

Criticism of Bourgeois Ideology in Soviet Marxist Epistemology

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The critical study of bourgeois ideology remained central to Soviet Marxist epistemology. Soviet modernity as an alternative project to Western capitalism aimed to reveal the pathologies of capitalist system. For this purpose, it significantly fostered and promoted critical scientific investigations on ideological nature and apparatus of bourgeois world. In this context, Soviet Marxist epistemology provided an excellent framework for a greater understanding of social, cultural, political and historical-philosophical essence of the capitalist system. The knowledge produced by Soviet Marxism not only merely described the elements of bourgeois political and sociocultural life in the twentieth century, but it also allows us to make accurate considerations about today's liberal capitalist world and western imperialism. Thus, Soviet Marxist theory of knowledge is not just a part of Soviet intellectual history, but it's also operational knowledge to explore contemporary social reality. This paper strives to explain the principal concepts and ideas in Soviet Marxist epistemology for the criticism of bourgeois ideology.

Soviet Union; Marxism; Bourgeois Ideology; Dialectical and Historical Materialism; Soviet Scholars.

1. Introduction

Soviet Marxist epistemology was based on classical Marxist political and social theory in the sense that it rejected all deviations from Marxism, which had so pervaded Western intellectual life in the twentieth century. Given this, methodological and theoretical accuracy was especially observed and followed in Soviet academia. This means that dialectical and historical materialism alongside scientific communism shaped the genuine parcel of Marxist methodological and theoretical approaches. Stalin regarded Marxism as a philosophical system based on dialectical materialism. In his *Dialectical and Historical Materialism*, Stalin explains: «It is called dialectical materialism because its approach to the phenomena of nature, its method of studying and apprehending them, is dialectical, while its interpretation of the phenomena of nature, its conception of

these phenomena, its theory, is materialistic»¹. As for historical materialism, he defines it as follows: «Historical materialism is the extension of the principles of dialectical materialism to the study of social life, an application of the principles of dialectical materialism to the phenomena of the life of society, to the study of society and its history»². Regarding scientific communism, the Soviet Handbook on scientific communism, describes it as follows: «It studies the laws of the growth of the world revolutionary process and the laws governing the emergence and development of the communist system, which represents the highest stage of humankind's progress. These laws define the basic content of the social changes in our epoch, which is the epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism and communism»³. Thus, the scientific study of various social and political phenomena, social processes, or the socio-political world was mainly and principally carried out using these theoretical and methodological approaches.

Following the aforementioned Soviet tradition of Marxist thought, Vladimer Mshvenieradze (1926-1990), renowned Soviet Marxist philosopher, sociologist and political theorist argued that: «A critical study of the complex way in which various forms of contemporary bourgeois ideology, including political consciousness, manifest themselves and function must be based on materialist dialectics»⁴. Therefore, the criticism of bourgeois ideology was presented solely within the prism of those approaches. In this way, Soviet Marxist understanding of the ideology was relatively different from Western tradition. Vladislav Kelle (1920-2010), Soviet Marxist philosopher underlined that: «Marx and Engels regarded ideology as illusory consciousness, but their views on ideology differ fundamentally from the interpretation of ideology that is current in contemporary bourgeois literature»⁵. In this context, it should be noted that the bourgeois academia was preoccupied with the formal and technical interpretation of ideology, emphasizing the micro-understanding of the

¹ STALIN 1972, p. 5.

² *Ibidem*.

³ FEDOSEYEV 1986, p. 9.

⁴ MSHVENIERADZE 1985, p. 23.

⁵ KELLE 1977, p. 260.

meaning of ideology. In other words, bourgeois scholars in the West dis-couraged ideology predominantly in the context of political ideologies.

However, when speaking about ideology in general, Soviet Marxist thought does not reject the significance of ideology, but it distinguishes between the ideology and bourgeois ideology. Georgian Marxist philosopher and sociologist, Guram Asatiani (1927-2023) explained what Marx meant by the critique of ideology: «K. Marx and F. Engels in several works, particularly in the *German Ideology*, do indeed speak of ideology as “false consciousness”, but they mean by it an idealistic philosophical worldview. Marx only notes the inability of idealistic philosophy to notice the class antagonism opposed to freedom. This antagonism is contained in bourgeois society itself, whose official point of view tries to disguise it and reconcile it with the abstract concept of freedom»⁶. Then, Asatiani continues to describe and clarify the importance of ideology in Marxism: «Therefore, K. Marx speaks not about the falsity of ideology in general, but about the falsity and illusory nature of the ideology of the exploiting classes, in particular the bourgeoisie. Marx does not “liberate” the proletariat from ideology, but on the contrary, attributes to it the ability to truly understand the existing order, which cannot be expressed in anything else, if not by the concept of the ideology of the proletariat»⁷. So, respectively, when we discuss and think about the critique of ideology in Soviet Marxism, what is meant here is unequivocally the criticism of bourgeois ideology and its various forms, including social, political, economic or cultural dimensions.

It should be noted that in the criticism of bourgeois ideology, Marxist thought in Soviet Georgia attracts particular attention⁸. Although Soviet Georgia was a small republic in the Soviet Union, its role in the political, cultural, and scientific life of the Soviet Union was enormous. Scientific institutions were developed in Soviet Georgia, where one of the main directions was the historical, sociological, philosophical, and political critique of the bourgeois West. Most of these institutions were grouped under the system of the Academy of Sciences of Soviet Georgia. Of course,

⁶ ASATIANI 1987, p. 327.

⁷ Ivi, p. 328.

⁸ On Marxism and academic life in Soviet Georgia see BEREKASHVILI 2026.

universities and their faculties and departments also played a significant role. Books, monographs, and articles were written in Soviet Georgia, which, among other topics, included criticism of bourgeois ideology. Scientific sessions, conferences and discussions were organized, where the main directions of bourgeois political thought were criticized. Of course, Marxist thought in Soviet Georgia was in line with the main trajectories of Marxist epistemology in Soviet Union.

2. Bourgeois Ideology and Capitalist Society

Soviet Marxists emphasized that ideology is not merely a formal political category but something which accompanies everyday life of the individual. In this sense, Vladimir Mshvenieradze observed that: «the whole daily way of life of the individual in capitalist society is such that it is the bourgeois ideology which is spontaneously imposed upon him»⁹. Then, Mshvenieradze continues to explain how does this mechanism work, and how bourgeois ideology influences an individual, shaping their behavior and thinking style:

«The basis of social life under capitalism is private property and it is this which inevitably creates the dominant system of material, spiritual and social values which determine man's interests and which motivate his behavior. The feverish chase after profits, an individualistic psychology and morality, a terrible fear of the merciless competitive struggle are the attributes of the capitalist way of life which have an important effect on the individual, including the worker. He is drawn into the general merry-go-round of bourgeois "mass culture" which imposes a consumer psychosis and an egotistical point of view upon him, making him apolitical and fatalistic, thus corrupting his consciousness»¹⁰.

In Soviet Marxist epistemology, critical understanding of the power of mass culture, individualism and consumer society establishes one of the general lines of the intellectual and scientific critique of bourgeois

⁹ MSHVENIERADZE 1985, p. 16.

¹⁰ Ivi, p. 17.

ideology and capitalist society. In other words, mass culture, individualism, egoism and bourgeois consumerism were viewed as fundamental elements of bourgeois ideology and of capitalist society aiming to indoctrinate and disintegrate the popular masses. As Otar Dzhioev (1928-1999), Soviet Georgian philosopher and social theorist emphasized it, bourgeois propaganda attempts: «to influence the consciousness of the masses, to impose on them a private property psychology, to instill in them bourgeois individualism. A person who falls into the captivity of individualism and is imbued with the spirit of private property, even if he belongs to the workers by his social status, is subordinate to the system based on private property... Such a person is an ideal object for capitalist exploitation. Therefore, the instillation of individualism in the consciousness of the masses is the main direction of bourgeois ideology»¹¹. Dzhioev also concentrates on the power of marketing, advertisement and bourgeois media which reinforces the individualism and contributes to the formation of human consciousness, he continues to argue that: «The role of the mass media in introducing consumer psychology is not limited to the flood of advertising for material things. Along with advertising for things, they instill a cult of need, because they inspire the reader or viewer as if the possession of material things is the main thing to achieve happiness, to charm a woman or a man, to achieve harmony in the family, to gain prestige in society. Personal dignity, love, friendship, family traditions – everything is reduced to material things»¹².

Of course, Dzhioev links the cause of the moral degradation of capitalist society to the issue of private property: «Only in capitalist society has private property become the sole basis of social life, and its growth is the main driving force of human life. For here society cannot exist unless it continuously takes care of the increase in wealth, the growth of capital»¹³. Unsurprisingly, Dzhioev also discusses the dialectical relationship between private property and inequality, arguing that: «When private property is the basis of social life, social inequality is also a recognized

¹¹ DZHIOEV 1969, p. 63.

¹² Ivi, p. 71.

¹³ DZHIOEV 1985, p. 18.

principle of social life»¹⁴. Considering this, critical reflections on moral and ethical problems of capitalist society and consumerism played important role in the criticism of bourgeois ideology.

Similar critical reflections and observations about the pathologies of bourgeois ideology and capitalist society are also presented in the works of classic thinkers of Soviet Marxism. For example, Kita Megrelidze (1900-1944), Georgian philosopher and sociologist, one of the eminent representatives of the early Marxist generation in the Soviet Union, emphasizes the problem of alienation in capitalist society:

«The meaning of private property is that the surplus labor of the direct producers is secretly alienated. The owner strives to seize the accumulation and organize the entire social accumulation as his own. From now on, the private owner becomes the intermediary of all life; all the wealth created by the direct producers flows to him, while the direct producers themselves live in poverty. The owner organizes production with the aim of appropriating the surplus product, organizes social accumulation as if it were his own private accumulation - in a word, he is driven only by private interests and acts for personal survival, therefore he directs social production as if it were his own private production»¹⁵.

The critical understanding of the human and social consequences of bourgeois ideology and capitalist system in Soviet Marxist thought was not limited to normative and theoretical constructions but also included social observations of capitalist reality. Soviet intellectuals who traveled to bourgeois Western Europe also critically observed the lifestyle of capitalist society and the difficulties or challenges faced by Western cultural circles and intellectuals¹⁶. Famous Soviet Georgian scholar and literary critic Shalva Radiani (1904-1977) who traveled to post-war bourgeois Eu-

¹⁴ Ivi, p. 87.

¹⁵ MEGRELIDZE 1990, p. 452.

¹⁶ Soviet scholars and intellectuals, while traveling in the bourgeois West, often kept diaries and notes. In these writings, they conveyed not only their travel impressions, but also their observations of the cities or provincial towns of bourgeois countries, their life there, and the environment, thereby also describing the social, cultural and political life in bourgeois countries.

rope, met the Swedish writer Henry Peter Matthiis during a visit to Stockholm, and wrote in his diary: «Matthiis noted that Swedish writers live in difficult conditions, their fate is poverty. Even bourgeois circles cannot deny this circumstance»¹⁷. Radiani continues to tell the story of Swedish writers under bourgeois system:

«The newspaper “Dagens Nyheter” published an article entitled “Rich Literature and Poor Writers”. It notes that many writers, as well as creative workers in general, “live and work in difficult conditions... but no one thinks about it or remembers it among the glossy advertisements and bestseller numbers”. The condition of Swedish writers is truly deplorable, most of them cannot live on their income. The same newspaper continues: “Poverty is the fate of the writer, if we consider that he devotes most of his labor to writing. Many talents have perished because writers cannot live on their labor, and no one knows why many talented people have not appeared who have applied their talents to other works rather than to literature”. These words truly illustrate the reality of a bourgeois country and the fate of true writers in it. Matthiis also told us that there is a great desire for peace among the Swedish people. Our people know well the price of peace»¹⁸.

These observations by Shalva Radiani are interesting insofar as they relate to Sweden, which was considered the brightest example of a welfare state during the Cold War, but this story tells us precisely that even in such a system, capitalism has a dramatic impact on intellectual and cultural life.

Let's draw a parallel with how a scholar lived in Soviet Georgia and what surprise this caused in capitalist society. In this context, the impressions that the famous Georgian sociologist and political economist Paata Gugushvili (1905-1987) had during his trip to the West is worthy to discuss. In 1964, Paata Gugushvili traveled to England, in the city of Southampton he was invited to the family of a local teacher, Gugushvili recalls: «About fifteen people gathered here. Neighbors, servants, mainly young men and women. Among them was a respected worker of a large factory,

¹⁷ RADIANI 1962, p. 304.

¹⁸ Ivi, pp. 304-305.

an old communist, very sympathetic, curious and educated»¹⁹. He continues: «Our host lived in a five-room cottage on the outskirts of the city, bought on credit. The others also told us (without us asking) what kind of houses and apartments they had. Some of them were surprised when I answered the question that in addition to the five-room apartment in the city, I also have a country house with its own garden, I have a car, and so on»²⁰. Also, Gugushvili objectively described the reality of bourgeois industrial countries, discussing both industrial successes as well as socio-economic troubles and bourgeois ideological hegemony characteristic of capitalism. In the autumn of the same year, while traveling in France, Gugushvili reflected on social nature of bourgeois nationalization and wrote: «The monopolistic bourgeoisie makes excellent use of nationalized enterprises as a means by which it appropriates the wealth created by the people, and at the same time opposes the idea of nationalization, insofar as it understands its anti-capitalist nature. This is precisely where the dual nature of bourgeois nationalism is revealed»²¹. In general, Gugushvili often traveled to the bourgeois West, participating in various international congresses, symposiums, and conferences. During his travels, he described capitalist reality and critically reviewed the social reality he observed, although his criticism was always characterized by impeccable academic ethics and accuracy.

So, the above-mentioned academic arguments and intellectual reflections on the task of bourgeois ideology were largely dominant in the traditions of Soviet Marxism, meaning that bourgeois ideology was not merely understood as a political phenomenon but also as a social phenomenon implemented in everyday life of the individual in capitalist society. However, as politics is always interrelated with society, we may say that the understanding and interpreting the ideology in the political and social dimensions were always interconnected and interlinked in Soviet Marxist thought. Nevertheless, ideology was perceived as a phenomenon of social consciousness which itself lays the grounds for political con-

¹⁹ GUGUSHVILI 1970, pp. 350-351.

²⁰ *Ibidem*.

²¹ GUGUSHVILI 1970, p. 418.

sciousness and action. Considering this, the concept of ideology was discussed within the strict scope of historical materialism, meaning that ideology, particularly bourgeois ideology historically performed as an instrument of the ruling class to dominate over the ruled class.

The Soviet Marxist understanding and criticism of bourgeois ideology or imperialism, as well as of bourgeois political or social order, not only does not lose its significance today, but on the contrary, acquires even greater significance. Contemporary Western capitalist democracies, which have completely subordinated democracy to the supervision of neoliberal ideology, undermine both the idea of democracy and the culture of collective interests. Today's capitalist societies, saturated with liberal individualism and hysterical consumerism, have created a social reality where culture, art, education and science lose their value. The tyranny of market relations and the capitalist mentality have swallowed up human dignity, creative labor and the desire for an honorable life. It was the Soviet Marxist epistemological thinking that discussed and warned us about such a degeneration of society under the conditions of liberal capitalist order. It should also be emphasized that the politics of contemporary Western bourgeois imperialism, which manifests itself in the form of liberal universalism and reactionary conservatism, and which undermines peace and humanism in the world, once again reminds us of the correct conclusions of Soviet Marxists about the predatory and adventurist nature of the bourgeois West.

3. Anti-Communism as a Bourgeois Ideology

Historically, since the strengthening of communist movements, Marxism and socialist ideas, the pursuit of anti-communism has always been an important goal and task of bourgeois reactionism. However, anti-communist hysteria in the West was especially intensified in the era of Cold War. Domenico Losurdo made a great contribution to the critical study of anti-communism and bourgeois imperialism of the Cold War era, explaining the politics of the bourgeois West, the purpose of which was to discredit the idea of communism and the Soviet Union. An important

role in the propaganda of anti-communism was played by the anti-communist bourgeois academy and its prominent representatives, including the famous political theorist Hannah Arendt, whose service to bourgeois imperialism was so convincingly exposed by Losurdo.²² So, it can be said that pursuing a politics of anti-communism was one of the most important and principal tasks of Western imperialism.

As Micheal Parenti defines it, anti-communism is: «the most powerful political force in the world. Endowed with an imposing ideology, and a set of vivid images and sacred dogmas, it commands the psychic and material resources of the most potent industrial-military arsenal in the history of mankind»²³. He identifies the United States as the ideological-political locomotive of anti-communism and explains the following: «If America has an ideology, or a national purpose, it is anti-communism. Hundreds of billions of dollars have been expended, and hundreds of thousands of lives have been sacrificed on its behalf»²⁴. It should be noted that this understanding of anti-communism is consistent with the understanding of anti-communism in Soviet Marxism.

In Soviet Union, anti-communism was identified with politics and ideology of bourgeois imperialism. As Guram Asatiani claimed: «The main ideological and political weapon of imperialism is anti-communism. With the false slogans of anti-communism, imperialist reaction persecutes everything progressive and revolutionary, tries to divide the lines of the working class, and suppress the aspiration of the working class to struggle»²⁵. He also argued that anti-communism represents a radical form of bourgeois ideology: «Anti-communism is a manifestation of the extreme degradation of bourgeois ideology»²⁶. Soviet Georgian political economist Givi Chanukvadze (1924-1984) also claimed the same and emphasized that: «From the very beginning of Marxism and scientific communism, the struggle of bourgeois political economy against Marxist economic doctrines began. Currently, anti-Marxism and anti-communism

²² See LOSURDO 2008.

²³ PARENTI 1969, p. 3.

²⁴ Ivi, p. 4.

²⁵ ASATIANI 1987, p. 292.

²⁶ *Ibidem*.

have become the main ideological and political weapon of imperialist reaction»²⁷. So, since anti-communism was considered as a leading instrument of bourgeois imperialism, its criticism was of course one of the most important directions of Soviet Marxism.

Soviet Marxist academic literature clearly shows that the criticism of the ideology of anti-communism does not simply mean a criticism of the anti-communist propaganda produced by the bourgeoisie. The critique of anti-communism by Soviet scholars also significantly substantiates the fact that the liberal bourgeois West cannot reconcile itself with and accept a world order that is not based on the ideological and didactic rules established by it. The anti-communist propaganda supported by the bourgeois West in politics, culture, and society was not simply a war waged against communism, but a struggle to gain its own liberal capitalist hegemony. This struggle, in turn, expressed the insatiable interests of the liberal class, obsessed with world domination, to keep other nations in subjection and to expand its influence and power over them. It was also a struggle against democracy and peace. Obviously, in this context, it can be said that the critique of the ideology of anti-communism by Soviet Marxists at the same time meant support for ideas such as peace, national sovereignty, brotherhood among nations, democracy, and emancipation from oppression. The struggle against anti-communism was also a struggle against imperialism and neo-colonialism. It was therefore no coincidence that in the great era of decolonization of the twentieth century, communists and communist ideology played a leading role in the struggle against imperialism and oppression in the former colonies of the West.

It is also worth noting that anti-communism also represented a kind of powerful cultural weapon of the bourgeois West for the development of negative political concepts against the Soviet Union, which served, on the one hand, to belittle the idea of socialism, and, on the other, to covertly popularize ideas that were opposed to it. According to Guram Asatiani, the concept of totalitarianism in relation to the Soviet Union developed during the Cold War era, while this concept was not used in relation to it before the Cold War: «The concept of totalitarianism, which initially

²⁷ CHANUKVADZE 1969, p. 51.

referred to a one-party state, was first mentioned in the political lexicon of Italian fascists in the 1920s. Later (in the 1940s) it was used to refer to the political regimes of fascist Italy, Nazi Germany, militaristic Japan, and Francoist Spain»²⁸. He also argued that anti-communism became a means for the bourgeoisie to justify fascism and to slow down hatred towards it.

Soviet Marxists were also aware of the nature of the so-called soft power of Western imperialism. Bourgeois West created a powerful cultural apparatus that served to complete its ideological goals. An important place in this cultural apparatus was occupied by the academia, which was supposed to ensure the smooth functioning of the propaganda machine. A whole series of works of vulgar critique of communism and the Soviet Union were written by bourgeois scholars. As Vladimir Mshvenieradze argued: «Anti-Marxism, anti-communism and anti-Sovietism have turned into a lucrative trade for many politicians and political scientists who have few other talents in practical politics or in theoretical research»²⁹. Of course, in the rich countries of the West, the academic class that had pronounced anti-communist positions was distinguished by its power. Their number was quite large, they occupied leading academic positions, both in the academic field and had a certain influence on the political decision-making process, as scholars who were dependent on the ruling class of the bourgeois West. For example, from the huge industry of such scholars, we can name such prominent anti-communist scholars as the French political scientist Raymond Aron or the American economist and political scientist Walt Rostow and the reactionary philosopher James Burnham, who with their anti-communist hysteria strengthened and served bourgeois ideology and propaganda³⁰.

²⁸ ASATIANI 1987, *p.* 309.

²⁹ MSHVENIERADZE 1985, *p.* 37.

³⁰ Anti-communist hysteria and propaganda was also institutionalized in post-war bourgeois West. Numerous organizations and societies were established that consolidated reactionary scholars and intellectuals with vulgar anti-communist stance, who were supported by bourgeois governments or the wealthy class. Examples of this are Mont Pelerin Society (founded in 1947) and Congress for Cultural Freedom (founded in 1950).

Of course, there were those who refused to adapt to the reactionary ideological role and whose works were somewhat well known and respected by the Soviet academic community. For example, such were the American sociologist C. Wright Mills and economist Paul Sweezy or, for example, the West German political scientist Wolfgang Abendroth. However, the point is that, firstly, their number was small and secondly, despite their high academic reputation, they could not exert a significant influence on the destruction of the bourgeois ideology prevailing in Western academia. The methodological and political restrictions imposed on bourgeois academia during the Cold War, which were explicitly aimed at anti-communist sentiments, on the one hand, prevented scholars from describing objective social reality, and on the other hand, encouraged the opportunistic aspirations of academic circles. Since academic field is one of the important fields of power, in this arena, during the Cold War, the process of power relations was naturally dominated by scholars with anti-communist and anti-Soviet views, who were widely connected with the ideological apparatus of bourgeois imperialism and often provided academic legitimization of bourgeois political dispositions.

It should be noted that in the ideological struggle against the Soviet Union and communism, a significant part of the cultural apparatus of the liberal West was represented not only by the right-wing academia, but also by the so-called liberal left-wing intellectuals. The revisionists, left centrists or admirers of the third way, who were no less imbued with hatred of communism and socialism diligently performed the function of ideologues of anti-communism. About them, Vladimir Mshvenieradze wrote: «There is undoubtedly an ideological-political connection between anti-communism and revisionism. In modern conditions, as experience shows, every deviation from Marxism, every revision of its principles inevitably leads to anti-communism and anti-Sovietism. Revisionism is a Trojan horse within the communist movement, which the bourgeoisie uses for a malicious purpose: «to destroy communism and communists by the hands of communists themselves»³¹. Soviet scholars also accused

³¹ MSHVENIERADZE 1973, pp. 30-31.

revisionism of distorting Marxist theory: «Revisionism has been and continues to be a trap for bourgeois ideology in the fight against Marxism and communism. For example, revisionism, together with bourgeois political economy, aimed to replace K. Marx's scientific theory of labor value with the apologetic concept of "marginal utility" ("economic marginalism") of the Austrian school of vulgar economics»³².

Marxist scholars also particularly emphasized the inseparable connection of anti-communism with right-wing ideological extremism, as Chanukvadze writes: «In 1967, a Marxist symposium was held in Berlin, which focused on the struggle against the ideology of anti-communism. At the symposium, it was noted that the two main types of anti-communism are most widespread: neo-fascist and neoliberal. The following people belong to the neoliberal direction of anti-communism: A. Rüstov, F. Böhm, W. Repke, A. Müller-Armack, F. Hayek, L. Mises, and others»³³. Clearly, in Soviet Marxist epistemology, revisionists and right-wing extremists (neoliberals and neofascists) are presented as ideological allies in the struggle against communism and socialism.

So, during the Cold War, both liberals and right-wing extremists (fascists) acted synchronously, in a kind of anonymous agreement, against the Soviet Union and communism, which was caused by ideological and moral hatred of communism. However, in a historical sense, the not-so-anonymous alliance of liberals and fascists against communists and communism is quite well-known. Unsurprisingly, during the Cold War, this alliance was also joined by the representatives of Western Marxism, who separated their ideological affiliation from Marxism and communism³⁴. Of course, the path of ideological and political action that the liberal leftists or right-wing socialists (as they were called in Soviet Marxism) chose was obviously fully consistent with the goals and objectives of the ruling class of the bourgeois West. It can be said that in the ideological war against communism, the bourgeois ruling class amalgamated scholars and

³² CHANUKVADZE 1969, p. 54.

³³ Ivi, p. 57.

³⁴ For example, the Frankfurt School, as one of the central bastions of Western Marxism, was criticized by Soviet Marxists for their melancholic, bourgeois-opportunistic, and anti-Soviet ideological positions.

intellectuals from various academic, political, and intellectual standpoints, and set them the goal of a combined struggle against communism and the Soviet Union. This is why bourgeois leftist circles in the Soviet Union were so often criticized.

Of course, the propaganda of anti-communism and the fight against socialism continued after the end of the Cold War and, it should be said, continued even more fiercely and intensively. Following the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the capitalist West declared liberal democracy and liberal universalism as the winning idea³⁵ and enthusiastically began the liberal ideological transformation of the world, including the post-Soviet world, which was based on the neocolonization of post-Soviet nations. Obviously, in this process, that is, the process of post-Soviet neocolonization, essential importance was attached to the fight against Soviet socialism and socialist ideals in general. The new struggle against communism was carried out within the framework of the so-called decommunization process, which aimed at the complete discrediting of Soviet modernity as a whole and communism as a political theory. In this process, the bourgeois West formed a powerful cultural infrastructure, the purpose of which was, on the one hand, the cultural propaganda of the liberal West, and on the other hand, the encouragement and support of anti-communist academic and intellectual activity in the former Soviet Union.

Thus, in this sense, the bourgeois West established ideological control over the intellectual life of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. However, it is also worth noting that the liberal imperialist West contributes not only to the formation of liberal social and political thinking against communism, but also actively promotes the development of left-wing thinking with anti-communist and anti-Soviet positions, both in the

³⁵ In this context, the thesis of the reactionary American political scientist Francis Fukuyama about the end of history is noteworthy, who immediately after the end of the Cold War declared Western capitalist democracy to be a triumphant idea. Fukuyama's standpoint was obviously in full accordance with the ideological line of the United States and the bourgeois West in general, with their imperialist goals and objectives.

West itself and beyond. Certainly, the integration of left-wing liberals and right-wing liberals into its cultural apparatus by contemporary liberal imperialism once again speaks of the alliance that was historically used against the Soviet Union and is still used today in the fight against the Soviet socialist past. Of course, just as then, today the propaganda of anti-communism is aimed at strengthening and consolidating the liberal bourgeois order. However, the crisis that the liberal West is facing today does not provide solid prospects in the fight against socialism.

4. De-ideologization Thesis and the Power of Bourgeois Ideology

In the post-war West, bourgeois scholars argued for the end of ideology. The thesis is that post-war West was characterized by the dominant process of de-ideologization, largely driven by the behavior, nature and character of modern mass society. In this context, the thesis also argued for the end of classical political ideologies. This thesis, of course, was met with critical response from Soviet academic circles. Critically examining the social and political views of Raymond Aron, Daniel Bell, Walt Rostow and other bourgeois scholars Dzhioev writes: «Bourgeois philosophers and sociologists talk about the death of all ideologies, but they mean above all Marxist ideology»³⁶. Dzhioev substantiates the relations between this scientific theory and the ideological-political objectives of the bourgeois ruling class: «The theory of the “dying of ideology” seems to be directed against Marxist ideology. It itself is a harbinger of an intensification of the ideological struggle. Therefore, it is not surprising that at a time when sociologists are talking about the dying of ideologies, the ruling circles of capitalist society are calling for an intensification of the ideological struggle against communism, the bourgeois propaganda apparatus is growing, and they are spending ever greater sums of money on waging psychological warfare against socialist countries»³⁷. Considering this, Dzhioev evidently determines the broad opposition between Soviet

³⁶ DZHIOEV 1969, p. 3.

³⁷ Ivi, p. 4.

modernity and Western capitalism that was so characteristic of the Cold War era.

Countering the monolithic understanding of the ideological confrontation between socialism and capitalism prevalent in the bourgeois West, Dzhioev continues to argue: «When the rulers of capitalism attach decisive importance to the ideological struggle, they also have a certain ideological goal: they try to present the case as if the main thing in the confrontation between socialism and capitalism is the confrontation of ideologies, worldviews, and not the social systems themselves. The fact that capitalism is unpopular and people are moving towards socialism is not explained by the ideologists of the bourgeoisie in terms of the difference between these systems, but rather by the active propaganda of the ideas of socialism»³⁸. It is also noteworthy that he emphasizes the importance of the ideological struggle, which even bourgeois West cannot deny: «Bourgeois sociologists have invented many myths about contemporary capitalism. Bourgeois propaganda sociology has also created many false theories. But they are not wrong about one thing, namely, in assessing the importance of ideological struggle. Even those sociologists who speak of the “end of ideology” emphasize that the intensity of the struggle of ideas has not abated at all today»³⁹.

Dzhioev clearly understands the conflict between socialism and capitalism in the big picture, in a broad range: «The struggle between socialism and capitalism is the most important social process of our era. And in this struggle, the ideological struggle is taking an increasingly large place. This ideological struggle, thanks to the contemporary level of development of the means of mass information, especially radio, is spread over a wide front. The sphere of influence of bourgeois propaganda is not limited to the audience of readers or listeners in capitalist countries. Bourgeois propaganda sets as one of its main tasks the influence on the population of socialist countries»⁴⁰. He also notes the role of both radio and television in bourgeois propaganda, the purpose of which is to influ-

³⁸ Ivi, p. 6.

³⁹ Ivi, p. 85.

⁴⁰ Ivi, pp. 85-86.

ence the formation of public sentiment, behavior and taste: «In contemporary capitalist countries, radio and television are viewed as means of entertainment. Therefore, they try to find an attractive, spectacular form for propaganda: they often use interviews, live conversations, and dramatize news (it is no coincidence that regular discussions in New York, conducted by the intelligentsia, were called the “theater of ideas”). Of course, we cannot aim at radio and television only for entertainment. They are broad means of raising the cultural and political consciousness of the broad masses of workers»⁴¹. Dzhioev also emphasizes the role of Marxist theory against bourgeois propaganda and argues that in the fight against anti-communism, it is necessary to: «pay more attention to the clarification of the Marxist understanding of the relationship between individual freedom and political democracy»⁴². Of course, intellectual and scientific confrontation was one of the important processes in the struggle between socialism and capitalism during the Cold War, and this work by Dzhioev clearly illustrates this. It is also important to understand that this cultural war between the capitalist and socialist worlds took place against the backdrop of increased support for anti-communism, for which the bourgeois West used enormous political, ideological, economic, and cultural resources and industry.

Soviet Marxists considered the thesis of de-ideologization as a cultural tool developed by the bourgeois West in the fight against communism. They emphasized the formation of a theoretical-gnoseological construct against communist ideology by the ideological and cultural apparatus of bourgeois imperialism. As Asatiani writes: «One of such theoretical-gnoseological guidelines is the denial of ideology itself, as a combination of concepts and certain forms of consciousness, its opposition to science, its declaration as an arbitrary worldview system expressing the views and interests of the “ruling political caste” . From such an assessment of ideology, the absurd conclusion follows about “de-ideologization”, i.e. the liberation of human consciousness from the captivity of ideology, which

⁴¹ Ivi, p. 89.

⁴² Ivi, p. 90.

takes on different shades in different versions»⁴³. Asatiani discusses various bourgeois perspectives on the concept of de-ideologization, first he emphasizes the bourgeois academic perspective, according to which the twentieth century is considered as the century of the “end of ideology”. He argues that since according to this perspective: «The existence of ideological systems is justified and permissible until the “end of revolutions” and the beginning of the history of a unified “industrial society”, and insofar as a “unified industrial society” is attributed to a socialist society, the demand for liberation from the “captivity of ideology” is placed before it»⁴⁴. In this context, he examines bourgeois theoretical constructions about the “end of ideology” as a theory that is particularly directed against Marxism and socialism: «Thus, the mentioned concept claims universal freedom from the “captivity of ideology,” but in fact it only fights communist ideology, trying to gain victory in the ideological struggle between the two systems»⁴⁵.

Nevertheless, Asatiani also discusses another bourgeois point of view, according to which, despite the “end of ideology,” the ideological battlefield still retains its importance: «Representatives of this approach seem to have lost hope in the “de-ideologization” of socialism: therefore, they either speak openly about the confrontation between “ideology and freedom” or demand the creation of an ideological force in the West that opposes communist ideology»⁴⁶. He clearly describes a unified ideological task for these various currents of de-ideologization, which aims to popularize bourgeois ideology by using a variety of manipulative ideas in the struggle against communism: «It seems that both directions of “de-ideologization” have in common the goal of ideological disarmament of the socialist system, while bourgeois ideology is either considered an axiomatic fact in the form of a comprehensive concept of “Western freedom” or is sought to be established in the form of an ideology opposed to communism»⁴⁷. So, in this sense, it should be noted that the concept

⁴³ ASATIANI 1987, p. 319.

⁴⁴ Ivi, p. 320.

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁶ Ivi, p. 321.

⁴⁷ *Ibidem*.

of the “free world”, which emerged during the Cold War as a sort of designation for the Western world, was nothing more than a mere ideological designation, completely devoid of objective reality. This is evidenced by the constant persecution, repression and regular surveillance of socialist and communist forces in the bourgeois West. It is also evidenced by the fact that despite some success caused by the development of the welfare state in the countries of Western Europe, they, like other bourgeois states, remained countries based on an antagonistic class structure, which obviously could not create the conditions for real freedom in their respective societies.

Vladimer Mshvenieradze argued that the reinforcement of the socialist system and its growing popularization during the Cold War gradually forced the bourgeois West to shift the battlefield from politics to ideology, which led to the establishment of a huge scientific infrastructure in the West in the field of studying communism and the Soviet Union, which was actually aimed not at the scientific study of this phenomenon, but rather at discrediting it. As he writes: «A methodically planned attack on communist ideology of unprecedented scale and intensity began. It pursued a far-reaching political goal – to divert the socialist countries from the path of socialist development or, in extreme cases, to halt and hinder the development of world socialism, thereby solving the tasks assigned to it – to weaken, and then reduce to nothingness, the international communist movement, and to disorient the national liberation struggle»⁴⁸. Considering this, Mshvenieradze held that the concept of de-ideologization played one of the main roles in this matter.

Mshvenieradze considered the discrediting of Marxism and the workers' movement as one of the main tasks of the concept of de-ideologization, as well as the task, the purpose of which was the following: «The defiling of socialist ideals, the creation of various anti-communist and anti-Marxist theoretical concepts to justify the non-communist path of development of human society. This goal is served, in particular, by the theories of convergence, modernization, technetronic society, industrial

⁴⁸ MSHVENIERADZE 1973, p. 53.

civilization and others, which are essentially presented as “de-ideologized” societies»⁴⁹. Of course, Mshvenieradze's reflections on de-ideologization are in line with the views of other Soviet Marxists, who viewed de-ideologization thesis as a conceptual doctrine directed unequivocally against Marxism and communist ideals.

Such harsh criticism of de-ideologization thesis by Soviet scholars is understandable insofar as the thesis about the end of ideology put forward by the bourgeois academy was completely inconsistent with the social and political realities of the Cold War era. In other words, the incomprehensible and controversial nature of the thesis about de-ideologization lies in the fact that while the cultural-ideological apparatus of the bourgeois ruling class was asserting the idea about the end of ideology, at the same time the same cultural apparatus was fiercely fighting the idea of socialism and communism. The point is that bourgeois political and social theorists were fighting not just against the Soviet Union, but directly against the socialist way of organizing social and political life. This, of course, allows us to think about the thesis of de-ideologization as a hypocritical concept.

It is not surprising that in the bourgeois West, the discussion and assertion of the end of ideology did not slow down even after the end of the Cold War. On the contrary, this thesis has become even stronger⁵⁰. Bourgeois scholars have been talking about the end of ideology for a long time, that ideology and political ideologies no longer determine the character of public and political life. This opinion is based on the assertion that today no one wants to belong to any ideology. First, this assertion is also not correct, that people have suddenly abandoned ideological affiliation, but the fallacy of this assertion or opinion is further supported by another argument. The point is that today's ideological uniformity, the political-ideological and rhetorical-ideological monopolization of the sys-

⁴⁹ Ivi, p. 54.

⁵⁰ The development of such reasoning in the political and cultural life of the bourgeois West is, in turn, facilitated by the social dialectics of postmodernity and the sociocultural logic of postmodern society, which rejects grand ideas or ideals and undermines the solidity of the value system.

tem of sociopolitical thought which uniformly characterizes contemporary capitalist states, and which is expressed in unconditional loyalty to liberal capitalism, speaks not of the end of ideology, but of its domination.

5. *Conclusion*

As we see, the critique of bourgeois ideology in Soviet Marxist epistemology placed significant emphasis on the critical study of bourgeois society and the capitalist system, anti-communism and the propaganda of de-ideologization. However, of course, the Soviet academia was not limited to the critical study of these issues alone. Important topics of scientific research also included criticism of imperialism, imperial colonialism and neo-colonialism, the critical study of bourgeois philosophical, sociological, political and economic theories. Obviously, all these topics were significantly interconnected and often determined one another. For example, the critique of the capitalist system also included a critical study of the nature and character of bourgeois imperialism, just as the critical study of anti-communism essentially included a criticism of bourgeois social and political thought.

It is important to note that the Soviet academic criticism of the bourgeois West, its ideology, and its sociocultural and political character, was not simply a critique of capitalism from a communist perspective, but at the same time a description of the objective social reality of the bourgeois West in the twentieth century. However, it is often argued that the Soviet academia was limited both ideologically and methodologically, and that the critical understanding of the bourgeois West in Soviet Marxist epistemology was entirely subordinated to the political ontology of the Soviet Union. Two things need to be clarified here. The first is that academic knowledge, academic circles, and scientific institutions in the West were not free from political supervision and were not at all devoid of political loyalty, an example of this is the amalgamated academic front in the West against communism and socialist Europe. The second is that Soviet Marxist epistemology and Soviet scientific circles or institutions acted in

accordance with the original principles of Marxism and socialism, with their historical goals. Also, it was about great historical struggle. The struggle against capitalism and bourgeois ideology was considered an important part of the great social, political and cultural struggles that were at that time connected with the struggle for the victory of socialism over the capitalist order.

Although today, at first glance, this struggle seems to be a thing of the past, since the Soviet Union, which represented the strongest alternative to Western capitalism, no longer exists, this does not mean that the criticism of bourgeois ideology has lost its significance. This is not so, because the current political and cultural crisis of the West gives even greater importance to the critical study of the bourgeois West and its ideology, its political and social practice. Of course, this already requires a new approach, a new criticism of the bourgeois system and ideology, considering the new reality. And in this matter, Soviet Marxist epistemology occupies an important place in academic and intellectual life. It represents a certain intellectual guideline, which was one of the first to deeply explain and study the nature and character of bourgeois ideology.

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