the development of the spiritual sphere is very specific. The book unquestionably offers the reader a thesis about the high level of culture of the Soviet society, but does not provide historical evidence of this assessment (pp. 93–124). The purpose of including in the work a detailed analysis of the philosophical heritage of the Russian cultural scientist and literary scholar Mikhail Bakhtin (1895–1975) is not entirely evident (pp. 68–92). It is not clear from the text why so much attention was paid to it, except the mention that this part is a response to C. Emerson's book dedicated to M. Bakhtin (p. 68).[4]

To summarize, it should be noted that the presented book certainly awakens the interest in studying the history of Marxism and its role in Russia's past and present. The authors, considering the most acute social problems, also make the reviewer think about the foreseeable future of the globalized world. I dare to formulate a number of questions that may interest the reader in this regard: Will the youth of the twenty-first century be interested in Marxism on a global scale? Is it possible to modernize Soviet Marxism in order to instrumentalize it and use it to defend the foreign policy interests of modern Russia? What price should the world pay if the paradigm of class fight is used as a weapon of information warfare in the struggle of the Global South (led by Russia) against the Global North? Could the reactivation of the idea of building a "just" society on the basis of class segregation provoke a massive destabilization of the social order in the West? I hope that the proposed book will help the reader to find answers to these questions.

Notes

1 Leszek Kołakowski, *Główne nurty marksizmu* [Main currents of Marxism], vols. 1–3 (Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2015).

2 Tony Judt and Timothy Snyder, *Thinking the Twentieth Century* (Penguin Publishing Group, 2012); Karel Bartošek et al., *Le Livre noir du communisme: Crimes, terreur, répression* (Robert Laffont, 1997).

3 Anne Applebaum, *Gulag: A History* (Doubleday, 2003); Elena Zhemkova, "Zwischen Mitgefühl und Gleichgültigkeit: Die Rehabilitierung der Opfer sowjetischer Verfolgungen," in *Nach den Diktaturen: Der Umgang mit Opfern in Europa*, eds. Günther Heydemann and Clemens Vollnhals (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2016).

4 Caryl Emerson, *The First Hundred Years of Mikhail Bakhtin* (Princeton University Press, 1997).

Paul Starobin, *Putin's Exiles: Their Fight for A Better Russia* (Columbia Global Reports, 2024), 126 pp.

Reviewed by
Gvantsa Gasviani, Irvine

"One must leave their country to change it" (p. 16), argues author and journalist Paul Starobin in his latest book, *Putin's Exiles: Their Fight for A Better Russia*. Through a quick overview of Russian history, Starobin introduces an argument that Russian exiles have often served as agents of change. Therefore, he embarks on a journey to study "a potentially history-changing vanguard" (p. 19) of Russian exiles. Through lengthy, in-person, and online interviews in Armenia, Georgia, England, France, Germany, and the Unit-

ed States, Starobin narrates the story of a new Russian diaspora, exploring their diverse approaches to anti-war resistance and the challenges of living in immigration. In addition to migration and diaspora studies, Starobin contributes to the studies of transnationalism and identity formation by analysing how Russian exiles negotiate their identities and loyalties across borders, maintain connections with their homeland, and engage in transnational activism. Aligned with contemporary trends in migration studies, Starobin employs personal narratives to reveal the less visible and more quotidian aspects of exiles' lives to emphasize their humanity, individuality, and agency. Starobin amplifies the voices of Russian exiles that the Russian authoritarian regime is actively trying to silence.

Starobin begins the first chapter by recounting the journey of Alexsei Fisun, a 31-year-old Russian creative producer. Fisun drove nearly seven hours from Moscow to the Latvian border, seeking refuge from potential repercussions for his volunteer efforts on behalf of those opposed to Vladimir Putin. Starobin uses Fisun's story to open a conversation about almost one million Russians who fled their homes after the beginning of the Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine on February 24th, 2022. He describes the complexities of leaving Russia and underlines that people, who simply did not want to kill or be killed, were turned into "scum and traitors" (p. 33) by the Russian political elite and their propaganda machine.

In chapter two, Starobin explores the feelings of guilt that followed Russian exiles into their new homes. He emphasizes that their guilt was not only related to the current war in Ukraine but also to "the bargain" made between the Russian government and its citizens: "Stay out of politics, and your private life is your own" (p. 38). Starobin suggests that many Russian exiles came to regret this arrangement even more when they encountered cold and sometimes hostile receptions from their host countries. The author underscores that such unwelcoming reactions are not surprising, given that many host countries were former colonies of the Russian and Soviet empires.

Chapter three demonstrates how Russian media in exile, specifically TV Rain, waged the "Information Resistance" (p. 50) to offer Russian people an alternative to pro-war, state-controlled media. According to Starobin, TV Rain's challenges to operate from Latvia were related to anti-Russian sentiment deeply rooted in post-Soviet Latvian identity.

In Chapter four, Starobin tells the story of Russians who are not only against the Russian invasion of Ukraine but also actively support Ukraine in its fight for sovereignty and territorial integrity. Starobin analyses his Zoom interview with Russian physicist and entrepreneur Mikhail Kokorich and argues that for some Russians, supporting Ukraine is a way to bring down Putin's regime and settle personal scores. However, Starobin underlines that while some Russians join the Free Russian Legion to fight alongside Ukrainian soldiers, the Russian political elite in exile does not have a united stance on supporting the Ukrainian military.

The fifth chapter depicts how Putin's regime and the Russian Orthodox Church work hand in hand to justify the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Their mutual belief in *Russky Mir* (Russian World), a distinct

Russian Orthodox civilization whose borders expand beyond post-Soviet Russian territory, is used to cover the annexation of Ukrainian territories under the guise of the "return of sacred ground" (p. 81). In contrast, Starobin brings forward the story of Father Oleg Batov, a priest who paid a high price for not following the Russian Church's orders to remain silent about the war. Father Batov had to leave his home, his church, and even had to switch his profession to taxi driving to support his family in exile.

The last chapter discusses "Putin's most important exile" (p. 94) – Alexei Navalny, the Kremlin's most perplexing and persistent adversary. Starobin argues that Navalny was an exile since banished political prisoners represent a traditional form of exile in Tsarist and modern Russia. The concluding chapter contends that despite the diversity of the political elite in exile, figures such as Mikhail Khodorkovsky, Garry Kasparov, and Ilia Ponomarev, Navalny remains the main threat to Putin's regime. Starobin ends his book with a glimmer of hope, arguing that each generation of exiles has had a different fate, but maybe, just maybe, Putin's exiles are destined to triumph. *Putin's Exiles* was published sixteen days before Alexei Navalny died in prison. Nonetheless, Starobin's argument remains relevant, as Navalny's legacy, now overseen by his wife Yulia Navalnaya, continues to threaten Putin's regime.

Putin's Exiles is a book for anyone interested in learning more about Russians who oppose Putin's regime and the Russian intervention in Ukraine. The book might not be suited for someone looking for a nuanced analysis of racial, class, or gendered dynamics of Russian lives in exile. By focusing mainly on male elites, new forms of collective female leadership, such as Feminist Anti-War Resistance (FAR), skip Starobin's attention. In addition, the book does not address Russian exiles who left their homeland but remain loyal to Putin's regime. However, *Putin's Exiles* is a great starting point to explore the potential Russian exiles hold in changing the Russian future and, by extension, the post-Cold War global order.

Richard Bourke and Quentin Skinner, eds., *History in the Humanities and Social Sciences* (Cambridge University Press, 2023), 416 pp.

Reviewed by
Mitchell G. Ash, Vienna

The fact that a number of humanistic disciplines, such as art history, music history, or the history of science, have "history" in their names should give us fair warning that a volume that purports to discuss such a topic cannot be limited to the academic discipline called history. As the editors make clear in their introduction, this volume actually takes the opposite route, excluding both the discipline and its relations with other fields. Although reference is made in a few chapters to the thinking and research practices of actual historians, the topic here is the role of historical thought in disciplines other than history. The editors advance the claim that historical thinking in the broadest sense