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**Basic biographical data**

<b>Name:</b>	Georg Moltved
<b>Other names (by-names, pseud. etc.):</b>	- - -
<b>Date and place of birth:</b>	April 23, 1881, ? (Denmark)
<b>Date and place of death:</b>	March 6, 1971, Copenhagen (Denmark)
<b>Nationality:</b>	Danish
<b>Occupations, careers:</b>	Physician (Dr. med.), writer, literary critic
<b>Time of activity in Trotskyist movement:</b>	1956 - 1971

**Biographical sketch**

*Georg Moltved was widely known in Denmark as an outstanding Marxist literary critic who frequently appeared on Danish radio and TV in discussion panels and features, as a lecturer on a variety of political, literary and cultural topics and as a contributor to various intellectual periodicals. When he died at an age of nearly 90, he was furthermore the best known representative of Danish Trotskyism.*

Born on April 23, 1881, Moltved became a physician (Dr. med.) and practised for several decades in Skævinge, a little town situated in a rural area some 40 km north-west of the Danish capital Copenhagen (København). Between the two World Wars Moltved was a member of *Det Radikale Venstre (Radical Party)*<sup>1</sup>, a petty-bourgeois democratic and pacifist party, in which for some years he belonged to the national leadership. From 1925 for some 18 years, Moltved held a seat on the local parish council.

Still a member of the *Radikale Parti*, Moltved successively approached to Marxist positions, contributed financially and otherwise to various left-wing causes and began to engage in relief work for political refugees, chiefly communists and left socialists who came to Denmark in the 1930s as emigrants from fascist Germany. In that time, Moltved was also an active member and from 1937-1939 the president of *Frisindet Kulturkamp*, a Danish organization aiming at the dissemination of antifascist cultural thought. He frequently contributed to the organization's journal *Kulturkampen* (Cultural Struggle).

Like many people in Denmark, Moltved took part in the antifascist resistance struggle after the German *Wehrmacht* had occupied neutral Denmark in 1940. In 1943, he joined the ranks of the then il-

<sup>1</sup>) *Det Radikale Venstre* (literally: *The Radical Left*; the literal translation, however, is somewhat misleading) is officially translated by the party itself as *Danish Social Liberal Party*) is a party in the centre of the Danish left-right political scale. It was founded in 1905 as a split from the Venstre (literally: Left). See *Wikipedia* article about [Det Radikale Venstre](#)

legal *Danmarks Kommunistiske Parti (DKP, Denmark's Communist Party)*, and after having given up his medical practice, he became one of its central figures in the northern part of Sjælland and eventually a member of *DKP's* central committee.

After the end of the Second World War and the liberation of the country from Nazi occupation, Moltved strongly opposed the *DKP's* participation in a coalition government which was formed immediately after the end of the occupation; *DKP's* chairman Aksel Larsen (1897-1972) became Minister without Portfolio and another *DKP* leader, Alfred Jensen (1903-1988), was appointed Minister of Transport. By criticising the politics of reformism, class collaboration and conciliation, Moltved soon got in conflict with the majority of the party establishment, a conflict which eventually ended in 1950 by Moltved's expulsion from the *DKP* under the verdict of 'Titoism', in those days a bad heresy.

In 1953, Moltved published a book titled *Kommunisme i Danmark* in which he gave a summary of his vitriolic criticism of the post-war party line. The party's action against Moltved caused some trouble and protest, thus some further left-wingers were excluded, too, or left the party 'arbitrarily'. Those expelled communists, who did not discontinue their political activities, organized in an informal circle which became known as the *Moltved group* and which soon established links with a tiny group which called itself *Internationale Socialister (International Socialists)*, then being the Danish section of the *Fourth International (International Secretariat)*. The Trotskyists were allowed to participate in the sessions of the *Moltved group*. While this group as such did not formally join the Danish section, Moltved did so as an individual in about 1956<sup>2</sup>. However, after some disagreements with its leaders, Moltved left the section in 1963 but remained an individual member of the *Fourth International (International Secretariat, later United Secretariat)* until his death and a faithful Trotskyist.

In 1970, the Danish Trotskyists who – like their comrades in many other countries – had primarily practised 'entryism' during the 1950s and 1960s, could gain control over the *Socialistisk Ungdoms Forum (SUF, Socialist Youth Forum)*, which had been founded in 1961 and which was close first to the *Socialistisk Folkeparti (SF, People's Socialist Party)* and from 1968 to the *Vestre Socialisterne (VS, Left Socialists)*, which had split from *SF* in 1967. Two years later, *SUF* was renamed *Socialistisk Ungdoms Forbund (SUF, Socialist Youth League)*. Georg Moltved – now aged 89 – joined the ranks of Trotskyist *SUF* and participated in its 12<sup>th</sup> congress held in January 1971 at which the organization decided to apply to the *Fourth International (United Secretariat)* for admission as a sympathizing group after having broken all its connections with *Vestre Socialisterne*. *SUF* soon merged with the majority of the small Danish section, *Revolutionære Socialister (Revolutionary Socialists)*, to form an organization called *Revolutionære Socialisters Forbund (RSF, Revolutionary Socialist League)* which was recognized as the new *Danish Section of the Fourth International*.

Georg Moltved perhaps was not only the best educated Marxist and the greatest intellectual capacity within the ranks of the Danish Trotskyist movement but furthermore became known – far beyond narrow left-wing circles – as the author of a Lenin biography (published in 1966) and of a Trotsky biography (published shortly after his death in 1971), a project which was strongly endorsed by Isaac Deutscher and which – like Deutscher's *Trotsky* trilogy and like many other of Moltved's literary and educational activities – contributed a lot to the dissemination and popularizing of Trotsky's thought. Some years earlier, in 1960, one of Trotsky's main works, his *The revolution betrayed*, could appear in Danish language for the first time thanks to Moltved's translation of the work from the French edition, *La révolution trahie*.

Georg Moltved, 'a fighter to the end' (as he was called in an obituary), died in Copenhagen on March 7, 1971, just a few weeks before his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday and shortly before the publication of his magnum opus *Leo Trotskij*.

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2) Ernest Mandel once mentioned that Dr. Moltved from Denmark and Willy Boepple from Germany were the only ex-members of a *CP* central committee who after WW II joined the ranks of the *Fourth International*, see Mandel, Ernest: Vorwort, in: *Boepple, Willy: Gegen den Strom / Wolfgang Alles (Hg.)*, Köln, 1997, p. 11.

*Selective bibliography*<sup>3</sup>

- **Selective bibliography: Books/pamphlets (co-)authored by Moltved**

Kommunisme i Danmark : en marxistisk-politisk analyse af Danmarks Kommunistiske Parti siden besættelsen. - København, 1953. - 48 p.

Lenin : en biografi / Georg Moltved. - København : Borgen, 1966. - 336 pp. - (Borgens billigbøger ; 53)

Leo Trotskij. - 1-2. - København : Rhodos, 1971. - 471 pp.

- **Selective bibliography: Books/pamphlets translated by Moltved**

Trotsky, Leon: Revolutionen forrådt : hvad er Sovjetunionen og hvor styrer den hen? / Lev Trotskij. Overs. fra den franske udg. af Georg Moltved. - København : Borgen, 1960. - 268 pp.

- **Selective bibliography: Books, collections, journals, bulletins to which Moltved contributed**

Fourth International / International Executive Committee of the Fourth International (Paris) [ISSN 0429-2790] <TSB 0535>

Kulturkampen (København)

Kulturkampen : en antologi / ved Ole Grünbaum eog Henrik Stangerup. Introd. ved Elias Bredsdorff. - København : Fremad, 1968. - 223 pp. - (Fremads fokusbøger)

Quatrième Internationale (Paris etc., 1936- ) [ISSN 0771-0569 - ISSN 0765-1740] <TSB 1282>

- **Selective bibliography: Books and articles about Moltved**

[Anon.]: Georg Moltved - fighter to the end, in: *Intercontinental Press* <TSB 0657> 9.1971 (17), pp. 402-403. [Obituary, based on Preben Kinch's obituary, see below]

[Anon.]: Georg Moltved (1881-1971), in: *Quatrième Internationale* <TSB 1282> 29.1971 (49), p. 60. [Obituary]  
Kinch, Preben: Georg Moltved (1881-1971), in: *Klassekampen* <TSB 0825> 2.1971 (6), p. 5. [Obituary]

*Note on archives*

Papers of George Moltved including his correspondence with E. Mandel, I. Deutscher, P. Frank, L. Sinclair et al., documents about his exclusion from the DKP and about the activities of the '*Moltved group*' are preserved as Georg Moltved Arkiv, 1950-1975 at the *Arbejdermuseet & Arbejderbevægelsens Bibliotek og Arkiv*, Copenhagen, Denmark. The papers are registered, an online finding aid is not (yet) available. A great portion of Moltved's personal papers, however, was deposited by his family at Riksarkivet, Copenhagen, Denmark.

*Notes:*

1.) The photograph on page 1 taken from *Intercontinental Press* (New York, NY), 9.1971 (17), p. 402.

2.) Thanks to Bertel Nygaard, some errors which have slipped into the earlier version of our bio-bibliographical sketch now have been corrected.

Wolfgang and Petra Lubitz, 2006  
last rev. June 2016

3) TSB item numbers (e.g. <TSB 0716>) refer to Lubitz' *Trotskyist Serials Bibliography*, München [etc.] : Saur, 1993, which is out of print but available as PDF file within the framework of Lubitz' *TrotskyanaNet* website. In TSB you can find detailed descriptions of the respective Trotskyist journals, newsletters, bulletins and the like.