philosophy of the USSR Academy of Sciences was founded, and by the end of the 1960s the corresponding department was opened at the Lomonosov University in Moscow. Nevertheless, as Stepanyants (2009b, 12) points out, “the MSU graduates lucky enough to have received a specialised education in the Eastern studies currently form the creative core of research in Eastern philosophy in Russia”.

Indian philosophy

Seeds sown during the Thaw only started to yield fruit in the mid-1980s. The first works on the history of Indian thought were the monograph of V. G. Lysenko on the atomist Vaisheshika and Nagarjuna and his teaching by Androsov (1990). These works, published in the very last years of the Soviet epoch, can be classified as publications of the intermediate type; they are still marked by the Soviet style of “mandatory” references to Marx and topics relevant to the “line of Democritus” in general. Nevertheless, they are still relevant thanks to being well-researched and comprehensive. However, the situation started to change in the early 1990s as researchers became more and more focused on religious and philosophical aspects of Indian thought. Books on Shankara, the early Vedanta, Kashmiri Shivaism, as well as Brahmanic and non-Brahmanic philosophy were published; around the same time, several introductions to Buddhist philosophy came out prepared by researchers from Moscow (V. G. Lysenko) and St. Petersburg (E. P. Ostrovskaya, V. I. Rudoy, and T. V. Ermakova), with substantial divergences emerging among them. Whereas the scholars from St. Petersburg focus on the Buddhist tradition, being primarily occupied with systematizing the metaphysics and practices of Buddhism, the Muscovites are more interested in the orthodox aspects of Indian thought, displaying a higher propensity for historical and comparative analysis. This is due to the latter’s application of “comparativist studies of methodology,” involving, besides comparisons of various schools of the Eastern thought, the discovery of extant parallels with the European philosophical tradition. The following works of specialists in Indian studies from Moscow likewise follow the tradition of historical and philosophical comparative studies. In particular, in 2004 Shokhin (2004b) presented his comparative analysis of the ontology of the Advaita Vedanta, as well as a further reconstruction of the history of early Indian thought (2004a), and a translation of Nyaya works (2001). Lysenko (2003), in turn, released a work titled *The universalism of Vaisheshika*, as well as a monograph on the dispute between Buddhist and Brahmanic thinkers concerning the “immediate” versus the “mediated” in sensual perception (2011). Young researchers in Indian studies such as S. V. Vatman, R. V. Pskhu, and V. V. Ostanin focused their studies on the orthodox schools of Indian thought, Bengali Vaishnavism, Classical Vedanta, and Vishishtadvaita Vedanta. The new millennium sees the translations of further sections of the *Encyclopaedia of Abhidharma* (Abhidharma Kosha Bhashyam, or the Treasury of Abhidharma). A number of fundamental Buddhological studies have appeared on the perception of the personality and teaching of Buddha in the Buddhist academic tradition, as well as the philosophy of Nagarjuna (Androsov 2001, 2006). Research on Buddhist logic and Jain philosophy has resumed (Zheleznova 2005, 2012). Apart

from scholarship, Russian specialists in Indian studies today have a number of educational objectives, as signified by the publication of two fundamental encyclopaedias, *Indian Philosophy* and *The Philosophy of Buddhism* (Stepanyants 2009b, 2011).

Chinese philosophy

As compared to the research on Indian thought, Soviet works on the philosophical traditions of ancient China are much more well-researched and comprehensive. Apart from the major works of such secular schools of thought as Mohism, Legalism, and Confucianism, certain fragments of the Taoist religious and philosophical treatises have been published starting in the late 1960s, and the first translations of the Buddhist sutras date from the 1980s. A large number of works on the formative stages of ancient Chinese philosophy date from the 1990s, in particular, Taoism and Confucianism. Among them are such titles as *Laozi: The Philosophy of Early Taoism*, a monograph by Lukyanov (1991), which inaugurates a book series on the genesis of ancient Chinese philosophy by the same author. Re-editions and new translations have appeared of such monumental works of ancient Chinese thought as the Tao Te Ching, Zhuangzi, Lunyu etc. One of the most important events of the period is the publication of the substantial encyclopaedic dictionary of Chinese philosophy (Titarenko 1994), which is the first reference book of this sort.

In the second half of the 1990s, the number of works on the Buddhist and Confucian philosophical traditions grew substantially. Among the published studies of Chinese Buddhism, the works of Yangutov (1995, 1998) stand out. They offer a systematic description of the Buddhist ontology of such schools as Fa-hsiang, Sanlun, Tiantai, and Huajan. St. Petersburg Orientalists have published two collections of Buddhist texts, including the *Prajnaparamita Sutra*, Tsung-Mi's treatise *On The Origins of Man*, and many others. Numerous translations of the key works of the Confucian tradition appeared at this time likewise: the *Four Books*, *The Spring and Autumn Annals*, *The Doctrine of The Mean*, etc., as well as a large number of studies in the history of Neo-Confucian thought. Among them, A. V. Lomanov's study on the evolution of the views of Feng Youlan in 1996, and in 2002 A. I. Kobzev's systematic study of the Neo-Confucian philosophy. The voluminous oeuvre of L. S. Perelomov, *Confucius and Confucianism From Antiquity to The Contemporary Period (Fifth Century BC to The Twenty-first Century AD)*, which came out in 2009, can be said to summarise all the historical research in the field of Confucian studies. However, the pinnacle of Chinese studies in contemporary Russia is definitely the fundamental six-volume encyclopaedia titled *The Spiritual Culture of China* (Titarenko et al. 2006–2010), the first volume of which focuses on Chinese philosophy.

Arabic philosophy

Of all the fields within the history of Eastern philosophy, Arabist studies played a leading role in the Soviet Union. Works of Arabic thinkers were studied and

translated not just in Moscow and Leningrad, but also in Alma-Ata, Baku, Dushanbe, and Tashkent. However, notwithstanding the achievements of the Soviet scholarship, one has to point out the invariable limitations as a result of the Soviet worldview. Soviet scholars were primarily interested in the works of Al-Farabi, Ibn Rushd, Ibn Sina, and other Arabic Aristotelians. By the 1980s, the situation had changed. The translation of Al-Ghazali's *Revival of Religious Sciences* became available in 1980; in 1983, E. A. Frolova published *The Problem of Faith and Knowledge in Arabic Philosophy* followed in 1987 by M. T. Stepanyants *The Philosophical Aspects of Sufism*, which contains, apart from a systematic study of Sufism, reflections on its obvious parallels with certain historical developments in Western and the Eastern thought. Stepanyants' research heralded a major renaissance of studies on Sufic gnoseology, aesthetics, the place of Sufism in the context of Islamic culture etc. A. V. Smirnov released a monograph on Ibn Arabi's philosophy in 1993, containing an annotated translation of *The Ringstones of Wisdom*. A small collection of Ibn Arabi's poems prepared by A. D. Knysh came out in 1995. The first systematic description of Arabic thought was the *History of Mediaeval Arabo-Islamic Philosophy* by Frolova (1995). The areas and the methodology of research that began in the 1990s have survived into the new millennium; however, today the justifiability of "direct" comparative philosophical research is questioned. One of the most prominent studies of this question is *The Logic of Reason* by Smirnov (2001), who claims that it is impossible to render the logical-rational foundation of Arabo-Islamic culture in terms proper to other cultures. In *The Mirror of Islam* Ignatenko (2004) voices the idea that the fundamental differences between the Arabic and the European tradition "mirror" each other. The former follows the imaginative-discursive principle and the latter, the discursive-imaginative. Studies of this nature have lead researchers to fundamental paradigm shifts as regards the underlying principles and procedures of comparative studies, reflected, for example, in 's (2000) *Gnoseological Issues in The Classical Western and Arabo-Islamic Traditions and Islamic mysticism* by Stepanyants (2009a).

The launch of the academic series "The Philosophical thought of Islamic world" is among the most important recent events, inaugurated by I. R. 's (2009) *The Foundations of Islamic Mysticism: Genesis and Evolution*, which sheds some light on manner in which Sufism transformed from a mystical tradition to a philosophical school. *Arabic Philosophy: The Past and The Present* by E. A. Frolova continues the series in 2010. It offers a systematic account of the history of Arabic thought. Translations published as part of the series include selected works of Ibn Arabi in two volumes prepared by I. R. Nasyrov (2013) and Smirnov (2013).

Afterword

Regardless of the bumpy course of development throughout the diverse areas of the history of philosophy in post-Soviet Russia, one may nonetheless point out some general patterns of evolution and an overall dynamic of research. Thus, works published in the late 80s and the early 90s can be classified as "transitional period research": on the one hand, they still depend on the subject areas and the

methodology devised by official Soviet science; on the other hand, due to their sheer scope and the amount of related research, they serve as a firm foundation for further studies. Works on the history of philosophy published between the first half of the 1990s and the beginning of 2000s fall into the “formative period”. During this period, researchers focused on filling the lacunae in Soviet history of philosophy as a result of ideological “purges”. Apart from becoming thoroughly familiarised with the research and works of foreign colleagues, this required the revival of Russian traditions in the field of the history of philosophy. All the while, Russian scholars remained focused on religious and philosophical thought and related studies, which had long been banned. The end of such “formative periods” is usually characterised by the publication of specialised textbooks and encyclopaedic materials that sum up years of research work.

A growing number of scholars write about logic and epistemology from the historical perspective, the history of scientific discoveries and related philosophical speculation, as well as the history of social and political thought, all pushed into the background during the previous period of “religious and philosophical renaissance”. Thus, a key feature of contemporary research on Russian history of philosophy is the complete openness of the field, which spans the entire history of human thought proving that the “eclipse” has ended.

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