



**CULTURE IN  
TWO WORLDS**

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# CULTURE IN TWO WORLDS

THE CRISIS OF CAPITALIST CULTURE AND THE  
PROBLEMS OF CULTURE IN THE U. S. S. R.

## I

### THE "PARADOX" OF FASCISM

It is now generally admitted that we are living in a period of very great historical cataclysms, of violent upheaval in all social life, of the most radical changes, and of the crash of old systems of material existence and the old outlook on life. Wars, revolutions, the crisis, the dictatorship of the proletariat, fascism, the threat of new wars, the heroic struggle of the Austrian workers—all these facts are extremely ominous for capitalism, which might say, with Horatio:

In what particular thought to work I know not;  
But, in the gross and scope of my opinion,  
This bodes some strange eruption to our state.

The strain of the contradictions which are under constant pressure in the unbearably stuffy atmosphere of the capitalist world may at any moment end in some new catastrophe quite unexpected in its form.

However, we can trace a basic historical "tendency of development" through the cinematographic swiftness and motley change of events. This tendency is expressed first and foremost in the unusually intensive process of the polarization of the classes—the great differentiation in all social forces and ideologies—the sharpening of the struggle between fascism and communism, as two class camps—two doctrines, two cultures. If we were to characterize the entire historical situation briefly from this point of view, we might say that great class forces are forming in military array for coming battles—for the battles which will be really final (in the world-historic sense) and really decisive.

For this reason, fascism must be subjected to thoughtful study in all its aspects, from its economics down to its philosophy. And

all these already exist; for the bourgeois ranks are being reorganized with enormous swiftness, both in the form of so-called "national revolutions" and in the form of "plain fascism." These forms vary greatly, but one cannot doubt their common historical tendency and the common root of their social and political class significance.

A long time ago, before the series of bourgeois revolutions, feudalism gave birth to the absolute monarchy. The tzars, emperors and kings, in alliance with the petty landowning nobility, and with the support of the towns, crushed some of the big feudal lords—and by doing this, strange as it may seem, put off the historical date of the end of feudalism. They strengthened feudalism and centralized its *basic* forces under the absolute monarchy, which was overthrown by the bourgeois revolution.

Another world-historic paradox is now being enacted on the historical stage, under entirely different conditions and in an entirely different manner. In the "national revolutions," finance capital and the *Junkers*—supported by the petty bourgeoisie, a section of the intelligentsia, and even certain groups of duped workers—advance anti-capitalist slogans, preach "national-socialism," and even sacrifice a section of their class colleagues (Jewish capital and "non-Aryans" in general), while at the same time they strengthen capitalism—or, rather, attempt to strengthen it—by gathering all their forces for the defense of capital, and by declaring a *preventive war* on the working class, on communism, and on Marxism.

Facist "order" is the "order" of military, political, and economic *barracks*; it is the military capitalist system of a state of "emergency." This expresses itself in a number of most important facts: in the tendency towards state capitalism; in the "common national," "corporate," etc., dictatorship, with the suppression of a number of internal contradictions; in the establishment of various "mono" systems—"mono-nation," "mono-party," "mono-state" ("totalitarian state"), etc.; in the organization of mass human reserves—petty-bourgeois and, in part, working class; in a whole "incorporated" ideology, attuned to the basic interests of finance capital; and, finally, in the creation of a material and ideological war base.

The so-called fascist "national revolutions," with their anti-capitalist slogans, are really in essence but a speedy reorganization of the bourgeois ranks, eliminating parliamentary changes and the

system of competing parties, introducing uniform military discipline all along the line, and organizing mass reserves.

The petty-bourgeois Philistines of the "centre" will say: "But you Communists also do many of these things." Or, as the Social-Democratic petty-bourgeois phrase it: "There is dictatorship here and dictatorship there, both equally abominable." Or: "There is 'Left' Bolshevism and there is 'Right' Bolshevism; and there is no difference in principle between them."

These miserable people, who receive blows both from the left and from the right, do not understand that the *formal* side of the matter alone ("dictatorship" in general), which they understand incorrectly at that, does not decide anything: *the important thing is its class meaning; its content—material and ideological; the dynamics of its development; its relationship to the general current of world historical development.* Only imbeciles can fail to understand that the dictatorship of the *proletariat* and the dictatorship of the *capitalists* are polar opposites, and that their content and historical significance are entirely different. Those who cannot—or will not—understand this will inevitably be crushed and plunged into the inglorious refuse of history.

## II

### THE CRISIS AND FASCIST IDEOLOGY

THUS fascism, in its essence, is a product of the general crisis of capitalism—as Joseph Stalin has emphasized. But from this it follows that the coming of fascism, in creating something *new* (*reactionarily* new) in the capitalist ways of living and thinking that had been formed before its coming, could not but bring with it a profound crisis in certain important bourgeois orientations. It should be stated that not all aspects of this complex reorientation are of the same depth or of the same stability: doubtless, many aspects are changing and will change—depending to a great extent on the curve of the economic cycle. But many aspects, of course, will remain, until the development and conclusion of the class struggle puts forward problems of an entirely different nature.

If we are to speak of the fascist bourgeoisie's political and economic platforms and guiding ideas, we must note facts of this sort:

1. *The crisis in the orientation towards swift technical progress.*

There was especially profound pessimism in this field during the years of the greatest decline in the cyclical curve. It is well known that all the leading technical publications: *Maschinenbau* (*Machine Building*), *American Machinist*, and hundreds of others, were full of discussion on the question: Is technology beneficial or harmful? Engineer Heilmich wrote in *Maschinenbau* that "there is an enormous army of writers who take a negative attitude towards technology, and even wish for or predict its death." The economic journals strongly recommend a decrease in the rate of technical development.

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

The machine, Spengler affirms, is beginning to hinder the human being (the multitude of automobiles in the streets): "In Argentina, Java, and other places, the small landowner's simple plough is superior to big motors, and is beginning to drive them out." The end of modern machine culture is inevitable. "This machine technology," he writes, "will end with the Faustian human being, and will some fine day be destroyed and forgotten: railroads and ships—like the Roman roads and the Chinese wall; our giant cities and their skyscrapers—like old Memphis and Babylon." (*Man and Technics.*)

Such funereal reactionary tunes have become the ideological fashion. The great optimism that was formerly felt concerning technological progress has undoubtedly disappeared. "Faith" in it has been undermined by the whole trend of the general crisis of capitalism.

2. *The crisis in the orientation towards further industrialization* is very closely connected with the above. If technological progress is stopped, the productive forces will inevitably decline or come to a

stand-still. This is assisted by the search for guarantees of safety against the "plague of the proletariat," the "back to the land" propaganda, the doctrine of the patriarchal bond with "mother-earth," and the return to the land. Hence—"re-agrarianization!"

Hitler's slogan is: "The land above all; it gives stability; it is the source of conservatism." The experiences of the fascist movement in Italy, in Germany, and in Austria (the rich peasants of the Tyrol, the Italian agrarian bourgeoisie, the Catholic Church—especially in the agrarian districts, etc.), oblige the fascists to turn decisively toward "the land"—which, of course, is far from hindering the rule of finance capital. The problem of "internal colonization," of moving the population from the cities to the countryside in the struggle against unemployment (the *Siedlungsproblem*), is one of the essential questions of the German internal policy.

T. Hielscher has expressed the coming ideological superstructure with classic clarity in his book, *Das Reich (The Empire)*: "Becoming more rural will mean becoming poorer and more primitive, and perhaps wilder and more barbarous; but, on the other hand, it will mean becoming more *Germanic*. Barbarism carries its own justification." *Sapienti sat*. Comment would surely be superfluous.

3. *The crisis in the orientation towards the world market.* The tendency which had previously flourished in this field with the old optimistic laissez-faire theory is being replaced by the doctrine of a decided *autarchy*—i.e., a confined, "self-sufficient" economy, almost independent of world economy. Certain governments which are becoming fascist, or are already fascist—especially Germany—show this process very clearly.

It is not difficult to see the basic *economic roots* of this tendency and this policy. I am referring to the militant economic and military preparations, to "independence" from imports which are not guaranteed during war, and the consequent corresponding decline in the proportion of exports.

The obliging economists have already deduced a whole "law of decreasing world connections." The Japanese social-fascists justify *annexation* by the necessity of having "enough of everything" for the building of socialism (!!) under the rule of the Mikado. The German fascists formulate the problem as the problem of "the greatest possible economic independence."

Ferdinand Fried puts this question very clearly indeed in his book, *Autarkie (Autarchy)*, in which he gives the "lofty ideology" of this autarchy: the "*Autarchy*" of self-sufficiency and the "*Autarchy*" of self-government—*i.e.*, political independence.

"The nation," he declares, "which is now being born in the *German revolution*" (this refers to the fascist "revolution."—N.B.) "has gone through an *intensive internal* survey, and wants to be self-sufficient and rule itself through itself. . . . The French Revolution brought forth *imperialist nationalism*; the German revolution will produce *social nationalism*. . . . The field of social nationalism is not the world, but the nation, the people, the human being."

This, of course, is utter nonsense, as far as the "field" is concerned. There is no talk of the fascist states refusing to go out into the *world* "field." The race for armaments and the foreign policies of these states do not permit us to accuse them of provincialism. But it is precisely for the purpose of struggle on the *world* field that they are breaking down the ideology of a *world of free-trading connections*. The continuous growth of *nationalism* and the *military* character of its entire ideology form the appropriate superstructure for the imperialist-fascist autarchy.

4. *The crisis of the liberal bourgeois-parliamentary state* is one of the outstanding manifestations of the military and political preparation of the bourgeoisie. So is its transition to dictatorship through the destruction of bourgeois democracy and the organization of an open dictatorship, with *one* party and a complete terrorist government apparatus, from the armed forces down to the university chairs and the art academies.

Here we must point out that the so-called "corporate state" is trying to draw the basic links of economy into its own hands on the basis of state capitalism, and is speeding up the process of the centralization of capital in every possible way. It is obvious that the building of "planned capitalism," which they preach under the name of "national-socialism," is a fascist Utopia. But there is no doubt whatsoever of the fact that in leaning for support mainly on heavy industry the fascists are tightening and militarizing certain important links in their economy, thus greatly increasing the pressure of state power.

One of the leading Italian fascists, M. Benni, formulates the

matter thus: "The rule of economic nationalism emphasizes this necessity, for all nationalism undertakes a political function first and foremost and adapts or subordinates to it all other social functions." (Ignazio Silone, *Der Faschismus*, p. 224.)

The representation of "corporations" (Italy) and of "estates" (Germany) is fictitious; for the "lower classes" are "represented" by members of the fascist staff—by "state imposed chiefs," so to speak, of one or another "front." *The essence of it lies in the direct rule of capital itself*, of the Thyssens, the Krupps, the trusts, the banks, etc., on the basis of a centralized and operative "complete" power.

According to Mussolini, this system overcomes both capitalism and socialism. (*Ibid.*, p. 226.) According to Fried, it is the embodiment of "the Prussian idea of order" and of Prussian "socialism." (*Op. cit.*, p. 45. Spengler says the same.)

Higher ideological structures develop on this basis into a whole philosophy of the "totalitarian" state, of the cooperation of all, of the leadership of the elect, in whom lies the spirit of God, of the realization of metaphysical values, etc.

In any case, the old liberal orientation has been broken completely; we have at present a transition to the operative, "complete" dictatorship of finance capital—a terrorist dictatorship, which has absorbed a number of mass fascist organizations.

### III

#### THE CRISIS IN BOURGEOIS IDEAS

THIS sharp turn in the sphere of material culture and the ideological spheres closest to it finds its appropriate expression and reflection on the higher rungs of the ideological ladder. Here also a swift reorientation is taking place, and the customary categories are turning out to be unsuitable for the new period. We have a *profound crisis in all* bourgeois "*spiritual*" culture, which says a great deal. We shall dwell here on certain especially clear manifestations of this crisis.

1. *The crisis in ideas of evolution* has developed on the basis of disillusionment about the progressive movement of capitalism. This disillusionment is growing and taking logical shape on a universal



scale. The *first* stage is summed up very well by Walter Eucken:

“Marx thought,” he tells us, “that the vital law of capitalism lies in ever-developing dynamics, and that the end of capitalist development would mean the end of capitalism itself. . . . Modern political economy has shown that Marx’s theoretical arguments on the necessity of these dynamics are false.” (*Staatliche Strukturwandlungen und die Krise des Kapitalismus.*)

The second stage, the universal spread of the negative attitude towards the idea of development, is found in the “universalist,” Othmar Spann. In his *Kategorienlehre (Science of Categories)*, this professor proclaims certain remarkable truths: “Darwin and Marx,” he writes, “did a terrible injury to our culture by their mechanical (!) *understanding of evolution*. For their *understanding of evolution* robs all activity of its value, as each day is conquered by the next day. And this gave rise to the utilitarianism, materialism, and nihilism which characterize our times.”

In other words: Only the conventional “dynamics” of simply grinding water in a mortar is of any value. As to real, successful struggle, and actually changing the world—that arouses human pride and turns men away from God, and is therefore criminal. What formerly made up the fervor of the progressive bourgeoisie—what Bacon formulated, with restrained passion, as the flowering of mankind—is now crushed under the fascist heel of the gloomy servants of God. The bourgeoisie, whose path to further development has been blocked, cries: “Down with development! Down with the very *idea* of development!”

2. *The crisis in the ideology of Christian and liberal “humanism.”* The period of liberalism corresponded to the rosy dream of “normal human relationships” raised to the ethical standard of Kant’s categorical imperative. This ideology, generally speaking, was very suitable for “fairer competition” both in the field of internal relationships and in the field of international trade. “Honesty,” “equality,” “respect,” etc., with their wordy halo of hypocritical “humaneness,” were the official ethical doctrines connected with the real conduct of the people; and the word “people” formally included the lower classes.

The semi-feudal romanticists and philosophers of reaction—in speaking of modern times, we must mention Nietzsche, first of all

—began to undermine this ideology. “Whom do I detest most, among the modern scoundrels? The socialist scoundrels—the apostles of the mob, who intrigue against the workers’ instinct, contentment, and feeling of satisfaction with their modest life—who make the workers envious, and teach them revenge.” (F. Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*.)

Socialism “is for the most part a symptom of the fact that we are treating the lower classes *too humanely*, so that they get a taste of the happiness forbidden to them. . . . It is not hunger that causes revolution; it is the fact that when the people begin to eat they acquire larger appetites.” (*Ibid.*)

The modern bourgeois ideologists, who on the wings of their thoughts are flying straight back to the Middle Ages, are raising aloft all their animal hatred for other nations, in essence, for the lower classes. The actual facts of this are universally known.

Mme. Omer de Guelle, the queen of adventuresses, whose memoirs came out recently, might well envy the pathological sadistic passions of the fascists.

But the interesting thing is that all this finds open, acknowledged, valued, almost “philosophical” expression. Spengler’s analogy of the *beast of prey* is well known. It is worth our while to cite once more the tirade, expressive of his “cultural perception,” in which this philosopher praises the gorilla-like, “primitive man.” Herr Spengler is touched: “The soul of this strong Solitary [!] is thoroughly militant, mistrustful, and jealous of his own power and gains. He throbs with emotion when his knife cuts into the flesh of an enemy—groans and the odor of blood raise his feeling of triumph. *Every real man*, even in modern cultural cities, sometimes feels within him the smouldering fire of this primitive soul.”

The fascist dramatist, Herr Jost, calls for priests “who will spill blood, more blood, and still more blood,” and declares: “When I hear of culture, I get my Browning ready.”

Herr Herbert Blank believes that in Bismarck’s *Thoughts and Reminiscences* there is more philosophy than in hundreds of works of university faculties, and that the development of character should be completed in the barracks. Frederick the Great, the officers’ corps, and the barracks form the ideal trinity of his “philosophy.” (See *Wir Suchen Deutschland*.)

A nationalist fury is raging: "humane" passages are crossed out even in the New Testament, as "Eastern influences." The Christian names are crossed out of the calendar and replaced by Teutonic ones ("Back to Wotan!" is the pass-word). The "race theory," with its analysis of "blood and sperm," is being elevated to the level of a "scientific" doctrine, and is the basis of all policies. Alfred Rosenberg even explains the entire October Revolution by saying that "Mongolian forces" got the upper hand of the "tall, shapely" light-haired people of German origin. (*The Future of German Foreign Policy.*) The liberal Christian orientation has been replaced by frantic anti-Semitism and incredible contempt for the colonial peoples (see Hitler's *Mein Kampf.*) This, however, while it causes the priests to revolt, does not prevent the Vatican from blessing the above-mentioned "things and processes."

3. *The crisis in the idea of formal equality.* From the very backwaters of reaction—from Joseph de Maistre and Co.—they have fished out the idea of hierarchy—eternal hierarchy—not as a temporary historical phenomenon, but as a *general and universal law of nature*. (See M. Berdyayev's book, *The Philosophy of Inequality*, written quite a long time ago.) Hitler speaks openly and plainly of the rule of the *aristocratic idea* in nature and in society. S. Araki, in his famous speech, "The Tasks of Japan in the Era of Showa," brings forward amusing "philosophical" arguments which are supposed to prove the age-old superiority of the Japanese race. (He compares human beings with various breeds of dogs, destined for different purposes.\*)

Herr Spann, the philosopher of Austro-German fascism (he is also their sociologist, their economist, etc.), builds up a whole theory of society and government on the basis of a hierarchical demarcation between "well-born" and "low-born" members of society, returning to and theologizing old biological theories.

The idea of hierarchy (*gerachia*) is given exactly the same determining role by the Italian fascists (see Gentile). Rocco, one of the leading ideologists of Italian fascism, has created a whole theory of government and rights ("reflected rights"). It is a well-knit theory of the serfdom of the low-born *castes*, who are in bondage to a corporate state, headed by the "élite"—the "select"—the "illus-

\* See *Militarism and Fascism in Japan* (International Publishers).—Ed.

trious": the trust-owners, the bankers, the "excellencies," and their spiritual and worldly servants.

The idea of formal equality has broken down all along the line. The banners of the bourgeoisie now bear the legend: *Hierarchy* (Read: the rule of capital).

4. *The crisis in rational thinking.* Disillusionment in the expediency of technical progress inevitably brought about disillusionment concerning the power of rational thinking. This is a subject worthy of detailed treatment.

In order that the reader may immediately feel the "aroma" of the new positions on this question, we shall quote here the above-mentioned Herbert Blank. In his controversial work he asks directly: *Of what use "to the German people is the science of Darwin, Virchow, Dubois-Raymond, Hückel, Planck, and Einstein, which has broken the tie between the soul and God. . . ?"* And he answers: *"We are more for the creed which is reviled as barbarism; for, I must remark, we consider the slogan 'Back to barbarism!' which has come up during the last few years, as one of the best of battle-cries."*

Science and rational thinking are replaced by theological and teleological metaphysics, mystical ravings, wild "intuitions," occultism, telepathy, astrology, etc. The content of the new literature is simply incredible: Vitalism and Jeans' "mathematical god" are harmless toys when compared with the scholastic and mystical nonsense that is printed in the capitalist countries nowadays. Truly, it seems as though heavy giant lizards, dinosaurs and iguanadons had again begun to crawl along the surface of the primitive earth.

Such is, in rough outline, the picture of the cultural crisis in capitalist countries. This picture is far from complete; it is very "poor" compared with reality. But its basis is clear. It has been very well expressed by Spengler:

"It is our duty to hold on to the end to a lost position, without hope, without salvation. To hold on to the end, like the Roman soldier whose bones were discovered before the gates of Pompeii, who perished because during the eruption of Vesuvius he was not relieved from his watch. That is glory, that is the valor of a race. That honorable end is the only thing a man cannot be deprived of."

Such is the intimate side of fascist ideology in all its glory. More-

over, the "knight" in a wild beast's skin is doing anything but "standing watch." He is making considerable use of his club. But he will not prove the victor; as is proved, among other things, by our growing socialist culture.

#### IV

#### DEVELOPMENT IN THE SOVIET UNION

THE crisis of capitalist culture serves to bring out in tremendous contrast the enormous growth of material and spiritual culture in the U.S.S.R. This culture is still very young and unsettled. But the dynamics of its development, its direction, its developing internal forces, its splendid unity, its creative impulses, uniting millions of people, all render the Soviet Union the real and dependable hope of the world proletariat. This hope is the stronger because the dictatorship of the proletariat has laid the foundations of socialist economy, has established world records in construction, has revealed itself as a great creative force. And all this precisely at a time when the dark clouds of the crisis are hanging ominously and trouble is hovering over the capitalist world. True, the frenzied ideologists of fascism attempt to attribute to victorious communism features and qualities which are the properties of fascism itself. Thus, for instance, Herr Richard Bie (*Revolution und Karl Marx*, Leipzig, 1920) asserts that "Lenin entertained a profound and justified distrust of education and scholarship . . . for they distort the nature of peoples." He asserts that Lenin "hated education," that "in this respect he was in his very nature a peasant and a Russian nationalist who opposed Western Europe," that he "hated townsmen" and that this constituted the "depth of his character." At the same time, a colleague of this fascist "scientist," the notorious orthodox church philosopher S. Frank, who now is taking shelter under the wing of the brown fascist eagle, in his work "Bolshevism and Communism as Spiritual Phenomena" (see the symposium *Der Staat, das Recht und die Wirtschaft des Bolschewismus*, Berlin, 1925), states the direct opposite: "Actually, communism as such, has no national-historical roots in the life of the Russian people and in Russian philosophy. It has been imported from the West and should be regarded as the latest abortive fruit of Western unbelief, of Western disregard of

God in all public life." However, these two "opposites" become reconciled in the "unity" expressed in that both hold that the domination of the proletariat is the domination of Satan. All this nonsense of the modern obscurants (compared with whom the ignoramuses of the time of the Reformation were shining intellectual geniuses), evaporates like ether before the ever growing host of facts which prove the enormous progress of our country and the splendid victories of the class struggle of the proletariat. The land of the dictatorship of the proletariat is exhibiting a trend of development which is the direct opposite of the tendencies now prevailing in the capitalist countries surrounding it. At the same time, all the principles of the proletarian state, which in the course of its social life are rapidly being materialized as links in its development, are the direct opposite of the principles of the fascist prophets and leaders.

The principal features of development in the U.S.S.R. are:

1. The emancipation of the productive forces from the fetters of capitalism and from the fetters of petty private ownership of land. Whereas in capitalist countries the growth of the productive forces is hindered by private property, the October Revolution has removed these obstacles in all directions: It has created a different correlation between production and consumption. It has destroyed the lagging behind of effective mass demand which is inevitable under capitalism. It has destroyed the parasitism of the ruling classes. It has swept aside the divisions in private economy. Thus it has opened wide the gates for the rapid growth of productive forces by adopting the principal progressive tendencies in technical development (electrification, use of chemicals, automatic machinery, the establishment of huge combinations of inter-related enterprises, etc.). It has freed all the latent possibilities of live working forces—that *decisive* productive force in all economy. The working class, having thrown off the old exploitation, has become the source of a new, manifold creative energy.

And, finally, the last few years of the development of the socialist revolution have liberated *agriculture*, and with it the entire economy of the country, *from the fetters of petty private ownership*, within whose limits a powerful agricultural technique could never develop.

The victorious socialist offensive which Joseph Stalin proclaimed and carried through with iron consistency has brought about the

roust of the kulaks and the incredibly swift reorganization of peasant economy.

The creation of new forms of collective and Soviet agricultural production—of large-scale socialist economy on the land—has hastened the process of giving this new form new material content, including new *technical* content. The introduction of machinery, and then of chemistry, into agriculture is attaining ever new victories.

*Live labor* is here too taking on immeasurably higher qualifications—technical, cultural, and political. And in connection with this the principle of planned socialist economy is becoming ever more important.

2. From this necessarily follows the *orientation towards technical progress*, as well as the orientation towards *industrialization*. But *socialist* industrialization has the specific peculiar trait that it does not lead to a further separation of the town from the country. On the contrary, it leads to the bridging of the gulf between them, to the development of an industrial regime in rural economy itself, to the elimination of the “idiocy of rural life.” Closely connected with this stands the orientation towards large-scale economy, towards closer and better organized connections of the socialist economic whole.

3. *The orientation towards economic independence and towards a world socialist economy*. In contradistinction to fascism, which places the “nation” and its isolation from other “nations” before everything else, the Soviet Union has *already* been built up on an *international* basis, uniting the toilers of a large number of nationalities, nations, and races in its state organization.

The U.S.S.R. is striving for economic independence in relation to the *capitalist world*, where *capital* rules—a world which in its class structure is diametrically opposed to socialist society. The U.S.S.R. desires to have its own sufficient and reliable social and economic foundation, without breaking off trade relationships with the capitalist countries.

The dictatorship of the proletariat in its perspective is orientated towards a *world communist community*—towards a huge organized economic whole, without exploitation and without classes—which would be the basis of the true brotherhood of all mankind.

4. Communism sets up the *dictatorship of the proletariat* as against the dictatorship of *finance capital*; the *Soviet state* as against the "corporate state" of fascism; *proletarian democracy* as against fascist Caesarism; the rule of the *workers* as against the rule of the Thyssens and the Krupps; and *planned socialist economy*, whose management forms the functions of the proletarian government led by the Party, as against barracks and state-capitalist militarized economic efforts.

The dictatorship of the proletariat sets itself up openly as the expression of a class principle against all twaddle of a "common national aim"—against the deceiving mask of "co-operating," "estates" or "professions"—a mask which conceals behind its empty legal formula a real class (capitalist) content.

The dictatorship of the proletariat, having liquidated parasitic classes—having destroyed the very foundation from which they arose—is acquiring the greatest *effectiveness of action*, is drawing in millions of people, is working out ever new forms of mass participation in the governing of the state, is securing, in practice and in the process of labor, an ever broader and ever deeper *growth in the cultural standards of its peoples*.

## V

### TECHNICS AND SOCIALISM

THE development of the culture of socialist society, advancing under a systematic bombardment from its class enemies, raises many questions and problems which demand a definite clarification. From the huge number of these problems, we shall choose a few of the basic ones, which are also subjects of discussion in the camp of our enemies.

1. *The problem of socialist "technics."* Many fascist and semi-fascist "scholars" and "theoreticians" attack us on the ground that, as they say, we fetishize the machine. We are reproached with having turned the machine into an icon, with being "machine-worshippers," with tending towards the creation of mechanized and depersonalized people—towards a "soulless" civilization, where the human being is a unit of calculation, a number, a paragraph, where all creative effort is ended, etc.



These attacks are based on criticism of “technics *in general*”—of machines as a purely technical principle. However, it is easy to understand that, in so far as there is truth in these condemnations of the machine, this truth applies *exclusively* to the capitalist application of the machine; and that it instantly becomes its own contradiction—*i.e.*, a *lie*—when it refers to the application of the machine in the *socialist* state. It is one of the basic paradoxes (one of the basic contradictions) of capitalism that the growth of machinery does not help the masses, but only increases the proportion of unemployed and hungry. To the *toilers* the machine is a means of capitalist robbery; it transforms the human being into a “detail worker”—a stupid and soulless screw in the mechanism, stupefied by weariness, by the monotony and narrowness of his work, etc. Inanimate things rule over human labor, the human being becomes a “pair of hands.”

All this was brilliantly explained by Marx, and no one has given such a fiery criticism of capitalist technics as Marx himself—with all due recognition of its relative (historical) progressiveness, which now has been transformed into its very opposite.

But *socialism* reverses all relationships down to the very root. And the development of *socialism* in our country gives extremely weighty and irrefutable proofs of this. With *us*, the machine plays a great liberating rôle: the seven-hour working day, the lightening of labor, the appearance of a definite leisure time, the increase in the productivity of labor, the growth in material well-being, the rise in literacy and technical culture, the growth in personality (shock-workers)—these are all bound up with the mechanization of the productive process. In place of unemployment—a shortening of the working day; instead of an increase in the standard of exploitation—a growth in well-being; instead of cultural humiliation and dwarfing of personality—a rise both in culture and in personality.

We need but compare the former peasant with the present-day collective-farm tractor driver to understand the absurdity of the assertions of the capitalist howlers. The machine under *socialism* is the greatest factor in the growth of culture. *Under capitalism, the growth in technique mechanizes the toiler, i.e., stultifies him. Under socialism, this growth humanizes the machine, i.e., makes it a weapon in the hands of the toiling masses.*

2. *The technique of our age and the classless state.* The fact remains, however, that while there is a huge leap forward in all fields of culture, including the field of art, social sciences, and philosophy, there is at the present moment a sharp *increase in the importance of technology* throughout our entire social life, on the basis of the utterly unprecedented growth in Marxist political culture.

This is also expressed, incidentally, in Stalin's popular slogan: "In the period of reconstruction, technique decides everything." But this formulation of Stalin's includes both an *explanation* of this phenomenon and a definite *prognosis, i.e.,* a prediction of its future development.

Now for a few preliminary remarks. There is not the slightest doubt that the *technical* side of culture is of exceptional importance in our country, and that consciously regulated and organized attention is now directed to this field. There is a certain "one-sidedness" in our educational "economy."

If we take our new proletarian intelligentsia, for instance, we will easily be convinced that the vast majority of *all* the new intellectuals consists of technicians, engineers and agrotechnicians. The "humanities" (art, philology, history, etc.) are far in the background. On the face of it we have a sharp bias towards technique and invention—towards practical and organizational work. We now often meet people who are perfectly at home in technology and in the corresponding fields of the exact natural sciences, but who do not have the least idea of ancient Greek tragedy, or of "Young Germany," or even of Pisarev, Dobrolyubov, and Chernyshevsky.\* They are often ignorant of the most elementary historical facts. In a word, not a trace of "classical" education is left. The hero of the day is the inventor—the technician—the shock-worker. This is the "cultural style" of the period we are going through, in the *narrow* sense of the word—the clearly expressed technical ideology of the day.

It would, however, be entirely incorrect to assume that such one-sided development must be characteristic of all socialism as a whole, or of the classless communist state. The *contrary* is more correct. The historically limited roots of present-day technical ideology lie *in the objective tasks of the moment*—in the necessity of *com-*

\* Russian writers and literary critics of the nineteenth century.—*Ed.*

pleting our technical reconstruction, mastering all of the many sorts of new technical devices, and raising the qualifications of all the labor forces of the town and the country to a level corresponding to the new machinery and apparatus.

Hence comes the fervor of mastery. But hence, also, comes the great purposefulness of all the active and creative forces of the revolutionary class—the proletariat; a purposefulness directed towards technology, and unavoidably—when the historical time in which things must be done is short—“one-sided.”

There is, as Hegel would have said, a certain sly historical logic in this *historically necessary and unavoidable one-sidedness*. It is the antithesis of the *old* culture, with its slow tempo of work and its slavish, Asiatic labor customs, with its justification of the green *Dubinushka* \*—the truly Russian tool, which was set up proudly against the “clever Englishman’s machine”; with its Oblomovs \*\* and its reckless idlers, its Solovyevs, Dostoyevskys, and Tolstoys—*i.e.*, Aphrodites and Mothers of God, pathological degeneracy and non-resistance; with that famous, mystical “Slavic soul” (*l’âme slave*), which has been the object of not a little mock-serious West European “research.”

The sharply expressed “bias” towards technique which reflects ideologically the class struggle of the proletariat for the mastery of technique, and the *operative work* bound up with this “technical bias,” are conclusively destroying the ideological and “cultural” remnants of *Dubinushka* all along the front. But with the very growth of technical culture in the country, and the broadening of all horizons, beginning with the political ones, there also grows a *demand for development in a number of other directions*.

An extremely characteristic example of this is a movement which has spontaneously grown up in our *technical universities*, namely, the movement for the organization of “universities of culture.” The growing generation of young technical workers demand a certain rectifying coefficient for the whole “system” of their education. “Voluntary” lectures on free days in philosophy, history and art—that is the essence of these “universities of culture.” But the same

\* Cudgel in English—the title of an early Russian revolutionary song.—*Ed.*

\*\* Character in a novel, by the same name, by Gogol personifying indolence.—*Ed.*

can also be said of much broader social circles—of the entire proletariat and of the collective farm masses. *The development of "technical bias" in our conditions carries within itself the germ of that which will overcome its own narrowness. A time is coming when science and culture will flourish in all their manifold variety.*

In the preceding sections we have discussed the process of the rise of material culture in the U.S.S.R., the tendency towards a gigantic growth in our productive forces, the liberating rôle of machine technique under the specific conditions of socialist economy, and the characteristics of the peculiar technical orientation of our entire cultural style—a "technicism" which, however, must be examined within its historical limits. Below, we shall speak of a number of further problems of our social life and our socialist culture—always keeping in mind that we are speaking of very current values, which must be understood precisely in their current quality, *i.e.*, in their historical changeability.

## VI

### PROBLEMS OF SOCIALIST CULTURE

1. *Centralized socialist economy and the problem of bureaucracy.* If we take technique broadly (as the technique of our work in general, and not only as purely productive technique), then the *technique of management*—the technique of organization, leadership and operative work in general—takes on great importance. We must realize what a huge apparatus our government uses. After all, our government in a centralized manner builds and directs our whole socialist economy. It is a huge "machine," such as has never been seen in all the existence of humanity.

Such a "machine," in certain historical conditions, contains within itself the danger of *bureaucracy*. Intermediate links of the apparatus fence the management off from the immediate demands of life, like dividing walls, by means of accounts and reports from below and orders and injunctions from above—both the former and the latter passing through a number of hands. The "bureaucratic routine methods" make paper forms rule over the real content of life. Then there is the insufficiently individual approach to ques-

tions, the bureaucratic stamp, the stencil, dry and lifeless decisions, the "mechanical" handling of all problems one after the other without any consideration as to their importance, etc.

All these phenomena actually exist, and the Communist Party is conducting a sharp struggle against them (see the decisions of the Seventeenth Communist Party Congress of the Soviet Union on organizational questions; L. M. Kaganovich, *Problems of Party and Socialist Construction*). We have the prerequisites for *victory* in this battle—extremely important prerequisites, namely, the initiative of the masses, the huge broadening "field of selection" where new proletarian activists are being promoted—leaders of technique, culture and of the organizing arts, leaders on an endless number of construction jobs, people who participate actively in the management of the government on all fronts.

For this reason, the measures laid down, for instance, by the wisest of the bourgeois ideologists—Max Weber—are entirely inapplicable to our relationships. He foretold the rule of a bureaucratic machine, where a "bureaucratic-monocratic method of rule through documents" would secure maximum "exactitude, continuity, discipline . . . and reliability," which would be "technically the most rational," and which would at the same time lead in the future to a rule of bureaucracy in the "old Egyptian style," where everyone else would be reduced to the condition of fellaheen. (See Max Weber: *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* and *Parliament und Regierung*.)

In actual fact, this is an extreme utopian expression of *state capitalism* under the dictatorship of finance capital, where the transformation of the workers into "detail workers," into "hands," into elements of the "cost of production," develops into the total enslavement of numbered and depersonalized serfs, and where the restless trader and the medium-sized industrial individual becomes an official under the magnates of the financial oligarchy.

On the other hand, all the dynamics of development in the Soviet Union tend towards the greatest development of mass energy, individual and group initiative, the most varied forms and methods of socialist competition, the advancement of an ever larger circle of fresh people with initiative. *That* is the basic process; and it is as far as heaven from earth from the tendency towards monopolistic ossification and sclerosis which is stated with fear and horror by

the greatest bourgeois ideologists in investigating "modern capitalism."

Our socialist centralization does not freeze or deaden human relationships, dividing people into hardened castes; on the contrary—it *provides for the ever swifter development of all the potentialities, possibilities and forces latent in the broad proletarian masses*, the active participants in and builders of the proletarian dictatorship.

2. *The problem of hierarchy, and of overcoming it; hierarchy and equality as problems of culture.* Fascism, as we have seen, sets up the idea of *hierarchy* as its central, unifying idea. This is not a question of asserting the variety of gifts, temperaments, talents etc., which will always exist to some extent. For fascism the question is to perpetuate class domination under this slogan, making it into an eternal category; to strengthen the *rule of capital of a definite great power* over the colonial peoples, making its rule an *eternal* torture and exploitation.

Nietzsche wrote long ago, in his *Antichrist*, that: "*Hierarchy and the caste system* are simply a formulation of the highest law of life." The most odious obscurantists and advocates of serfdom of tsarist Russia, like a certain personage mentioned by Vera Figner (see *Memoirs of a Revolutionist*), who "regarded all knowledge except the knowledge of a few prayers and the names of the members of the ruling house as being harmful to the people," stood for the eternal existence of that same exploiting ladder of castes which so delights the fascist ideologists. The former tsarina of the Russian empire, Rasputin's god-fearing friend, asserted, after the punitive expeditions in December 1905: "One drop of royal blood is more precious than millions of dead serfs."

Communism does not treat equality in the vulgarly utopian and rationalist sense of the absolute levelling of individuals, where all are alike, like a herd of sheep. It treats it in the sense of the *elimination* of classes, the elimination of oppression, of the creation of the material conditions for the development of each and all (see Marx's *The Critique of the Gotha Program*, Engels' *Anti-Dühring*, Lenin's *State and Revolution*, and Stalin's *Report to the Seventeenth Party Congress*). It sets as its task the elimination of class society, which can be realized through the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The entire period of the proletarian dictatorship, which raises the

formerly oppressed and culturally suppressed masses to the level of real masters of life, breaks down the old relationships, raises the masses materially and spiritually, and determines the paths of future development in an entirely new way. Powerful tendencies develop in the transition period, with its rigid governmental power, its dictatorship of workers, and a certain intra-class "hierarchy" which appears in the structure of the state apparatus and in the one-man management: tendencies which lead—in the class struggle and in the process of the cultural maturing of the masses—to a peculiar type of relationships, where the withering away of the state involves also the *elimination of all social and political hierarchy in general*.

This is a path of development directly opposite to the one which the fascists have in mind when they repeat phrases after Nietzsche, about the necessity of "the fervor of distance"—of the social "pyramid," where the common mortal is only a dumb stone, obliged to stick always in the same place. Inequality in talent and in the color of the hair, in passion and in temperament, and in the social rôle and importance of definite people in the most varied branches of culture, are categories of a very special order, which do not hinder the enormous general rise at all.

We are living in the U.S.S.R. during a stormy growth in mass energy and creative labor on the basis of proletarian democracy, a huge growth in mass culture, an entirely new feeling among the masses, and an unusual eagerness for further development. Before all this stands the modern sclerotic system of fascized capital, like a medieval stone edifice covered with moss.

3. *Specialization, mental and physical labor, planning, and the problem of the complete human being.* No one in the least doubts the fact that culture—and moreover mass culture, a culture which penetrates to the very thick of the people—has grown enormously. But together with this rise in technical knowledge, together with the growth in specialization and the breaking down of the old "know-it-all" attitude, are we not heading towards a further disfigurement of the workers—towards making them more than ever one-sided—a one-sidedness which Kozma Prutkov has stamped with the aphorism: "A specialist is like a gum-boil, in his lopsided one-sidedness." Will not development along this line lead to further estrangement and isolation of the professional groups of people, and to "money-mak-

ing" squalor, which may in time lead to squalor in all our culture?

We must answer this sort of question *categorically in the negative*. Even now—*i.e.*, in the period of undeveloped communism, a period characterized by a historically unavoidable one-sidedness, which is being overcome in the very course of its development—even now, *the growth of specialization is not* a growth of specialization in its *capitalist form*. As a matter of fact, every *active factory worker* takes part in internal factory planning and in drawing up and carrying out the *Tekhpromfinplan* (technical industrial financial plan), thus passing beyond the limits of his own specialty. More than that, he is obliged to "harmonize" the questions of "his" factory with questions which concern the whole of his branch of industry, questions of intra-branch importance, and questions of general economic and general political significance.

Every *active collective farmer*, and the leader of every specialized brigade, takes part in working out the plan for the entire collective farm, in calculating the basic parts of the entire process as a whole, in analysing it from both the technical and the economic point of view.

Every mechanic or engineer, no matter in what specialty he may have been trained, works within an infinitely large radius of technical interests and aims.

Every scientific research worker is obliged, in these times, to regard his work as a link in the collective chain of divided social labor, where each subject is bound up with the next, and all together, in the final account, work for the technical and economic construction of the growing socialist society.

Thus, we can see a tendency towards the elimination of the differences between *mental and physical labor*. This tendency comes out especially clearly at the most advanced positions in the struggle for socialism. During socialist technical examination (for instance, among the workers on the electrically-run blooming mill in the Dzerzhinsky Works at Kamensk), we can often see technical *skill* united with a very high theoretical level. Or, as another example, in Kabarda, *all* the administrative workers take part in the material process of labor. And in general, the very fact of the creation of a huge group of new proletarian intelligentsia speaks for itself.

It is characteristic that in this respect this proletarian intelligent-



sia expands to an ever broader extent, and that the *entire* working class and *all* the toilers are following this path. The real "emancipation" of the toiling *women*, *i.e.*, the elimination of the differences between male and female labor, develops the more quickly as a material base is created for it. The women are drawn into the processes of social labor, from the factories to the highest managing bodies, on the one hand; and communal feeding, etc., grow on the other hand. These processes create a basic distinction between our culture and the fascized culture of the West, where women are put into the position of domestic slaves and bedroom conveniences, and the medieval home-building "family virtues" are supplemented by the rapidly growing prostitution of both sexes.

Thus, more and more the prerequisites are growing for the creation of the *complete human being—the worker of socialist society*. Our *planning* is an objective guarantee ensuring us against division into parts and ugly one-sidedness. As social life becomes more complex, our plan proposes more and more to synthesize the data of the most diverse practice and the most diverse branches of science.

But our plan is not a dead and passive thing; it is a system of operative aims on a scientifically worked-out basis. For this reason, the *socialist planned type of economy* will inevitably unite knowledge and operative action—intellect and will.

Capitalist commodity production *divided* people *into parts*, tore them into pitiful, misshapen, one-sided, narrowly-specialized fragments. *Socialism*, on the other hand, is creating the *complete*, new person—is creating him in *labor* and in the *class struggle* against all the conservative traditions of the slavish past.

For the first time in history, on the richest and most many-sided material foundation, there is arising the type of this complete person—a worker in whom intellect and will, mental and physical labor, theory and practice, knowledge and action, concrete specialization and universal orientation, strive for a higher unity. This, of course, makes its impression on all aspects of social life, from everyday life to the higher manifestations of "spiritual culture."

4. "*Society*," "*individuality*," and the *problem of creative liberty; individualism and collectivism*. One may, however, ask whether the growth of this general and universal planning is not in itself a tend-

ency which smothers initiative, originality and creative freedom and joy, by "planning" life, as Ugryum-Burchayev did in Shchedrin's novel.\* We have already met this problem above. But we must examine it now from certain new points of view.

First of all, a certain "clarification" of principle is needed at this point. Let us suppose that the individuals X., Y., and Z., of the old professional intelligentsia, do not "believe" in socialism; that they prefer capitalism in principle. And suppose that in the disappearance of the so-called "classical education" these people see the "doom of culture" in general. Then all measures in the line of building socialism will seem to them utterly absurd; and the *tasks* which fall to their share will seem to them to be *coercion* and a suppression of the creative spirit *in general*—whereas in actual fact this is a collision of two classes, two understandings of the world, two orientations, which *cannot be reconciled*.

Of course, we cannot proclaim "freedom" for counter-revolutionary "measures" of culture. But the subjective reflection of this restraint of counter-revolutionary and restoration tendencies in the minds of personal representatives of the dying remnants of past formations does not and cannot negate the great world-wide historical fact that *millions and millions of people* have for the first time received real freedom for creative work and growth; that this freedom has an ever growing and ever more stable material foundation; and that a great process of differentiation of individualities is now taking place.

Compare the "grey cattle" of the tsarist army, for instance, with the individuality of the Red Army fighters; or the sordid, drab, socially disintegrated peasant masses with the present process of distinguishing shock-workers and activists—not to speak of the *proletarian* masses and the distinguishing of leaders, heroes of labor, and shock-workers, whose names are seen and heard by the whole country. Here the fulfilment of the general state plan is not a check on "creative freedom," for there is no basic conflict. The fulfilment of the "plan" is the personal, internal "aim" of these people; their *creative freedom can develop only on this basis*.

Therefore, the whole system of labor relationships generally, both in the field of material production and in the field of "spiritual"

\* The reference is to a character in *A History of a Certain Town* by the famous Russian social satirist, Saltikov-Shchedrin.—*Ed.*

production, develops on a *common* basis—the building of a classless society, the general line of the Party—which expresses in the most rational manner the interests and the hopes of the vast masses of the people. *This is one of the main reasons for the collectivism* of the entire style of the culture which is now forming and growing.

This does *not* mean the destruction of *individuality*. But it *does* mean the destruction of *individualism*. We have the blossoming of individuality, and, on a mass scale, the death of individualism, which disunites people, carries them in different directions, and hinders their mutual understanding. *Individuality and individualism* are two very different things.

Of course, bureaucracy and the rubber stamp are trying to lay their deadening hands on our cultural development. But the power of the basic tendencies of this development systematically chops off the fingers of this freezing hand, and comes out unconditionally victorious in the tense mass battles.

Thus, the new socialist culture combines unity and variety, collectivism and the development of personality, a mass cultural rise and a multiple process of selection of leaders. But this selection does not take place as a polarization of a dull mass, pressed as an exploited caste within an iron ring, on the one hand, and the parasitic, decadent efflorescence of a capitalist oligarchy on the other. It takes place as a continuous development in a differentiated and complex collective body—a development uneven in its different parts, but which is sure, reliable, powerful and permanent.

5. *The ethical orientation of communism.* In establishing a material basis for the development of human requirements in all directions, socialism and communism, as the highest stage of society, are an era of unprecedented and many-sided development of all human capabilities, talents, and passions, forming along the line of the definite stylistic peculiarities of socialist culture. And here also it is necessary to keep in mind the fluidity of the historical process, and the peculiarities of this *particular* period of time in the general current of events.

Socialism is an economy orientated towards the satisfaction of *mass demands*. And yet, we have gone through a phase of development when all forces had to be concentrated on producing *means of production*; only after completing this task was it possible to

begin the rapid development of the production of articles of *consumption*.

Communism is a philosophy which incarnates all the *fullness, variety, richness, and many-sidedness* of material and spiritual life. It is very far from the asceticism of the misers of the era of primitive accumulation, from the ideology of eunuchs and castrates, weak-minded fools and spiritual paupers. But it would have been absurd to preach epicureanism in the period of War Communism; \* whereas a certain "Spartan" attitude was a quite expedient standard for that *limited* period of time, for it united the fighters.

Communism is struggling for the *fullest life* for all. But the struggle itself has certain costs, and the heroism of this struggle, which unites and uplifts the masses, demands standards which develop a *contempt for death* and the greatest liberality in spending lives, if necessary, for the attainment of its basic aims. Communism is not characterized by Philistine niggardliness and cowardice. Great aims assume the existence of operative heroism, which becomes manifest as a "natural" social characteristic of a great class and a great Party.

Communism is the embodiment of universal *brotherhood*. But its establishment pre-supposes victory in a bitter class struggle—a victory which, in turn, has its own prerequisites—the *international solidarity of the proletariat* and the most profound revolutionary internationalism on the one hand, and universal *class hatred* for capitalism on the other.

Therefore, communism regards the standards of universal christian love, even for one's enemy, the standards of non-resistance or of running away from life, as its most bitter enemies.

Such is the dialectics of the ethical standards of communism, based on a scientific analysis of the historical process.

6. *Rational perception and perceptual optimism*. Communism is at present the only force which consistently defends the basic progressive tendencies of history, from technical development to the finest methods of rational perception.

The *fin-de-siècle* bourgeoisie, disappointed in the power of reasoning, turned sharply about to extra-intellectual intuition, to the mystical "voice of the blood" and various forms of sorcery. But in the

\* In 1918-1921. —Ed.

U.S.S.R. rational perception is perfecting itself, and confirming its power more and more with each day, both in depth and in breadth.

The growth of culture in general and of its technical side in particular, the planned mass application of science to the productive process, and rationalization, together with the victorious advance of planning—the basic life processes of society—all these greatly strengthen the position of intelligent perception, exact science and dialectic materialist philosophy, which is more and more becoming the only method of scientific perception in general.

We are not, of course, speaking of abstractly schematic *rationalism* of the type of the period of the Encyclopedists, with its anti-historicism and its theory of the immobility of the “rational truths” which had been given once and for all. We are speaking of the historical process of perception, a process, endless in time, before which there lie no barriers irremovable in principle.

Our culture is characterized, to a great degree, by a *creative perceptual optimism*, a profound confidence in the reality of the process of perception, which is tested by the mighty practice of our huge construction, and the great reorganization of the country. We know no “cannots” and no “will not find outs,” and we give no credit to Dubois-Raymond’s famous “Ignorabimus.” The entire intellectual and emotional tone of our culture is an utterly different one: the guiding arrows of the entire historical process point in a different direction.

## VII

### SOCIALIST CULTURE VERSUS CAPITALIST CULTURE

*Europe, America, U.S.S.R.* Now we can answer the general question about the entire style of our growing culture *in comparison* with what exists in Europe and in America. Europe and European culture were distinguished from the specific American culture by their greater “spirituality,” which has given certain theoreticians grounds for distinguishing between the “internal” *culture* of Europe and the “external” *civilization* of the United States.

There certainly exists a difference in cultural standards: America, despite its mighty technique, does not have that cultural refinement among its ruling classes and their ideologists which was observed

in Europe, and which made up one of the most characteristic traits of European cultural development.

However, on a closer examination of the subject, we find that in Europe there was evident (and is still evident) a "spirituality" whose roots grow from the depths of her *feudal* economic and cultural heritage (the nobility, the *Junkers*, metaphysics, theology, scholasticism, the noblemen's valor, ritual, the category of the "holy," etc.). On the other hand, bourgeois European culture was obliged to lay *new paths*, and consequently, unavoidably, to "deepen" all its problems.

The *United States* hardly knew feudalism. Energetic money-makers and adventurers, who spread quickly over the country, skimmed off a great deal of the cream of European civilization, and immediately seized hold of very prosaic lovers. The classic features of capitalism, including its "cultural" features—the rule of money, anonymity, impersonality, "soullessness," and commercial cynicism, along with a feverish greed for profits and an equally feverish business ability, efficiency, shrewdness and cunning—developed to the greatest extent in America, where they attained their clearest expression. Soulless "technique," watered only with the sap of greed, developed still further this European tendency, and became one of the corner-stones of the new civilization—a civilization which advanced to a certain extent the street magician and the charlatan type of preacher in the place of philosophy, and the "yellow press" with its huge circulation, boxing, and lynching in place of a more complex system for fooling the masses.

But American capital really has raised the material framework of society, the technique of the monopoly organization of capital, experiment and invention, to dizzy heights; and it would be foolish swaggering not to state this fact.

The latest developments, as we have seen, have brought forward new tendencies: the oligarchy of the "leaders" of the bourgeoisie, state capitalism, the barrack ideology, mysticism, and the revival of medieval traditions. In this respect, Europe is moving *backwards* with greater acceleration, as compared with America; and the "feudal" spots in her culture are beginning to come out more and more into the open.

In relation to these types of culture, our socialist culture will be a

*special* force. We are the inheritors of everything really progressive. We are at the same time the grave-diggers of everything that is dying and reactionary.

We inherit, continue, and develop—changing critically—the huge *technique advanced by America* and her “scientific organization of labor.” We strike off *Europe’s* swollen feudal ideological layers, religion, theology, scholasticism, ritual, philosophical clericalism, etc. But we implant dialectic materialism ever deeper and deeper, and *continue* the glorious traditions of science, the development of theoretical thought, and the setting forth of big problems, which are now trampled under the soldierly boots of the new Pretorians in Europe.

We have destroyed exploitation as the basis of culture, and have built for the latter a new basis, where the liberated toiling millions disclose their huge locked-up forces and bring about an exceptional acceleration of the entire historical process.

For the soullessness of capitalist technology we have substituted the liberating rôle of the socialist machine; for the dwarfing and enslavement of the personality of the toilers—the blossoming of this personality; for the parasitic character of the culture of capitalism’s last supporters—creation, the justification of labor; for retrogression and decay—progress along all fronts; for the pettiness and individualism of life and the state capitalism of the fascist barracks—the harmony of a plan, and the collectivism of all culture; for the bestial fury of fascism—international effort and brotherhood of the proletariat; for the tossing about between urbanism and ruralism—the completeness of the new socialist culture; for the pitiful caterwauling of the mystic—rational perception; for senile pessimism—the splendid young optimism of the proletarians.

Our culture is still very young, and it carries many birth-marks inherited from the past. But it is growing impetuously and unrestrainedly. It embraces hundreds of millions of people. It is becoming a world-wide historical liberating force, and it cannot fail to win.

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## INTERNATIONAL PAMPHLETS

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PHOTOS ON FRONT COVER: *Top*, a book bazaar in a village of the Donetsky Coal Basin of the Soviet Union on Press Day, May 5, when similar bazaars were held throughout the country as a part of a general cultural campaign organized by the Government (*Soyusfoto*). *Bottom*, Nazis consigning 20,000 'un-Germanic' books to the flames on Berlin's Opera Plaza as a part of a nation-wide drive accompanied by raids on libraries, bookstores and private homes. (*International News Photo*).