

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

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**THE REVISIONIST  
THEORY OF THE  
"LIBERATION" OF  
SCIENCE FROM  
IDEOLOGY**

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### **PUBLISHER'S NOTE**

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# 1. New Attempts to Detach the Social Doctrine of Marxism From Its Philosophical Foundations

A characteristic feature of the revisionist attacks against Marxism is the attack on its philosophical basis, materialist dialectics. Closely related to this are the revisionists' attempts to detach historical materialism, the Marxist theory of history, political economy and scientific socialism as a whole from philosophy, from dialectical materialism. Eduard Bernstein and other revisionists of the late 19th century fell over Marx's revolutionary dialectics, called for going back from it to Kant, and proposed "enriching" Marxism with Kant's gnoseological scholasticism. Karl Kautsky considered permissible the unification of historical materialism with any other philosophical system, including neo-Kantianism, Machism and all other positivist schools of philosophy. Such "unification" with idealist philosophy would not only mean the abolition of the philosophical foundations of Marxism, but would also be a distortion of its historical, economic and political theory and would lead to the revision of working class policy, strategy and tactics.

The Machist school (Bogdanov, Bazarov, Yushkevich, Valentinov, Adler and others) revised the philosophy of Marxism, dialectical and historical materialism, by trying to combine historical materialism with the philosophy of Machism, empirio-criticism. The ideologists of Trotskyism and right opportunism (Bukharin et al.) also distorted the materialist conception of history in the sense of mechanical materialism and subjective idealism.

But all these revisionist attacks against Marxist philosophy (from the Bernsteinites to the Bukharinites) suffered a complete defeat. Marxist philosophy triumphed over revisionism, expanded its sphere of influence and captured the thinking of many millions of people. At first sight, it seems surprising that today revisionist ideas are reviving anew, that people can be found who claim to “free Marxist sociology from its attachment to a particular worldview — that is, to dialectical materialism” and dissolve it in today’s bourgeois philosophy and sociology.

This tendency was expressed most clearly in an article by Lecsek Kolakowski in the Polish weekly “Nowa Kultura” (No. 4/57). Typical in this respect is also the article “Marxism and Mod-

ern Sociology” by Jerzy Wiatr and Sigmund Baumann published in the Polish journal “Mysl Filozoficzna” (No. 1/57). The core question in the article by Wiatr and Baumann is the “liberation” of science from ideology. To justify this question, the authors mainly cite arguments from history. “The subordination of science to ideology,” they write, “is a phenomenon that has persisted for a particularly long time in the field of the social sciences. While natural science freed itself relatively early from ideological tutelage, the social sciences did not follow this path until the 19th century, and in doing so have not completely freed themselves from this tutelage to the present day.” The task of sociology and other social sciences, he argues, is to free itself, much like natural science, from the “guardianship” of any ideology, which Wiatr and Baumann characterize as a class-based “distorted reflection of social reality”.

Anyone who is a little familiar with the history of philosophy will see at once that here appear in a new form the old claims of the positivists who pretend to liberate science from all ideology and from all philosophy — but in reality from Marxist philosophy. They declare the basic ques-

tion of philosophy, the question of the relation between thinking and being, to be unscientific and call all those who study and solve this question metaphysicians. They claim that science must throw philosophy, ideology “overboard”. Marxism has long proved the untenability of these positivist ideas about the liberation of science from philosophy, and the attempts of the revisionists to adduce new proofs expose all the more the paucity of their philosophy.

The Marxists hold that no scientist is free from the influence of philosophy. The question is whether he is under the influence of a philosophy which shows him the right way to knowledge or under the influence of a philosophy which leads him into the thicket of scholasticism, mysticism, fideism, clericalism. The history of science shows that only materialistic philosophy helps scientists to work out correct scientific methods and procedures of knowledge. Idealism, on the other hand, leads to unscientific, pre-scientific, erroneous and unwholesome methods and procedures of knowledge.

Wiatr and Baumann see the merit of Marx in the fact that he discovered “the fact of the subordination of the social sciences to ideology”, at the

same time establishing the causes of this circumstance and pointing to the force capable of liberating science from ideology — the working class. “The ideology of the proletariat,” they write, “is accordingly supposed to be a special kind of ideology which would be the negation of the last in its traditional meaning, science.” Thus, according to the authors, Marxism is already no longer an ideology, but science. One cannot agree with this juxtaposition of science and ideology. Science is a product of cognition and at the same time a process of cognition that develops on the basis of the social practice of humanity. In science one must distinguish: 1. verified facts, the knowledge of these facts and phenomena of reality; 2. the knowledge of the inner, necessary connections of phenomena and processes, which are formulated in the form of laws, guiding principles, axioms, doctrines, etc.; 3. the various scientific hypotheses and suppositions which have arisen on the basis of the totality of these facts and already discovered laws, and which can be confirmed and proved or rejected by the further development of science. Furthermore, into science have entered both various general theories, conclusions and attitudes, which developed on the basis of recognized and

tested facts and laws, and their philosophical interpretation and basic theoretical ideas, which guide further cognition and underlie the method of cognition. The material of facts is the air of the scholar, said I.P. Pavlov; but at the same time he emphasized that without theory the scholar cannot reach the heights of science. Even a Montblanc of factual material is not yet science. To make a science out of the enriched and studied factual material, one must crown this Montblanc with ideas and theories, with the scientific explanation of the factual material. Are Darwinism, for instance, or the teachings of Mitschurin or Pavlov only Montblancs of factual material and experiments? Are they not crowned with ideas hostile to the idealistic view of the world? All this has long been known not only to Marxists but to every theoretically thinking scholar. It is only the positivist philosophers and sociologists who do not want to admit this, who are working out theories about the liberation of science from all philosophy and all ideology.

The Marxists are not fighting for the liberation of science from all ideology, but for its liberation from the false, unscientific, idealistic, reactionary ideology, from the influences of fideism,



religion and for the victory of the progressive, revolutionary, proletarian ideology, the ideology of scientific communism in science. The slogan of the liberation of science from all ideology can only be put forward by people who have lost their way in positivism. The philosophy of Marxism as the science of the most general laws of development of the objective world and of cognition is by its nature incompatible with the essence of positivism.

Nowhere do Wiatr and Baumann openly oppose dialectical materialism; on the contrary, they claim that they of all people are creative Marxists, true materialists and dialecticians; but their whole conception of the liberation of science from ideology is permeated by the idea of the reconciliation of Marxist with bourgeois social science, of Marxist with bourgeois sociology, that is, by the idea of the reconciliation of materialism with idealism in social science.

Like other revisionists, Wiatr and Baumann give themselves the appearance of opposing the incorrigible “Stalinists” and “dogmatists” in the interest of the creative further development of Marxism. Their own conception, however, is a prime example of a combination of dogmatism

and revision of the basic questions of Marxism. Since they base their conception on certain misinterpreted statements of Marx and Engels on ideology, we consider it necessary to remind the reader of the views of the founders of Marxism on the question that interests us here.

In their works, which were directed against idealist German philosophy and against the entire idealist conception of history, according to which the Idea develops out of itself and in so doing creates the material world, nature, society, the state, the history of peoples and of the world, Marx and Engels characterized this ideology as a falsified, illusory consciousness which distorts reality. Engels uncovered the gnoseological and social roots of this distorted reflection of reality. Thus, in a letter to F. Mehring on July 14th, 1893, he wrote: "Ideology is a process which is carried out with consciousness by the so-called thinker, but with a false consciousness. The actual driving forces that move it remain unknown to him; otherwise it would not be an ideological process. So he imagines false or apparent driving forces. Because it is a thinking process, it derives its content as well as its form from pure thinking, either its own or that of its predecessors. He works with mere thought-

material, which he accepts unquestioningly as produced by thought and otherwise does not examine further for a more remote origin independent of thought, and indeed this is self-evident to him, since all action, because *mediated* by thought, also appears to him in the last instance to be *founded* in thought.”<sup>1</sup> Further, Engels exposes the gnoseological roots of these erroneous, false, illusory views by showing the role of tradition in the lawful development of ideology (political, juridical, philosophical, moral, theological). Of course, even the idealists sometimes notice that on the development of an idea certain external, material relations, facts and incidents of real life have an effect, but these facts and incidents the idealist ideologue again considers to be mere fruits of the preceding idea, the result and fruit of the thought process. And so, according to these ideologists, writes Engels, “we still remain in the realm of mere thought, which seems to have happily digested even the hardest facts”.<sup>2</sup>

This apparent independence of the history of theories of the state, of legal systems, of ideologi-

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<sup>1</sup> K. Marx/F. Engels: Selected Letters, Berlin 1953, p. 549 (Hereinafter Ger. ed.).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 550.

cal conceptions in any field, blinds not only ideologists by profession. The overcoming of the mercantilists by the physiocrats and Adam Smith appears as the victory of “pure thought”. It is not seen as an expression of the fact that economists are becoming aware of the changed economic facts and real relations, but as a finally achieved real insight into the allegedly unchangeable existing relations of production in general. Anyone who has read this letter of Engels carefully and compared his statements with the concrete history of the development of ideology must have noticed that Engels did not mean every ideologue and thinker and every ideology, but “so-called thinkers”, that is, idealistic ideologues, people with a false, idealistic world outlook and all those who think according to their method. (It was precisely such views that prevailed in the ideological field until the turnaround in science made by Marx and Engels in the conception of the history of society). It goes without saying that Engels did not include among this type of “ideologists” (“the so-called thinkers”) the founders of scientific communism — Karl Marx and himself — although they were undoubtedly ideologists, but the ideologists of the most advanced and revolution-

ary class of bourgeois society, the ideologists and leaders of the working class.

In his book "What is to Be Done?" Lenin points out the irreconcilability of Marxist scientific ideology with bourgeois ideology and shows how, in contrast to the spontaneously awakening consciousness of the worker, the scientific ideology of Marxism came into being and developed, and how the party carries the theory of scientific socialism into the workers' movement, into the consciousness of the masses. Only narrow-minded dogmatists can draw the conclusion from Marx and Engels' criticism of the idealist conception of history that Marx and Engels were fighting against ideology in general, against every ideology, that they regarded every ideology as a "distorted reflection of social reality". The conception of ideology put forward by today's revisionists is not new. Long before them it was propagated by the Machist falsifiers of Marxism, such as A. Bogdanov. Bogdanov arrived at the subjective-idealist conception of ideology because he uncritically adopted the philosophy of Machism, its subjective-idealist conceptions, which obstructs the way to distinguish scientific from unscientific ideology. Bogdanov and other Machists

and positivists interpreted the historically limited and relative character of knowledge of each epoch in terms of relativism, absolutized the relativity of knowledge and denied that absolute truth is contained in relative truth.

Of course, even scientific ideology does not immediately convey objective and absolute truth. It is relative, conditional in the sense that the knowledge of reality it contains is historically limited, reflecting the limited stage of knowledge of the given epoch. But to the extent that human knowledge develops, this knowledge reflects reality ever more richly, deeply and correctly; it approaches absolute truth. "In short, every ideology is historically conditioned, but what is unconditional is that to every scientific ideology (as distinct, for example, from religious ideology) corresponds objective truth, absolute nature."<sup>1</sup>

Scientific ideology is the result of scientific knowledge, but it is not passive; it plays an active role in the further course of knowledge. It influences not only the development of knowledge (the organization of observations, trials, experi-

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<sup>1</sup> V.I. Lenin: *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, Berlin 1949, p. 125.

ments, the emergence of scientific hypotheses, the verification of these hypotheses through practice, etc.), but also the development of man's social practice. The idea of class struggle, of socialist revolution, of the dictatorship of the proletariat, of the building of socialism and communism, the idea of proletarian internationalism, of friendship between peoples, of the struggle for peace, correctly reflects the objective lawfulness of the present stage of the development of society; for this very reason it grips the minds of hundreds of millions of people and becomes a tremendous material force in history. Only people who are hopelessly lost in the thicket of positivism can portray science and ideology, ideology and knowledge, as in principle hostile and incompatible, can stand against ideology "in general" and portray every ideology as a distortion, as a distorted reflection of social reality.

Since Wiatr and Baumann feel the uncertainty of their positions, they make the reservation that Marxism is not really an ideology but a science. Firstly, however, this reservation contains the positivist opposition of science and ideology altogether, instead of opposing scientific and unscientific, anti-scientific ideology; secondly, how-

ever, the authors recognize that ideology has been preserved in Marxism alongside science and has emerged anew, moreover as “ideology in the traditional sense”. In his article “On the Interpretation of Historical Materialism” (in: *Studia Filozoficzna*, No. 1-4/1958) Wiatr is at pains to distinguish himself from revisionism and therefore underlines that in Marxism science and ideology are closely connected. But this underlining does not change his actual position, because it remains positivistically directed against the philosophical foundations of Marxism. Wiatr and Baumann strive to free “Marxist sociology” from ideology, from the worldview, i.e., from Marxist philosophy, in order to bring it “into unity with the modern sociology of the world” (including bourgeois sociology) and to develop it. They underestimate the extent to which today’s natural and social science, created by bourgeois scholars, is “closely connected” with the idealist bourgeois worldview and ideology in general, and do not imagine what efforts are needed to free it from this worldview. Lenin demanded a solid philosophical, dialectical-materialist foundation for natural science, without which it would not be able to withstand the pressure of bourgeois ideol-



ogy, the pressure of idealism, fideism and mysticism. Today's revisionists, on the other hand, demand — in complete agreement with the philosophy of positivism — the liberation of social science and sociology from their “genetic connection” with the worldview, with the philosophy of dialectical materialism. To what end? To weaken the (fruitful) influence of the scientific ideology of Marxism, its philosophy, on the development of science in all countries, especially in the countries of socialism.

The positivist juxtaposition of science and ideology means nothing other than an attempt to conceal the opposition between the materialist and idealist worldviews, between scientific and anti-scientific ideology. In Wiatr's and Baumann's conception, every ideology is opposed to science and scientific knowledge as something alien and hostile that must be removed from science. “The social function of ideology as a class-distorted reflection of social reality,” they write, “is mainly to elaborate symbols, stereotypes and social myths that hold society together around a ruling elite or an elite struggling to conquer power, and to ensure society's voluntary subordination to the elite.” From here, the authors con-

clude that the proletariat does not need “the social function proper to ideology”. In doing so, the authors again speak of ideology “in general”, which helps them to blur and avoid the question of the necessity of a scientific, socialist, Marxist-Leninist ideology.

The working class was not interested in a “rebirth of ideology”, but the struggle of various groups within the workers’ movement, Wiatr and Baumann write further, led to the formation of a type of ideology “in the traditional conception of ideology”. The mythological character of this ideology, its monopolistic aspirations and its claim to supremacy over the social sciences can be explained — according to Wiatr and Baumann’s theory — by the fact that within the working class groups emerged which would be interested in the subjugation of the class, which carried out policies that were not in line with the interests of the class, and which were therefore compelled to use not rational-logical arguments but emotional-ideological arguments with symbols and stereotypes. In other words, groups hostile to scientific knowledge are said to have appeared within the working class; they are said to have given Marxist philosophy a religiously ideological function “in

the past historical period”, and instead of liberating social science from the domination of faith, instead of destroying the “institutions of social taboo”, instead of exposing the symbols and stereotypes of philosophy, philosophy in the Stalinist epoch itself was used as a means of imposing new taboos, a new ideological symbolism; Marxist philosophy was falsified.

We have stated the essence of Wiatr’s and Baumann’s conception almost exclusively in their own words and expressions, and now their ideological and social objective is clear. Their enemy is not the ideology of reformism, not reactionary bourgeois philosophy, but Marxist-Leninist philosophy, which has been transformed by the Communist Parties into a sharp and powerful weapon of the class struggle. The Communist Party’s struggle for the purity of Marxist-Leninist ideology against the attempts at its revision by ideologically vacillating, petty-bourgeois elements in the workers’ movement is portrayed by Wiatr and Baumann as the dogmatization and canonization of the guiding principles of Marxism, the effect of the primacy of faith over science. The defence of the principles of Marxism tested and confirmed in the fire of class struggle and rev-

olution is seen by the revisionists as the establishment and extension of “new social taboos”. The defence of the principles of proletarian internationalism through Marxist philosophy, of the dictatorship of the proletariat, of the alliance of the working class with the peasantry, of the unity of the communist parties and their revolutionary discipline, the defence of social ownership of the means of production, the prohibition of the violation of these principles — all this is nothing but “setting up, confirming new taboos”, against which the anarchist-acting revisionists fiercely fight under the flag of the “creative development” of Marxism.

For eclectics without firm principles, who switch from one position to another and discard their principles like gloves, every firm conviction and its passionate defence is “religious fanaticism”, “faith”, but eclectic doubting, ideological vacillation, switching from one camp to another, naked relativism and the denial of objective truth — this is for them “creative development” of science.

## **2. Capitulation to Idealism and Bourgeois Sociology**

The positivist idea of the liberation of science from ideology logically leads Wiatr and Baumann to direct capitulation to bourgeois ideology, to a renunciation of the foundations of Marxism. They assure their readers that Western sociologists are increasingly coming to the sociological conclusions of Marx and Engels, that many of them see in the teachings of Marx and Engels the necessary starting point of investigation, and that all this creates a favourable atmosphere of international co-operation and allows us to be “not only beneficiaries but also collaborators in the creation of the latest modern sociology”. Thus, the authors of the article under discussion have moved from “benefiting” from modern “Western sociology” to directly participating in the creation of the “latest modern sociology” together with the bourgeois sociologists. And where has today’s Marxist sociology disappeared to? Yes, according to the authors, it does not exist at all yet, and the authors propose to create it in joint work with the bourgeois sociologists.

As is well known, many renowned bourgeois scholars are taking a stand against the creeping empiricism in science and are looking for a way out of the positivist quagmire by combining the

collection of factual material with its theoretical generalization, penetration and explanation. It is precisely Marxism, dialectical materialism, that points the way to this. But Wiatr and Baumann disagree: they claim that “official Marxist sociology” attacks the naked empiricism of bourgeois philosophy, positivism, because it starts from a speculative philosophy which disdains and disregards experience, i.e. facts. They are full of enthusiasm about the fact that even in “so-called non-Marxist sociology” the protest against empiricism is growing more and more and calls are being made to fight “for the development of a general theory of society”, because this will contribute to the “development of a general sociological theory”. Do Wiatr and Baumann not know that “well-known socialists” — of whom they speak — have been trying for more than a century to work out this “general theory” in order to oppose Marxism, but that nothing comes of it?

As an example of Western sociologists who take the sociological conclusions of Marxism as their starting point, the authors cite the French sociologist Gurvich, who “recognizes in words Marx’s theory of class struggle”, but at the same time asserts that there will be classes under com-

munism, because this is what the Marxist dialectic on contradictions teaches. Our “newest” sociologists have forgotten (and suggest others forget) the principle of Marxism that people are not judged by what they say or think of themselves, but by what they do.

Wiatr and Baumann behave much more inclined and uncritical towards the various currents of non-Marxist sociology than Gurvich. Gurvich, after all, criticized the so-called “social stratification” at the 3rd Sociological Congress in Amsterdam, which seeks to replace Marx’s theory of class struggle. Wiatr and Baumann recommend that we “elaborate” precisely this theory of bourgeois sociology.

Modern positivist bourgeois sociology opposes Marxism, Marx’s theory of class struggle, with the theory of “social stratification”, “social mobility”, the theory of the elite, and so on. Wiatr and Baumann assert without batting an eyelid that only the analysis of these and similar problems “can give a scientific picture of the changing society.” They defend bourgeois sociology, which was represented at the Amsterdam Congress by the International Sociological Association and took a stand against Marxist sociol-

ogy. They are outraged that the above-mentioned “contemporary problems” were allegedly “deliberately ignored” by Marxist social scientists and that the latter had developed an argumentation which “theoretically” justified their turning away from these questions. The authors are particularly unhappy that the Marxists gave a scathing assessment of the problems associated with “social stratification”. They reject from the outset as unfounded the claim of the adherents of Marxist sociology that the aim of this “problem” is to divert attention from the basic social problems of the present and to combat Marxist class theory.

But the Marxists already proved at the Congress that the theory of “social stratification” and “mobility” diverted attention from the decisive social changes of the 20th century, namely, from the liquidation of capitalism and colonial exploitation on a vast part of the globe, from the problem of the emergence and development of the socialist system throughout the world, from the struggle of the peoples for peace, for national independence, against imperialism, colonial oppression and war. Wiatr and Baumann preferred to remain silent about it! This is also understandable because they want the reader to conclude



that the representatives of Marxist social science had turned away from “contemporary problems” while “non-Marxist sociologists raised important problems worthy of study for debate.” These are the first fruits of the “liberation” of science from ideology.

### **3. Attacks Against Marxism and Propaganda of Bourgeois Ideology Under the Flag of the Rejection of the Partisanship of Science**

Wiatr and Baumann began their article with an attack against ideology in general. They intimidated the reader with all sorts of horrors about the rebirth of ideology within Marxism or about the danger of “the pressure of ideology on the social sciences”. But the point of their critique turns incessantly, like the needle of a compass, against the ideology of Marxism, against the philosophical foundations of Marxism, but not against idealism and reactionary bourgeois ideology. Danger and aggressiveness of ideology threatens the social sciences, if Wiatr and Baumann are to be believed, not from the side of imperialist, reformist and revisionist ideology, but from the side of ide-

ology which is brought back to life and defended by the leading cadres of the Communist Parties. These cadres beat the poor revisionists “harshly” and “unfairly”, do not give them the opportunity to “creatively” develop the theory of “social stratification” either in relation to capitalism or in relation to socialism, they throw “heavy accusations” at “Western sociology”, pointing to its bourgeois character, its idealism and even its defence of colonial oppression.

From the revisionists’ point of view, the approving attitude towards the colonial system is not as dangerous to the social sciences as, say, the Marxist-Leninist theory of the two classes in bourgeois society or in a society passing from capitalism to socialism. Wiatr and Baumann find this theory “scientifically primitive” and demand that it be replaced by the bourgeois theory of “social stratification”. “The question of social stratification under socialism,” they write, “cannot be replaced by the exposition of Stalin’s scientifically primitive thesis of the division of society into two non-antagonistic classes and the intelligentsia associated with them, because this thesis itself requires confirmation, or at least specification.” According to this, then, the Marxist theory on the

division of socialist society into two non-antagonist classes is “scientifically primitive,” but the theory of “social stratification” is impeccable and represents the “latest contemporary sociology.” It goes without saying that no arguments or evidence are put forward to support this claim. It is simply determined, ordered from above. One is struck by the cowardly manner, characteristic of revisionism, of attacking the foundations of Marxism under the flag of criticizing individual representatives of this doctrine, and of remaining silent about the achievements known to all, in the given case about the fact that it is precisely the Marxists, including J.V. Stalin, who have given a deep, concrete analysis of the character not only of the “two main classes” of all antagonistic formations and societies passing from capitalism to socialism, but also of the various other social strata and the various groups within the classes.

“Marxist sociology cannot establish its value through its genetic connection with a particular worldview”, i.e. with dialectical materialism; it is not to establish or “illustrate” “a priori assumed worldview theses or political program”. The decrees of our sociologists with regard to social science are of this kind. They even allow themselves

a cheap demagoguery by claiming that science should seek the criteria for the truth of its doctrines in conformity not with the system of this or that worldview, but in conformity with the reality “described” by these theses. As if Marxist philosophy and the Marxist worldview as a whole did not proceed precisely from this criterion of truth. As if materialist dialectics as a science of the most general laws of development of the objective world and of cognition were not the true reflection of reality. As if Marxist philosophy did not teach precisely how to verify the correspondence between theory and reality with the help of the whole of social practice. As if the policy of the Communist Party was not based on Marxist social science, but was an emotional subjective evaluation, and as if, on the other hand, there was a “sociological study” of socialism, capitalism, feudalism, etc., which did not evaluate these phenomena, neither scientifically nor “emotionally-mythologically”.

Here we encounter the usual bourgeois and revisionist way of “criticizing” Marxism, in which one pretends to criticize speculative philosophy as such (against which, after all, both Marxism and every genuine scholar is opposed), and then one

directs the whole criticism against Marxism by means of a trick. It is well known that Marxism fought and still fights speculative natural philosophy and "philosophy of history" as well as flat, crawling empiricism, naked factology.

In their attacks against the Marxist principle of the partiality of the social sciences in class society, Wiatr and Baumann also interpret the category of the class character of the social sciences in a very "original" way. For them, the class character of the social sciences (which in and of themselves are not class-bound) consists only in the influence of "class ideologies" that are alien to science itself; as a result of these influences, "doctrines" have been introduced into science "that are not subordinated to logical-experimental scientific criteria, but to ideological criteria of social usefulness". As if the social sciences did not reflect the interests, worldviews and needs of the warring classes. Accordingly, for example, the sociological doctrines of A. Comte, H. Spencer, Dürkheim, Rickert, Bogardus, Ross, Burnham, Toynbee, are not bourgeois, idealist in their essence; they are not expressions of the social and political philosophy of the bourgeoisie, but stand outside the classes, above the classes, and contain only some

unscientific doctrines which can easily be thrown out of these sociological theories without changing their social essence in the least.

From this logically follows the conclusion that the Marxists and the bourgeois sociologists can throw overboard their ideological principles, embrace each other and begin to build the general, unified, latest, modern sociology and substitute it for the earlier, class-bound sociologies.

So that nothing remains unclear, we emphasize that the Marxists hold that absolute truth is independent of the consciousness, will and interests of classes. There is only one objective truth of science, there are no truths of mathematics, geometry, history, philosophy or political economy which are different for different classes (and this is not what the Marxists mean when they speak of the partiality of philosophy, natural science or the class character of the social sciences). But firstly, objective truth is not given in a *finished* form, but is developed in the complicated and contradictory process of cognition, which is always *socially* conditioned and in class society necessarily takes place under the influence of class struggles. Secondly, every science always serves certain *social forces*, classes, fulfils a certain *social*

function, serves above all the interests of the ruling class, its needs. Thirdly, science is created by people who belong to different classes of society and who approach the objects of knowledge from different angles, from the standpoint of the interests of their social practice. They pose different problems and behave differently towards objective truth; they draw different theoretical, methodological, ideological conclusions from one and the same discoveries. All this must also have an effect on the content of the social sciences, not to mention their utilization. Natural science, which studies the phenomena of nature, touches less on class interests and can be applied directly in production by all classes; that is why the class structure of society does not leave such a stamp on the natural sciences as it does on the social sciences. That is why it is ridiculous to speak of a feudal, bourgeois or proletarian mathematics, geometry, physics, chemistry and biology. But the ruling classes in society determine how and for what purpose these sciences are exploited: for the enrichment of a bunch of exploiters and for the oppression of the exploited masses, or in the interest of the liberation of the oppressed and exploited masses, in the interest of war, the destruction of

peoples, or in the interest of peace.

In natural science, too, a fierce struggle is going on between materialism and idealism in the interpretation of the discoveries and findings of science, on the one hand in favour of idealism, fideism or clericalism, on the other in the interests of materialism and atheism, either in the justification of the bourgeois world outlook or in the justification of the proletarian, socialist one. An even fiercer ideological struggle is taking place in the social sciences. What follows from this for the Marxist? Only one thing: to defend materialism, atheism, objective truth in science against idealism, fideism, religion and fanaticism.

Is today's bourgeois sociology idealistic? Wiatr and Baumann doubt that too. More even, they do not doubt that "the main directions of contemporary sociology are not idealistic". (We are talking here about non-Marxist, i.e. bourgeois sociology, because Marxist sociology, according to Wiatr and Baumann, is only at the stage of provisional theorems and principles, and does not yet have a scientific apparatus, a theoretical system or an independent method).

Thus, the idealist direction is no longer the dominant one within the main directions of



bourgeois sociology. That the widespread “narrow-empiricist” direction in bourgeois sociology is mostly connected with the tacit adoption of idealist epistemological principles, Wiatr and Baumann must also admit; but they immediately reassure themselves and the reader that, firstly, this “is not the rule” and that, secondly, this direction meets with strong opposition among the sociologists of the capitalist countries. Wiatr and Baumann present the matter as if the majority of bourgeois sociologists had already gone over to materialism, had committed a kind of ideological fall from grace. As proof of this thesis, they point out that a whole series of bourgeois sociologists, in explaining social development, endeavour to assume the determining role of economic factors. Thus, for example, according to Wiatr and Baumann, the conception of W. Ogborn must be criticized not because of its idealism but because of “the one-sided exaggeration of the role of technical changes”, i.e. because of vulgar materialism. Further, the recognition of the “determinant role of social structure in the various social forms of human thought is an almost universally unquestioned sociological principle”. That is the whole line of argument. And from this the following

two main “conclusions” are immediately drawn:

1. “Marxist sociology has not, in the period since Marx worked out its foundations, formed itself into a developed scientific theoretical system provided with a corresponding scientific apparatus.” It has not created its own method and procedure for the study of social empiricism and must therefore pay homage to bourgeois sociology and apprentice itself to it.
2. “In the same period, individual Marxist sociological principles have been taken up and used by various sociological theories, including those which in words, in their declarations, distinguish themselves from Marxism.”

In reality, however, they have become Marxist, materialist and dialectical, calling for an all-round and concrete investigation, “a dynamic consideration of the object of research”, of the interaction between quantitative and qualitative changes, or the study of the sources of social dynamics in the clash of opposing forces, etc.

What is the use, then, of quarrelling and fighting between Marxists and non-Marxists over problems which — as it turns out — do not separate them at all but unite them, all the more so since the “separation of the two directions in philosophy is decidedly obsolete in our time by an

unbridgeable gulf”?

Indeed, what is this “unbridgeable gulf” between materialism and idealism, between bourgeois and Marxist sociology, when our sociologists hop over, well and truly, from the position of materialism and Marxist sociology to the position of idealism and bourgeois sociology, “reconciling” them so sweetly with each other — but only in their imagination, and not in actual reality, where the struggle goes on with the same intensity as before?

Such a cover-up of class antagonisms and class struggle is nothing but pure idealistic charlatany. That bourgeois scientists — historians, sociologists, economists — successfully use individual tenets of Marxist philosophy, its dialectical method or Marxist sociology for themselves and their science has been known for a long time. Engels, Lenin, Plekhanov and other Marxists wrote about it, criticizing at the same time the eclecticism, hopeless confusion, inconsistency, idealism and metaphysics in the teachings of bourgeois scholars. Lenin has shown particularly clearly that such ideologists of the bourgeoisie as Struve or Sombart and such reformists as Bernstein took from Marxism only *what is acceptable to the bour-*

*geois* and rejected *the main thing* in Marxism; they even recognized (though only in words) the class struggle, but in no case its carrying through to the end, to the dictatorship of the proletariat and the abolition of the exploiting classes and of classes in general. What Marxist is unaware of the fact that many bourgeois theoreticians and reformists recognized the “importance” or even the primary importance of the economic factor in the development of society, but denied the determining role of material production, of the material conditions of life, the determining role of social being in the development of consciousness, and thus sank to a confused, eclectic theory of the reciprocal influence of various factors which are equal among themselves.

V.I. Lenin already proved in his polemic with Struve in 1894 that the theory according to which social science stands above the classes, outside the classes, is an expression of the ideology of bourgeois objectivism, which differs in principle from the ideology of Marxism. Marxist materialism implies proletarian partisanship, i.e. the duty to adopt a certain standpoint, that of the most advanced and revolutionary class, the working class, and to study and evaluate the various social phe-

nomena from the standpoint of this class. In 1905, in the struggle with the political ideology of the cadets, the bourgeois liberals, Lenin proved that the idea of impartiality propagated by the ideologists of the bourgeoisie, both in science and in politics, is a typically bourgeois (and petty-bourgeois) idea. The ideology of impartiality is the ideology of those social strata and classes which, as a result of their social situation, are interested in the blurring of class antagonisms, antagonisms, opposing class interests; that is why their ideologists do not openly appear in the name of their class, but disguise their position with the opaque ideology of “impartiality”, “non-partisanship”, with an ideology of their class politics “above the classes”. But this does not mean that their politics and ideology, philosophy and science are “above the classes”, “non-partisan” and “impartial”, on the contrary, under the flag of impartiality they serve the bourgeoisie better than if they openly stood up for its class interests.

The ideologists of the bourgeoisie and the revisionists drifting in their wake do not want to admit this. They insist that the discussions and scientific disputes in sociology, as in any other science, cannot be considered “as an expression of

the struggle of political conceptions". Not a single Marxist has ever claimed that every scientific dispute is an expression of the struggle of political conceptions; but Marxism has claimed and continues to claim that in a society in which antagonistic classes confront each other, fighting each other most fiercely, there can be no social science which is neutral, "impartial" or "non-partisan" towards the antagonistic classes.

*"To expect an impartial science in a society of wage slavery," wrote Lenin, "would be as foolish a naivety as to expect impartiality, say, from the factory owners on the question whether one should not raise the wages of the workers by lowering the profit of capital."*<sup>1</sup>

The revisionists will not succeed in concealing the fact that the entire bourgeois social science defends the capitalist system, wage slavery, one way or another, even if it calls this order the "free" world and openly slanders socialism. Marxism, however, has declared a ruthless struggle against this wage slavery and leads the working class, the labourers, along the only correct road to libera-

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<sup>1</sup> V.I. Lenin: Selected Works in 2 Volumes, vol. 1, Moscow 1946, p. 63.

tion, the road of class struggle and the construction of classless communist society.

And the very fact that the bourgeois sociologists, the reformists and revisionists are leading fierce attacks against the ideology of Marxism, against its philosophical foundations, its sociological theory, but especially against the political conclusions of this theory, proves once again the correctness of the Marxist-Leninist theory of class struggle.

*“The dialectic of history is such,”* wrote Lenin in 1913, *“that the theoretical victory of Marxism forces its enemies to disguise themselves as Marxists.”*<sup>1</sup>

The new successes of Marxism gave rise to new attempts to revive rotten bourgeois liberalism in the form of today’s revisionism, which appears under the flag of “defence” of creative Marxism. The aim here is to crush in these “liberal” embraces if not all Marxism, at least some ideologically insecure Marxists. Other fighting forces of ideologists of the bourgeoisie and revisionists will openly “refute” Marxism, criticize

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<sup>1</sup> V.I. Lenin: Selected Works in 2 Volumes, vol. 1, Moscow 1946, p. 70.

and slander it after them. Such division of labour and specialization in “annihilating” and “criticizing” Marxism has been going on for a long time, and only people who are inexperienced in ideological struggle do not notice it. It was such inexperienced people that Wiatr and Baumann were reckoning with when they wrote: “We are of the opinion that if the situation in sociology throughout the world resembles a battlefield criss-crossed by trenches from which the opponent is systematically pelted with fire, then one must renounce such an opinion.” Is it not hypocrisy to declare this after the authors themselves — with what success is another question — systematically took fire at the positions of the “official” Marxist social sciences, Marx’s theory of class struggle, and praised the main directions of bourgeois sociology in every possible way? For just before the declarations we have quoted, the authors repeat the bourgeois lie of the “deep decay of social sciences in the era of Stalin’s terror”. We recall that the authors thought these outbursts against the social sciences of the countries of socialism were appropriate after the fascist coup in Hungary. These outbursts were probably very convenient for the bourgeois critics of Marxism who were calling at



the top of their lungs for a “critique” of Marxism and world communism on all street corners during this period.

The revisionist myth of the liberation of science from ideology, the rejection of the partiality of philosophy and sociology, leads logically to the separation of science from practice, to the bourgeois theory of the impartiality of science, pure science, etc. But this is the direct road to scholasticism. Opposites touch each other. Positivism begins with naked empiricism, propagates distrust of theory (under the flag of the critique of speculative theory) and arrives safely at scholasticism by separating sociology from politics. This is a characteristic trait, a characteristic tendency of bourgeois positivist “philosophy” and “sociology”. It is precisely from the womb of this “philosophy” and “sociology” that the revisionist ideas about the liberation of science from ideology and the scholastic theories from isolation, i.e., from the separation of sociology from politics, have grown.

The revisionists write and theorize about industrialization and urbanization in general, about the freedom of personality in general, but they are not willing to explain and underline the funda-

mental difference between capitalist and socialist industrialization, between the development of town and village under capitalism and under socialism, between the position of the personality of the labourer, the worker (the millions of unemployed slaves of capital), the oppressed colonial peoples (who are subjected to merciless exploitation, oppression and discrimination) and the position of the personality of labourers, women, whole nations, who are freed from exploitation, are truly free and equal creators of their lives. From the point of view of the revisionists, this is again politics and aggression of ideology against “pure science”, which has been isolated by them with so much effort from politics and practice; such an approach to the questions would indeed mean the recognition of the primacy of practice, of politics over theory, over science! This is a political-pragmatic revision of Marxism, declare the Yugoslav revisionists, taking the conclusions of the revisionist theory of the liberation of science from the ideology and politics of Marxism to their logical conclusion. Here we have before us quite clearly the old bourgeois idea of the separation of theory and practice, science and life, characterized by Lenin *as a specific trait of the bourgeois*

*world outlook, of bourgeois ideology*, in which the hypocrisy of the whole bourgeois civilization comes out.

Marxism assumes that practice is the basis of all knowledge and the objective criterion of the truth of every theory; it determines the direction in which knowledge develops, determines its tasks, its problems, it provides the material means for knowledge. Practice is “higher” than theory in the sense that it has the significance of “immediate reality”. Through practice, theory is translated into life.

The politics of certain social classes exerts a strong and determining influence on the development of the whole of social consciousness, science, art, etc. In this sense, too, the Marxists recognize the primacy of practice over theory, which by no means provides a basis for speaking of a rapprochement of Marxism with pragmatism, for this does not eliminate the direct opposition of their starting points, the foundations of their philosophy, their worldview, their relation to objective truth, nor their directly opposed conception of practice itself. The Marxist conception of the primacy of practice, of politics over theory, of philosophy, of the primacy of life over science,

does not at all imply any *degradation* of the role of theory.

For the pragmatist, everything is true that is useful, that leads to success, that is advantageous at a given moment for a given person or a given class. Religion is useful, it gives “consolation” which is advantageous to the bourgeoisie, so it is true, so think the pragmatists, the subjective idealists. For the Marxist, on the other hand, only that knowledge is true which correctly reflects *objective* reality; only such knowledge is useful to man and humanity, useful to the working class in its struggle for the revolutionary transformation of reality. This is the very reason why Marxism attaches such extraordinary importance to correct scientific theory in general and to revolutionary theory in particular.

The revisionists criticize Marxism for emphasizing and establishing the inseparable unity of theory and practice, philosophy and politics (strategy and tactics) of Marxism. They even claim that this is a “pragmatic revision” of Marxism. This assertion is made, without any attempt at substantiation or proof, in the program of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia. In fact, this means “putting the blame on someone else”. Eve-

ryone knows that such a Marxist as Marx reproached the earlier philosophers that they only interpreted the world differently, whereas what mattered was to change it. The philosophy of this change of reality *itself* became the *most powerful weapon* for the transformation of the world in the hands of the revolutionary class, the proletariat. It was precisely Marx who wrote of Feuerbach that the latter had not recognized the importance of practical-critical, i.e. revolutionary practice, and had only considered it in its bourgeois manifestation, as a dirty haggling. For the Marxist, Lenin's teaching has become the axiom that anyone who separates the philosophy of Marxism, dialectical materialism, from revolutionary practice, politics, strategy and tactics, consciously or unconsciously distorts Marxism, one-sided it and turns it into a lifeless dogma. And conversely, the very unity of the theory of Marxism with revolutionary practice, the politics, strategy and tactics of the proletariat makes it irreconcilable, hostile to dogmatism and scholasticism. Thanks to this unity, revolutionary theory always remains alive, capable of development and creative. By uniting theory and practice in an indissoluble inner unity, Marxism does not degrade the role of theory, but gives it a

significance like no other philosophy, transforming it into a powerful weapon for the revolutionary transformation of the world by man.

The aim and meaning of the revisionist theory of the liberation of science from ideology is ultimately to separate science from the practice of the revolutionary struggle, from the practice of building the new, socialist society, to “liberate” it from the influence of Marxist ideology and philosophy, from the leading and directing influence of the Communist Party, and to strengthen the influence of bourgeois ideology on science.

It is characteristic that the program of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, which claims to fight against the “pragmatic distortion” of the views of Marxism, particularly emphasizes, with regard to the role of science and art in society, that the Communist Party should not play the role of a judge in relation to scientific and artistic trends, schools and styles, that it should not express its opinion on these questions at all and that it should not interfere.

This creates an original situation: every communist, scholar, artist, like every other member of society, can act as a judge towards the various schools and directions in science and art, but the

Communist Party, the avant-garde of the whole people, of the whole society, must not represent its judgement, its assessment.

#### **4. For a Unified Consistent Marxism, Against Eclecticism and Lack of Ideas in Science**

In conclusion, one could examine those arguments of Wiatr and Baumann which are put forward in order to prove that the principle of partisanship and irreconcilability of Marxists towards bourgeois ideology, philosophy and sociology allegedly makes the establishment of scientific contacts, disputes and discussions between Marxist and non-Marxist sociologists impossible and leads to sectarianism, to the "isolation" of Marxism, to the neglect of concrete sociological investigations, etc., etc. But enough has already been written and spoken about this in our country, and there is no need to refute anew these fantasies of the revisionists about the "dangers" which are supposed to threaten Marxism.

The need for *concrete* historical, economic, sociological, ethnographic and other investigations arises from the spirit of Marxist philosophy,

from its revolutionary method, and is dictated by the daily needs of the practice of building socialism. These investigations must be vigorously and persistently organized and carried out, but on the basis of the Marxist-Leninist world outlook, its scientific method and its scientific procedures, not on the basis of *capitulation* to bourgeois philosophy and sociology, as the revisionists propose to us. We Marxists have never refused and will never refuse to use valuable factual material from the investigations of bourgeois scholars, including sociologists, especially when it concerns progressive directions. We are also ready to “learn” from them the technique of concrete investigations, as far as they exist. But we will always expose the defectiveness of the foundations of bourgeois sociology, demonstrate the harmful effects of this false starting position on concrete investigations, whatever valuable factual material may be contained in these investigations.

Marxists know very well that individual bourgeois scholars, including sociologists, economists and historians, exploit some ideas and tenets of Marxism for their investigations. But for what reason should we “reconcile” ourselves to the one-sided appropriation of individual fragments from



Marxism and their eclectic combination with bourgeois sociology and renounce the defence of unified, consistent, revolutionary Marxism?

History shows that not a single social movement has benefited from allowing itself to be disintegrated by elements and ideas alien and hostile to it, leading to insecurity, fluctuations, degeneration and decay. Did not the process of opportunist transformation, the degeneration of many social-democratic parties, the betrayal of socialism, the collapse of the Second International in 1914 and its transfer to the side of the imperialist bourgeoisie take place before the eyes of the millions of workers of all countries? Why should the communists ignore this bitter lesson of the socialist movement?

It is clear that today many non-Marxist scholars in many countries are becoming more and more interested in Marxism, that they are appropriating individual pages and ideas of Marxism and applying them beneficially in their work in the interests of peace and humanity.

The increasing differentiation of the intelligentsia of the capitalist world and the growing attraction of Marxism for the left strata of this intelligentsia can be explained by the growing influ-

ence of the communist parties on the masses and by the growing international authority of the socialist camp. The growing influence of Marxism could only be achieved thanks to the ideological and political firmness, the communist consciousness, the organizedness, the unity and discipline of the Marxist workers' parties, thanks to the irreconcilable struggle against reactionary bourgeois ideology, against ideological fluctuations, deviations, against factions in their own ranks, thanks to the struggle for the purity of Marxist-Leninist theory. This influence is strengthened because the communists correctly estimate the extraordinarily great importance of ideology in the class struggle; they understand Lenin's teaching that anyone who belittles the importance and role of ideology in the workers' movement is consciously or unconsciously opening the way for the strengthening of the influence of bourgeois ideology and bourgeois politics. It is precisely this pernicious cause that is served by the scribbblings of the revisionists, especially their theory on the liberation of science from ideology.

The idea of neutrality, of the impartiality of science in the struggle between materialism and idealism, between mutually exclusive class ideolo-

gies, is theoretically untenable.

This idea is bourgeois and petty-bourgeois in its class character. The eclecticism, internal contradiction and lack of principle of the positivist idea of the impartiality of science reflect the class standpoint of the bourgeoisie and the petty-bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie is interested in concealing, in masking the class character of its ideology, of its social theories, in presenting them as “universally valid”, as popular, as “pure” science, which allegedly does not reflect the interests and the worldview of certain classes. The petty-bourgeois is, on the one hand, a labourer who is oppressed and exploited by big capitalists. This brings him closer to the proletariat, pushing him towards the proletariat as the ally in the struggle against capital. On the other hand, the petty-bourgeois is a small owner, a commodity producer, who — bound by his small property — is at the same time entangled in the network of private property relations. This pushes him away from the proletariat and into the arms of bourgeois ideology and politics. From this follows the inevitable fluctuations of the petty-bourgeoisie and its intelligentsia between the bourgeoisie and the revolutionary proletariat. These fluctuations

are reflected consciously, on the one hand, in the aspiration to be “higher” than the main classes and their ideology, “outside” the classes and “above” the classes, and, on the other hand, in the aspiration to reconcile these irreconcilable ideologies. This explains the eclecticism characteristic of the ideologists of the vacillating petty-bourgeoisie.

These are the class roots of the theory of the “liberation” of science from ideology, of the theory of impartiality and of social science standing outside the classes. The ideologue of the petty-bourgeoisie, entangled in the ideas of private property, bourgeois individualism, anarchy and spontaneity, is unable to free himself from the chains of bourgeois ideology unless he undertakes the critique of this ideology from the standpoint of Marxism. Only the philosophy of Marxism showed the working class and all labourers the way out of the mental slavery in which all oppressed classes used to be; only it gave humanity the great weapon of knowledge and the transformation of the world. Only Marxism-Leninism pointed the way to the liberation of humanity from all social and national oppression.

Lenin said that Marxist doctrine is unified,

harmonious and omnipotent because it is true, because its truth is proved by the course of history; it is cast as if from one piece of steel, so that one cannot detach a single essential part from it without distorting the essence as a whole, without risking falling into the net of bourgeois lies. That is why Marxists follow Lenin's instruction to "forge the steel of the Marxist world outlook" and to resist all revisionists who want to contaminate this steel with bourgeois dross.