

Perestroika and the Nineties in Vladimir Bibikhin's Hermeneutics

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Abstract. This article reconstructs and analyzes the philosophical hermeneutics of the political events of perestroika and regime change in Russia in 1991 as well as the political and economic atmosphere of the “wild 90s” proposed in the works of Russian philosopher Vladimir Bibikhin. Bibikhin’s attention to this theme owes as much to the traditional themes of Russian philosophy as to Heidegger’s thesis on historical factuality of thought. An examination of Bibikhin’s philosophy is impossible if these two sources are separated: it is only by mutually enriching each other that they contributed to the specificity of Bibikhin’s philosophical work linked with contemporary events. Characteristically, while recognizing the significance of historical context for Bibikhin’s thought different researchers often propose opposite interpretations of the philosopher’s reaction to current events. While Artemy Magun believes that Bibikhin fully shared the political enthusiasm of the pioneers of perestroika, Mikhail Bogatov discerns Bibikhin’s critical attitude to such enthusiasm. Looking at the whole body of Bibikhin’s texts it becomes clear that the reason for such a wide spread of possible interpretations was the complexity of Bibikhin’s attitude to the events referred to. On the one hand, the philosopher, while being highly critical of the scale of privatization, was also very sensitive to the change of ideology; on the other hand, Bibikhin recognized the significance of the events that happened and urged intellectuals to think about them deeply. Bibikhin believed that the only adequate response to the newly available freedom was philosophical work that links the interpretation of historical context to eternal themes of the original philosophy. At the same time, he stressed the significance of the Russian philosophical tradition for such interpretation and therefore perceived perestroika and the 1990s as a new chance for the evolution of Russian philosophy. His main intent was the search for non-ideological thinking.

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Vladimir Veniaminovich Bibikhin (1938-2004) is known in Russian academia mainly as a translator of Heidegger's works. However, of late more and more research works have been published about Bibikhin as a thinker in his own right. Many of them were published in the third volume of the journal *Stasis*, in whose pages researchers focus primarily on the conceptual dimension of Bibikhin's unorthodox phenomenology. Not surprisingly, the journal has published an English translation of a fragment from the *Woods* course, the most "author's" work of Bibikhin, and this particular course has attracted the attention of American philosopher Michael Marder [20].

However, in another article in the same issue—*The Concept of Event in Vladimir Bibikhin's Philosophy*—Artemy Magun singles out another aspect of the Russian philosopher's work. He rightly considers Bibikhin a philosopher of history, above all a philosopher of Russian history,¹ who consistently sought to turn Russia into a philosophical concept. Artemy Magun points out that Bibikhin's interest could have been prompted both by the reflections on the historical path of Russia, traditional for Russian philosophy and especially popular during perestroika, and early Heidegger's principle of situationism and factuality of thinking [19, pp. 159-160]. Both these hypotheses highlight the exceptional importance of perestroika and the liberal reforms in the early 1990s for Bibikhin's thought: thus these events determine not only the philosophy of Russian history that we find in Bibikhin's works but also other aspects of his thought.

It is important to understand that the two hypotheses are not mutually exclusive but are mutually complementary. Thus, Bibikhin's link with the Russian philosophical tradition cannot be correctly understood separately from Heidegger's hermeneutics of factuality and without raising the question of the link of historical tradition with the present because for Bibikhin himself the link with tradition is not something to be taken for granted and not deserving a thoughtful analysis. Bibikhin lashes out at "savage gestures" with regard to Russian thought based on the premise that since Russian philosophy is "our philosophy" no effort is needed to understand it and it can be used whichever way [4, p. 153].

In the collection of articles *Another Beginning* devoted to the Russian philosophy and Russian history, Bibikhin pays particular attention to the modern interpretation of Russian religious philosophy. In his article *Us and Them*, he attacks as "Slavophile" the attempts to exploit and edit the Russian philosopher Vladimir Solovyov, highlighting only those texts of Solovyov that can be used to boost patriotism as well as cosmopolitan critique of the Russian idea as nationalist anti-Semitism [3, pp. 208-226]. In the article *The Return of the Fathers* devoted to Dmitry Galkovsky's novel *The Endless Dead End*, Bibikhin describes

Galkovsky's deconstruction of Russian philosophy as "literary poaching in broad daylight" [3, p. 241] and considers it an instance of taking stock of culture, i.e., its appropriation and exploitation for one's own needs [3, p. 239]. In the same collection, Bibikhin shows great respect to the way Russian religious thought is perceived in the project of Sergey Horujy, but his praise applies exclusively to the scholastic rigor, the technicality and asceticism of his philosophizing while largely ignoring the substantive part of his concept [3, pp. 159-164]. From this, one may conclude that for Bibikhin the study of the perception of the Russian philosophical tradition focuses on the mood of philosophical work rather than its conceptual result.

However, just like the problem of historical factuality connected with Heidegger's philosophy lends a distinctive character to Bibikhin's perception of the Russian philosophical tradition, so Russian philosophy influences the way Bibikhin reads Heidegger, in particular his concept of understanding. For Heidegger understanding, one of the two equally important existentials of *Dasein*, is pure ability to be which is primary in explaining speech [17, pp. 142-167]; it means "to be projecting towards a potentiality-for-Being for the sake of which any *Dasein* exists" [18, p. 385] (Heidegger italicizes these words). Bibikhin removes the active side of the category of understanding replacing it with the passive one: "along with this forgotten aspect of understanding, the potential to be in the world and find oneself in it, there is another and similar aspect which is far less frequently mentioned. Understanding in the sense of the ability to comprehend things presupposes adopting them as they are in their essence... Understanding—the 'I can' attitude which agrees in advance that things do not just have the right to be but must be themselves for me... Understanding is not so much about capturing as about being captured. Understanding in the world would have been impossible if things were deprived of the possibility to be free" [7, p. 87].

In other words, Bibikhin reads the existential of understanding in the spirit of his concept of "amechania," the removal of the mechanisms of planning and decision-making, philosophical enthrallment, poverty and destitution, which he borrows from the philosophy of Rozanov for his course of lectures called *Reading Philosophy* [12, pp. 76-77]. As will be shown later the mood of "amechania" turns out to be the key to Bibikhin's philosophical interpretation of the political events of perestroika and the 1990s.

Thus, the philosophy of Heidegger and Russian philosophy are equally important in Bibikhin's attitude to the events of his time.

However, it is important to understand that his interest is not factographic; at the end of the day, Bibikhin is interested not in Russia as an individual country, but in the world as a whole. In his course of lectures entitled "It's Time," Bibikhin notes that our country opens up the world to us like a bush that grows into the earth and into the sky [13, p. 311]. According to Bibikhin, we can understand others only if we proceed from our actual situation: the country "for us is always honestly our country and we know about other countries, honestly, only through our own" [13, p. 258]. This point is also made in the *Introduction to the*

Philosophy of Law: “As we peer into our own we always start noticing many rare things and at first glance they appear to be uniquely ours. Observing yourself you appear to yourself to be unlike anything else. It is only when you dig deep to reach your intimate uniqueness and dare to extract it... that the world begins to hear something of itself in your revelations” [5, p. 133].

How exactly did Bibikhin want to “hear the world” in the events of the late Soviet and post-Soviet period? One possible answer is offered by Mikhail Bogatov, one of the most attentive readers and students of Bibikhin’s philosophy. In an article *Ideology and Platonism in Vladimir Bibikhin’s Works of 1989-91*, Mikhail Bogatov scrupulously traces how what appear to be historical-philosophical works of Bibikhin are connected with the current political situation and the role of ideology in it. Challenging the enthusiasm that prevailed at the time—especially in 1991—born of the sense of the fall of an ideological regime and the arrival of long-coveted freedom, Bibikhin stresses that the gesture of abolishing old things in favor of new and interesting things replicates the gesture of ideology. The latter, being a closed system of thought claiming to be the absolute truth, differs radically from genuine freedom of thought—“the event of truth” [16]. Current political events become for Bibikhin the material that directly reflects the main topics of the primary philosophy.

Unfortunately, the existential sensitivity of Bibikhin which underpins M. Bogatov’s analysis, escapes Artemy Magun who offers an entirely different vision of Bibikhin’s reaction to the events of perestroika and the 1990s. In Magun’s opinion, Bibikhin “fully in accordance with the intent of M. Gorbachev and A. Yakovlev who launched perestroika in the USSR... sees the current—and coveted—event as an injection and a source of energy that gives an impetus of historical movement in a ‘stagnant’ atmosphere of apathy and atomization of society” [19, pp. 160-161].

It has to be admitted that A. Magun does not ignore the “passive” aspect of Bibikhin’s interpretation of event. He points out that “Bibikhin uses Heidegger’s philosophy to understand perestroika as an event in the philosophical sense” and stresses that Bibikhin’s philosophy of event has motives of the later Heidegger who interprets an event apolitically and criticizes all human activism [19, pp. 162-163]. However, Magun does not revisit this topic and likens Bibikhin’s thought to political enthusiasm.

While criticizing A. Magun’s far-reaching conclusions, I totally agree with the main thrust of his article, i.e., that the event of perestroika had particular significance for Bibikhin who called on his listeners to pay special attention to it. No less important is Magun’s emphasis on the fact that Bibikhin considered perestroika “our last revolution,” “the revolution of 1987-1993” [19, pp. 161, 171]. But did Bibikhin welcome that revolution?

Bibikhin’s own texts speak in favor of Bogatov’s position. Describing his deliberations of 1987, Bibikhin writes: “I have caught myself wanting to help the falling socialism, wanting to see it grow stronger and more stable. My instincts told me that the only reliable way to weaken autocracy is to deprive it of the right to change ideology, i.e., make it keep its promises” [2, p. 294].

The above description of perestroika as a change of ideology while preserving autocracy is intimately linked with Bibikhin's reflections on Russia under Nicholas I drawing on the notes of Marquis de Custine, which form a significant part of the philosopher's book *Introduction to the Philosophy of Law*. Comparing the shaky law and order situation in the Russian Empire with the tyranny of revolutionary periods in France, de Custine notes that while in France revolutionary tyranny is disorder of the time of transition, in Russia despotic tyranny is a permanent revolution.² Bibikhin compares these words of the French traveler with a 1999 article by the Swiss lawyer Marie Mendras, who writes about the absence of a rule-of-law state in post-Soviet Russia as a condition of "sustained imbalance" [5, pp. 165-166, 120].³

Thus, Bibikhin in his hermeneutics of Russian politics does not identify the term "autocracy" with Tsarism, but uses it to refer to Russian power interpreting it as a real ontological force. This power can be seized by various agents: the monarch, the Bolsheviks, the oligarchs. To follow Bibikhin's logic, it is not they who seize power but, on the contrary, power seizes them. It establishes and arbitrarily changes both law and ideology.⁴

A closer look at Bibikhin's political philosophy reveals that he hardly shares the ideas of the pioneers of perestroika. A. Magun is right that Bibikhin drew attention to the event of perestroika being aware of the philosophical significance of "our last revolution." Bibikhin attached no less importance to the seizure of property through privatization, a process that unfolded during the 1990s. But, as we have seen, for Bibikhin understanding which, according to Heidegger, demonstrates the potential of historical factuality [17, pp. 383-386], is "not so much capture as being captured." The topic of being captured is one of the key topics for Bibikhin and for that reason, it must be handled with particular care. As Aleksandr Pogrebnyak points out, Bibikhin distinguishes the private and business interests of the businessman which launched the grabbing during perestroika, from being grabbed, which leads to the experience of amechania [22, pp. 236-237].

The key concept of Bibikhin's philosophy is amechania, i.e., the mood of poverty, lack of resources that limits human initiative, the spirit in which, as we have seen, Bibikhin reinterprets Heidegger's category of understanding. It remains central to his interpretation of the present times: "It is from this sigh—ah, we missed it, wealth (billions, oil) is flowing past us and we are unable not only to dip into it but even to notice how and where it flows—from this knowledge that an event of the world takes place without us and regardless of us... and that we have failed and *should not* capture it or to put it on record and under control—from permitting an event to be and without any permission on our part begins our *participation* in the event" [12, p. 25].

The most detailed discussion of the topic of privatization is provided by Bibikhin in the course of lectures called *Property*. The course was delivered in 1993-1994 and was prompted by current political events. In it, the philosopher keeps at a distance from these events and is far from encouraging the enthusiasm mentioned by A. Magun. Bibikhin notes that "the things with which the modern

man really deals, are too scalding” and are ill-thought-out “because each serious and effective approach to an issue turns into instant and spasmodic adoption of measures” [12, p. 20].

The task of philosophy is to refrain from taking measures (epoche) [12, p. 22]. The philosopher stresses: “Thought should not take measures, it is not its business. It kills thought, it ends with the taking of measures, turning into calculation... This is not to say that I propose suicidally never to take any measures. Simply real taking of measures happens is so seldom and so unlike what these words usually are understood to mean that it is better and safer to assume that the taking of measures is not for us since we have not yet started to think in a meaningful way” [12, p. 21].

Speaking about taking measures, Bibikhin refers to “moral indignation over the capture of *property*” and condemnation of the latter [12, p. 23]. Bibikhin believes that for philosophy it is more important that after being dumped in the dustbin philosophy after this capture has got a chance ⁵ “to remember itself, its primary beginning, its original essence” [10, pp. 24-25]. Bibikhin urges a closer examination of the concept of “property” and the concept of “one’s own” because “all philosophy revolves around the difference (of interest) between one’s own and one’s own, one’s property and one’s property. Is it the case only in philosophy? The whole country is trying to sort out property and what is its own as best as it can” [10, p. 111].⁶ This work is the undertaking of philosophy which “desires a great deal, it is not content with leading man away from what surrounds him towards something else... No, it is also loath to let go of what is around it and what we hear and how” [10, p. 182].

In the same way Bibikhin works with the concept of “energy” in a course of that title he delivered in 1990-1991. Before turning to the philosophical concept of energy, Bibikhin stresses that philosophy is absolutely unnecessary and is of no practical use in the current race for energy. On the contrary, philosophers may by their reasoning hinder business people [4, p. 11], so they would push the advisers out of the way suspecting that they too claim to “take part in sharing the benefits from the flow of energy,” because “in our time having access to energy and its sources, even very modest access confers prestige, status and gives hard currency” [4, p. 13]. In the rest of his course, Bibikhin never touches upon topical issues thus reminding his listeners that it is not up to philosophy to take measures or succumb to indignation.

But should not a philosopher seek to bring society to truth and justice? Bibikhin describes the position of a philosopher who believes that our world is not what it should be and should be changed to suit the ideal as Platonism counterposing it to the thought of Plato himself [12, p. 35]. Platonism in this case can be characterized as revolutionary idealism: “With Plato, the idea is brighter than the whole world, it eclipses everything earthly and it *blinds us as well*. In revolutionary idealism the idea is also brighter than anything else, it cancels the old world, and it inspires the revolutionary transformer. It gives him clairvoyance and insight; it overshadows everything, but it does not bother him who has come into possession of it, on the contrary, it charges him with the energy to act” [15, p. 9].

While the follower of Platonism, upon encountering the ideal truth, is anxious to restructure the whole world in accordance with that idea, Bibikhin believes that one who has really emerged from the Platonic cave is incapable of being blinded—but not because his eyes cannot get used to daylight, which would have been possible, but because the sun of truth is new every time [7, p. 147]; looking at it, the philosopher totally loses his bearings in his former environment [15, p. 10]. However, what makes modern Russian politics tick is not Plato's philosophy, but revolutionary Platonism, the claim to absolute knowledge of good and evil: the politician is a “‘fighter against evil,’ ‘against corruption’ whereas there is not even an approximation to defining ‘what is corruption’” [10, p. 215].

A particularly important fact in the critique of Platonism, as Mikhail Bogatov demonstrates, is revealed by Bibikhin in his speeches on August 27 and 30, 1991 in the wake of the events of 18-21 August (see [16]);⁷ this critique can be seen as a *direct reaction* to them. It has to be understood that criticism of enthusiasm and activism in the works of Bibikhin did not end there. In the course of lectures *The Diaries of Leo Tolstoy* (2000-2001), Bibikhin agrees with a member of the seminar that the situation out there is horrible, but, the philosopher says, being gloomy and despondent is deplorable: what is needed is “a change of eye,” “tenderness” [8, pp. 388-389]. Bibikhin argues that Tolstoy's ethics, his preaching of a non-aggressive view of the world is the only true one; moreover, according to Bibikhin, history exists only to the extent that eyes change [8, p. 404]. By change of eyes Bibikhin means accepting the world, changing the aspect in the sense of Wittgenstein with whose philosophy he compares Tolstoy's thought [8, p. 450]. Changing the view of the world is directly opposite to the activist change of the world [8, p. 387], something that Bibikhin never tires of criticizing, especially with regard to the 1990s.

While rejecting activism Bibikhin sees another possibility opened up by perestroika. One can go along with A. Magun: Bibikhin really feels that “our last revolution,” like the beginning of the World War I, had great mobilizing potential [19, p. 160]: “The mysterious surge of inspiration in Germany in August 1914 (‘everything suddenly became serious,’ Heisenberg) and, in more diluted forms, also in Russia and partly in Austria was *in itself* a rare and important encounter with the true depth of human being... It was the same with the whiff of unbelievable freedom in Russia on August 21, 1991, when tanks withdrew peacefully from Moscow” [14, p. 298].

However, far be it from Bibikhin to thus justify the world war and the out-rages of the “wild nineties.” In August 1914, “everything went haywire at once,” and in Moscow in 1991 “everything instantly, within hours, turned into a tangled mixture of stupidity and cunning. It does not, however, follow from this that the first slight movement of discovery of the world was suspect” [ibid.]. Bibikhin stresses: “But one has to see the difference between the intoxicating capture, the fresh wind of the genuine world whose space unexpectedly and suddenly opens up, like in Paris and Prague in the spring and summer of 1968, like in Russia in late August 1991, and *inevitable* human inadequacy in the face of the challenge of these historical revelations” [14, p. 297].

Man's incapacity is inevitable, so Bibikhin does not propose an alternative to the ongoing course of political events. He draws attention to the things that these events have brought to light.

In other words, the significance of perestroika and the 1990s for Bibikhin lies primarily in that it *made philosophy possible*—and the interpretations offered by Bogatov and Magun concur in that view.

Bibikhin proposes to interpret the word “world” that occurs in ideological calls for Russia to join the world community [10, p. 27] and mobilize itself to tackle world tasks [5, pp. 266-267] in the philosophical sense: in the historical situation of the collapse of the USSR when the world's attention was riveted to Russia, Russia can “give the floor” to the silent world [3, pp. 271-272], something that is possible only in poetry and philosophy, but not in geopolitics [3, p. 267]. In 1993, Bibikhin criticizes Grigory Yavlinsky's call addressed to the intelligentsia “to give birth to power” stressing that this is impossible, “so far there have been no solid elaboration even remotely equal to those of Hegel” [10, p. 158]. What lies ahead for Russia is not the throes of giving birth to power but Socratic throes of thought.

Bibikhin is aware that this is a difficult, perhaps an impossible task. Stressing the “ambivalent existence of philosophy in this country, neither banned nor allowed, exiled and neglected” [11, p. 71], Bibikhin writes: “That philosophy has found refuge in Russia can be said only with reservations. Thought exists in Russia like explorers survive in the North Pole or soldiers survive in the trenches” [6, p. 135]. In the article *Our Situation*, Bibikhin admits that “we would not have been able to exist as a successful culture without the West” [9, p. 83], and speaks about the importance of Western support, including financial support for the development of philosophy in Russia and the need for Russian philosophical education to invite teachers from the West [9, pp. 83-85].

However, Bibikhin does not for a moment believe that Russia has nothing new to tell the West. If Russian philosophy gains its feet and “gives the floor to the silence of the world” it would challenge “the West it always threatens to become, to take up the business of arranging human life on Earth” [3, p. 267]. What does Bibikhin mean by “the silence of the world” to which only philosophy and poetry can give the floor?

To answer that question it is important to take another look at the way M. Bogatov examines Bibikhin's reaction to the 1991 events in Russia. Contrary to our expectation that the political enthusiasm of the early 1990s is inspired by freedom, which has at last replaced *ideology*, Bogatov stresses that for Bibikhin the enthusiasm *replicated* the gesture of ideology. But while criticizing the liberal spiritual uplift Bibikhin did not call on our country to return to the socialist path. He offered something different to his students: to juxtapose ideology and “the event of truth” that is revealed in philosophy [16]. In my opinion, this means that the driving motive of Bibikhin's thought was *the desire to overcome ideology*. Realizing that simple rejection of the old ideology throws man into the embrace of a new ideology, Bibikhin was looking for other modes of non-ideological thought. The philosophical attention to the event of freedom in 1991, to the

“challenge of the world” stressed by A. Magun does not contradict this quest and is not at odds with criticism of undue haste: “To this day our thought is in a state of seizure unable to withstand the tension of being close to the incredible challenge that the world continues to be. Today, hysterical calls for mobilization which always has a deadline (“by the summer”) and is total (“the situation is totally critical”) disrupts all attempts to pause and think. Today as ever, the world is too much for the human brain. Today as ever, the challenge of the world is insupportable, people imagine many things and they are in a hurry to discern ideological dictation in response to the unbearable challenge” [11, p. 78].

By turning to the concept of “the event of truth,” Bibikhin opens up two strategies for overcoming ideology. First, interpreting philosophy as non-guaranteed speech, as freedom of philosophical questioning, Bibikhin advocates non-instrumental, spontaneous thought that approximates poetic thought. Secondly, instead of rejecting the old ideology Bibikhin urges us to think about how ideology is possible at all, which is the condition of its possibility—and reveals dialectical relations between ideology and “the event of truth”: the former is at once alien to the freedom of the “event of truth” and seems to reproduce its force being closer to it than to scholastic diligence [16]. The question of the conditions of possibility reproducing Kantian transcendental gesture is approached in Bibikhin’s philosophy in terms of Heidegger’s hermeneutic circle, as a result of which it is not research, but parrhesia, free philosophical speech. Not finding any alternatives and discerning an ideological gesture in any system of thought and any values, Bibikhin identifies the freedom of philosopher with the freedom of the poet interpreting the latter not only as spontaneous poetic work, but also as civic freedom.⁸

Can it be said that the transcendental turn implemented in the poetic spirit enables Bibikhin to escape ideology? Probably not. Today Bibikhin’s solemn declaration to the effect that the Russians are ready to make any sacrifices for the sake of their country and that “we have sacrifice in our blood” [11, p. 73]—sacrifice flowing directly from “in-built metaphysics of the people” and linked with Russia’s world mission [3, p. 267]—sounds like a patent ideological cliché speculating on the myth of the “special spirituality” of the Russians and thereby justifying violence. Moreover, they directly contradict Bibikhin’s other words, in particular, his criticism of the ideology of national superiority characteristic of Russia (see, for example, [5]). Although Bibikhin is aware of the “world mission” of Russia “in the philosophical sense,” he draws political conclusions from this, for example, giving Russian power a metaphysical sanction to sacrifice its own people, and these sentences appear *on the same pages* in which Bibikhin criticizes the urge “to hear ideological dictation.”

In my opinion, Bibikhin’s dramatic switch from the criticism of ideology to ideology itself is inherent in his separation of ideology and philosophy as “an event of truth” in the words devoted to Plato and Platonism. If one applies Bibikhin’s terminology to analyzing this separation, “the event of truth” becomes the transcendental truth, the “new and the interesting” that every ideological gesture strives for.

It is notable that in a later work, *Introduction to the Philosophy of Law*, Bibikhin notes the *difficulty* of separating freedom and ideology: “Let us distinguish the emergence of the human being from the mundane state, his being taken off the hinges and lifted into the abyss of freedom and risk and danger, hence organization and manipulation. The illusion that it is a simple distinction... liberation of consciousness, for example, when reading Plato, *may seem* and indeed *nearly always does seem to the majority to be indoctrination and manipulative suggestion*” [5, p. 255]. However, even here Bibikhin notes that reading Plato may appear to be ideology only to “a majority,” in other words, he is still convinced of the metaphysical difference between freedom and ideology, knowledge of which philosophy is a custodian.

Nor should one forget that the articles *Power of Russia* and *Our Place in the World* containing on the same pages critique of ideology and ideological clichés are published in the collections *Our Situation* and *Another Beginning* by Bibikhin himself in 2000 and 2003 respectively. In a new decade and under new political circumstances, Bibikhin does not renounce his speech that was prompted by the critique of the political enthusiasm of the 1990s, but on the contrary, puts a seal of approval on it.

This path of overcoming ideology—by venturing into the “abyss of freedom and risk” which, incidentally, only a philosopher can distinguish from ideology, enables the philosopher in a creative act to escape the common places of ideology but does not guarantee that his speech itself would not turn out to be ideological. The intellectual strategy chosen by Bibikhin does not sit well with the ideals of conscience, civic responsibility and philosophical caution that were so important for his thought.

In criticizing the ideas of Vladimir Bibikhin it is important to understand that we thus continue his work—in terms of the main intention of his thought and the way problems are formulated by him. It is thanks to the lectures and articles of Bibikhin that the quest of freedom as the classical theme of philosophy acquires a new relevance in his time. Bibikhin’s event of philosophy, which his friends and listeners recall, has affected not only them. Even today, it puts the Russian 1990s in the immortal landscape of the history of world philosophy, a history of the search for freedom and faith in the truth.

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Notes

- ¹ One proof of the importance of the “Russian theme” in Bibikhin's philosophy is the fact that his first work translated into German was *Another Beginning*, a book about Russia [1].

- ² Bibikhin compares de Custine's diagnosis with the position of Russia outside history noted by Pyotr Chaadayev [5, p. 96].
- ³ Bibikhin reveals the paradox of revolution in the course *Energy*, noting that revolutionary consciousness hankers for the new, but at the same time seeks to establish a final order through revolution [4, pp. 56-57].
- ⁴ On law in Russia see the article *Serfdom* [3, pp. 383-394]. This topic is explored in more detail by Bibikhin in [5].
- ⁵ The theme of "philosophy in the dustbin" is even more passionately discussed in the course *Reading Philosophy* [12, pp. 52-53].
- ⁶ The key provisions of the course *Property* were set forth by Bibikhin in the article *Svoye, Sobstvennoye (One's Own)* (see [3, pp. 362-383]). See their analysis in [21].
- ⁷ The most complete and all-embracing criticism of Platonism is to be found in the article *Interpretation of Dreams* [15, pp. 7-13]. The article was written in October, 1991 based on the first lecture of the course *Reading Philosophy* which Mikhail Bogatov analyzes along with two other Bibikhin's works.
- ⁸ The theme of the poet's civic mission characteristic of Russian culture in general is touched upon in various works of Bibikhin. See, for example, one characteristic place in [5, pp. 366-367].

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