

**ALL-UNION SOCIETY
FOR THE DISSEMINATION OF POLITICAL AND
SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE**

**CORRESPONDING MEMBER OF
THE USSR Academy of Sciences**

F. V. Konstantinov

**ABOUT BASE AND
SUPERSTRUCTURE**

**Episode 11
No. 63**

PUBLISHING HOUSE “SNANIE” MOSCOW 1953

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Ф. В. КОНСТАНТИНОВ

О БАЗИСЕ И НАДСТРОЙКЕ

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People produce the material goods necessary for life, exchange and consume these goods, and engage in politics, science, art, literature, and philosophy. All of this constitutes the complex and diverse process of social life, forming the historical movement of society, its progressive development from lower to higher forms.

Before Marx and Engels, philosophers, sociologists, and historians struggled with how to separate “important” phenomena from “unimportant” ones, the essential from the nonessential, and the necessary from the accidental in the complex and diverse realm of social life. And since each bourgeois sociologist and historian proceeded (and continues to proceed) from some preconceived and favoured idea, the result was (and continues to be) an incredible arbitrariness, chaos, and subjectivity in all their “sociological” constructs—all of which are alien to science.

The great merit of Marx and Engels as the creators of a genuine science of the laws of social development was that they were the first to establish the simple fact, hidden under ideological layers, that people must first of all eat, drink, have a home and clothes before being able to engage in politics, science, art, religion, etc.; that, therefore, the production of the immediate material means of life and thus each given stage of the economic development of a people or an era form the basis from which state institutions, legal views, art and even religious ideas of a given people develop and from which they must therefore be explained—and not vice versa, as has been done until now¹.

If the production of material goods necessary for human life is the primary, fundamental and original historical fact, without which there is no society and social life, then, consequently, those relations between people that are formed in the process of production, i.e., production

¹ K. Marx, F. Engels. Selected Works, Vol. II , p. 157. Gospolitizdat, 1948.

relations, are primary and represent the real basis, the foundation that determines political, legal, religious, artistic, philosophical views and the institutions corresponding to these views.

Marx gave the classic formulation of the most important proposition of historical materialism about the base and superstructure in his famous preface to “A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy.”

“In the social production of their lives, people enter into certain necessary relations independent of their will—production relations that correspond to a certain stage of development of their material productive forces. The totality of these production relations constitutes the economic structure of society, the real basis upon which the legal and political superstructure rises and to which correspond certain forms of social consciousness. “¹

As we see, Marx defines the base here as the totality of production relations corresponding to a specific stage of development of material productive forces. The political and legal superstructure, as well as the forms of social consciousness, correspond to and are determined by this historically defined base.

V. I. Lenin saw Marx’s historical merit in the fact that, in creating the science of society, he was the first to establish the division of social relations into material and ideological. The latter are a reflection of the former.

Material relations are production, economic relations that, when formed, do not first pass through the consciousness of people, while ideological relations are those that, when formed, first pass through the consciousness of people.

Ideological relations, according to Lenin’s definition, represent a superstructure over material economic relations.

¹ K. Marx, F. Engels. Selected Works, Vol. I , p. 322. Gospolitizdat. 1948.

In all their works, Marx and Engels, when analysing capitalist society, as well as pre-capitalist social formations, were always guided by this division of social relations into economic relations, as defining ones, and ideological relations, as a reflection of economic relations, serving as a superstructure above them. At the same time, Marx and Engels always considered the dominant ideas of a given society to be those of the ruling class. The fundamental, essential element of the superstructure is the state, law, and ideology of the ruling class, reflecting the economic structure of a given society and protecting and strengthening it.

A common thread running through all of V. I. Lenin's works is the division of social relations into economic and productive ones, on the one hand, and ideological ones, on the other. Without this division, there cannot be historical materialism, just as there cannot be historical materialism without the fundamental principle that social existence determines social consciousness.

The position on the base and superstructure makes it possible to explain not only the relationship of ideological phenomena to the economy of society, but also the relationship of political, legal and other institutions to the political, legal and other views of a given society, as well as to the economic structure of a given society.

The Marxist-Leninist theory of base and superstructure found its further development in the works of I. V. Stalin.

The work "Marxism and Questions of Linguistics" defines base and superstructure, reveals their internal connections and interactions, and demonstrates the laws of destruction of the old, moribund base and its superstructure, as well as the laws of the emergence and development of a new base and superstructure. This work exposes vulgar, simplistic, and anti-Marxist views on base and superstructure and profoundly explores the role of the superstructure in the development of society.

So what is the basis of society?

The basis is the economic structure of society at a given stage of its development. The economic structure of society is the totality of historically determined production relations that develop between people in the process of producing material goods. These production relations are determined by the state of society's productive forces, changes in which inevitably alter the economic basis of society.

The basis of capitalist society is characterised by capitalist private ownership of the means of production, relations of exploitation and oppression of workers by capitalists, and a capitalist form of distribution of goods. The capitalist basis, like slavery and feudal serfdom, is inherently antagonistic—it is based on domination and subordination.

In his work “On Dialectical and Historical Materialism,” J. V. Stalin gives the following characterisation of capitalist production relations, i.e., the basis of capitalist society: “Under the capitalist system, the basis of production relations is capitalist ownership of the means of production in the absence of ownership of the workers in production—hired workers whom the capitalist cannot kill or sell, because they are free from personal dependence, but who are deprived of the means of production and, in order not to die of hunger, are forced to sell their labor power to the capitalist and bear the yoke of exploitation on their necks”¹.

All three volumes of Marx's *Capital*, along with several other of his brilliant works, are devoted to a comprehensive analysis of the economic system of capitalism, or the capitalist basis. A scientific analysis of the state of the economic system of capitalism during the period of imperialism is provided in V. I. Lenin's “Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism” and other works by Lenin, as well as in the writings of J. V. Stalin.

¹ History of the All-Union Communist Party (B). Short Course, p. 120.

The capitalist foundation has long since become reactionary. The profound contradictions it has generated are leading it to its inevitable, inescapable demise. The revolutionary class struggle of the proletariat against capitalism stems from the inherent nature of the capitalist economic system, and it cannot be eliminated by any decrees or any violence on the part of the reactionary ruling circles of bourgeois states.

As a result of the socialist revolution in Russia, the capitalist basis was replaced by a socialist basis, which is characterised by public socialist ownership of the means of production, the absence of exploitation of man by man, relations of cooperation and mutual assistance between free workers of a socialist society, and a socialist form of distribution of products according to the quantity and quality of labor.

“The economic foundation of the USSR,” states Article 4 of the USSR Constitution, “consists of the socialist economic system and socialist ownership of the instruments and means of production, established as a result of the liquidation of the capitalist economic system, the abolition of private ownership of the instruments and means of production, and the abolition of the exploitation of man by man.” Under the socialist economic system, the principle is established: “From each according to his ability, to each according to his work.”

In socialist society, production relations have been fully aligned with the nature of the productive forces. Under socialism, the social nature of production is reinforced by public ownership of the means of production.

The socialist foundation is the most progressive foundation. It has already proven its vitality, its advantage, and its superiority over the capitalist foundation. In a short historical period, our country has made a gigantic leap from backwardness to progress. The Soviet people, under the leadership of the Communist Party, have built socialism and are successfully advancing along the path to communism.

The economic base, or economic structure of a given society, **should be distinguished from production, from the production process.** The production process is the interaction between society and nature, while the base, or economic structure of a society, is the totality of historically determined production relations between people. The distinctive feature of the base is that it serves society economically.

What does it mean to serve society economically? It means that the production of material goods requires not only productive forces but also production relations. Without these production relations, the production process is impossible, and therefore, society itself cannot exist.

Each new basis, replacing the old, dying one, serves society better than the previous basis; the new basis opens up greater opportunities, greater scope for the development of productive forces.

The economic base determines the social superstructure. As is the base, so is the superstructure.

What is a social superstructure? What social phenomena does it encompass?

“The superstructure is the political, legal, religious, artistic, and philosophical views of society and the political, legal, and other institutions that correspond to them.”¹ If the specific feature of the base is that it serves society economically, then the specific feature of the superstructure is that it serves society with political, legal, aesthetic, and other social ideas and the corresponding political, legal, and other institutions.

Like the base, the superstructure is historical in nature. A historically defined economic base corresponds to a specific superstructure of a given society, generated by it. The feudal base has its feudal superstructure, its social, political, and other views and institutions; the capitalist base

¹ J. Stalin. *Marxism and Questions of Linguistics*, p. 5. *Gospolitizdat*. 1952.

has its own, i.e., capitalist, superstructure; the socialist base has its own, corresponding and conditioned socialist superstructure.

Consequently, the characteristic feature of the superstructure is that it is the product of a single era, during which a given economic base exists and operates. Consequently, the superstructure is short-lived, lasting only a single era; a historically defined superstructure is liquidated and disappears along with the liquidation of the given base.

The destruction of the old, obsolete superstructure and its replacement with a new one is caused by the historical necessity of ensuring scope for the development of the productive forces of society.

A characteristic feature of the superstructure is that it is connected to production, to the process of production, not directly, but indirectly, through its economic base. Changes in the production process, in the productive forces, and in their level of development do not directly and immediately influence changes in the superstructure, but indirectly, through the base, through changes in the base.

Depending on and in accordance with changes in the state of productive forces, a fundamental change in human production relations ultimately occurs, a revolutionary shift in the economic base. And this fundamental change in the base leads to a fundamental change in the social superstructure.

Considering the process of revolutionary replacement of an obsolete base and its corresponding superstructure with a new base and superstructure, Marx wrote: "At a certain stage of their development, the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production, or—which is only the legal expression of this—with the property relations within which they have hitherto developed. From forms of development of the productive forces, these relations are transformed into their fetters. Then begins the era of social revolution. With the change in

the economic basis, a more or less rapid revolution in the entire enormous superstructure takes place. “¹

Consequently, changes in the vast social superstructure lag somewhat behind changes in the productive forces. This lag is due, firstly, to the nature of consciousness, ideas, views, and ideology, which reflect social existence, and, secondly, to the reactionary activities of moribund social forces defending old, obsolete ideas, views, and institutions.

The superstructure in a class society is class-specific. It is created by the ruling class and serves the needs not of society as a whole, but only of the ruling class. This distinguishes the superstructure, in particular, from language, which serves the various classes of a given society, equally serving the various bases of different societies, and is created by the entire nation, a given people, and not by any particular class. The great Russian language and the languages of other peoples of the USSR equally served the capitalist base and all classes of bourgeois society, just as they now superbly serve the socialist base, socialist culture, and all aspects of life in a socialist society.

The most important feature of the superstructure is that, having arisen as a product, as a reflection of a historically determined basis, it then exerts a reverse active influence on the basis that gave rise to it.

Unlike vulgar materialists, economists, Mensheviks, Kautskyites, right-wing socialists and other supporters of the theory of spontaneity, spontaneous development, and the peaceful growth of capitalism into socialism, Marxists have always recognised the active role of the superstructure, the great mobilising, organising and transforming role of advanced ideas, advanced social and political institutions in the life and development of society.

The superstructure is created by the base, its product and reflection. But it is neither passive nor neutral in relation to the fate of its base, to the fate of classes, to the nature of

¹ K. Marx, F. Engels. Selected Works, Vol. I , p. 322.

the social order. Once formed, the superstructure becomes a great active force, helping its base to take shape and strengthen. The superstructure helps the new order, the advanced forces of society, to finish off and eliminate the old base and the old classes, the reactionary forces. “The superstructure is created by the base precisely so that it can serve it, so that it can actively help it take shape and strengthen itself, so that it can actively fight for the liquidation of the old, moribund base and its old superstructure. It is only necessary for the superstructure to renounce this subservient role, to shift from a position of active defence of its base to a position of indifference toward it, to a position of equal treatment of classes, for it to lose its quality and cease to be a superstructure . “

* * *

Thus, the superstructure plays an active role; it serves its own base, which gave birth to it.

The active nature of the superstructure can be expressed in the defence and protection of the moribund base, the social order, and its ruling class. This is precisely the function the superstructure performs in modern capitalist society, protecting the thoroughly rotten, moribund capitalist base from destruction. This superstructure plays a reactionary role, hindering the development of productive forces.

Capitalism as an economic system has completely outlived its usefulness. Capitalist production relations have long since become the greatest obstacle to the development of modern, powerful productive forces. Periodic economic crises, as well as destructive imperialist wars, are generated by the nature of the capitalist system and are an expression of the reactionary nature of the capitalist foundation.

¹ J. Stalin. *Marxism and Questions of Linguistics*, p. 7.

The reactionary capitalist superstructure, primarily the bourgeois state and bourgeois political and other views, ideas, and theories, are called upon to protect, defend, and justify the capitalist base. With the transition from pre-monopoly capitalism to monopoly capitalism, i.e., imperialism, came the transition from bourgeois democracy to imperialist reaction. The rejection of even limited, rotten, false, and corrupt bourgeois democracy and the transition to fascism, to an open terrorist dictatorship over the working people—such is the characteristic feature of modern capitalism. The reactionary bourgeoisie, through open terror, violence, and predatory wars, strives to preserve the foundations of capitalism, to save the capitalist base and all of bourgeois society from destruction. This is precisely what the reactionary role of the bourgeois superstructure boils down to.

In his work “The Collapse of the Second International,” V. I. Lenin writes that oppressor, exploiting classes require two social functions to maintain their rule: the executioner and the priest. The executioner, i.e., the exploiting state, must forcibly suppress, and does suppress, the protests and rebellion of the oppressed and exploited masses. The priest, i.e., all the ideologists of the bourgeoisie, including its right-wing socialist lackeys, paints illusory prospects for the oppressed masses, poisons and corrupts their consciousness, attempts to reconcile them with the existing bourgeois system, paralyse their resolve in the struggle against capitalism, their revolutionary spirit, and strives to destroy their faith in their own strength, their ability to overthrow capitalist rule, their ability to carry out a socialist revolution, and build a society without exploitation and oppression. This is precisely the social function of the bourgeois superstructure. Its active role boils down to the comprehensive protection of the economic system of capitalism—the system of wage slavery and the unbridled exploitation of workers.

The socialist superstructure created in the USSR in accordance with the socialist base plays a fundamentally different role.

The socialist superstructure, and above all the socialist state under the leadership of the Communist Party, took all measures to finish off the old base and the exploiting classes and ensure the victory of the new, socialist base, the new social order.

“Over the past 30 years,” writes J. V. Stalin, “the old, capitalist basis in Russia has been liquidated and a new, socialist basis has been built. Accordingly, the superstructure over the capitalist basis has been liquidated and a new superstructure, corresponding to the socialist basis, has been created. Consequently, the old political, legal, and other institutions have been replaced by new, socialist ones . “ 1 ¹

The socialist superstructure performs the functions of comprehensive protection, strengthening and further development of the socialist base.

Thus, the general historical pattern expressed in the decisive role of the base in relation to the superstructure and the active role of the superstructure in relation to the base is fully preserved in socialist society. The socialist superstructure rests on its own socialist base and is determined by it.

The dictatorship of the proletariat and the Communist Party, as the leading force in the system of proletarian dictatorship, arose before the victory of the socialist base and became the decisive condition for its victory. The dictatorship of the proletariat arises during the breakdown of capitalist production relations, during the breakdown of the capitalist base, before the formation of the socialist economic system. Here we see the uniqueness of the socialist revolution compared to the bourgeois revolution, the uniqueness of the formation of the socialist base compared to the formation of the capitalist base, and, consequently,

¹ J. Stalin. *Marxism and Questions of Linguistics*, p. 6.

the special role of the socialist state as the most important political superstructure in the creation of the socialist base.

The capitalist economic basis arose spontaneously within feudalism. This was possible because both capitalism and feudalism are based on private ownership of the means of production. The creation of a socialist economic basis is a different matter. It could not and cannot arise spontaneously within capitalism, for it represents its fundamental opposite, its most radical, revolutionary negation.

Within capitalism, only the material productive forces necessary for the creation of a socialist basis arise spontaneously. Without the vast socialisation of labor achieved by capitalism on a national and global scale, socialism would be impossible. But this socialisation of labor is created in capitalist society on the basis of capitalist private property. This socialisation of labor is only one of the material prerequisites for socialism, for the socialist basis. The creation of this basis itself presupposes, as its decisive prerequisite, a socialist revolution, the violent expropriation of the expropriators, and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The latter is the decisive political means for the creation, formation, and victory of a socialist economy.

The Soviet state could fulfil its great role in destroying the capitalist foundation and establishing a socialist economy only because it relied on the economic law of the obligatory correspondence between production relations and the nature of the productive forces. The working class needed a socialist state to bring production relations into line with the level of development of the productive forces, to help establish a socialist foundation, and subsequently, after the victory of this foundation, to facilitate its consolidation and development.

This special role of the socialist state, the socialist superstructure as a whole, stems from the fact that the socialist system is based on public, socialist ownership, on the planned organisation of the entire national economy on a

national scale. The socialist economic system is hostile to the spontaneous, to the unpredictable.

While under a capitalist system based on private ownership of the means of production, economic laws operate spontaneously, a socialist system presupposes conscious, planned, centralised management of the entire national economy based on the conscious application of objective economic laws. This guiding and organisational role is fulfilled by the socialist state.

But despite this specific role of the superstructure under socialism, the decisive role of the base in relation to the socialist superstructure ultimately remains here, in socialist society. The socialist state developed, changing its form and its functions in response to changes occurring in the economic foundation of Soviet society. Based on the strengthening of the socialist base—that is, socialist production relations—the socialist consciousness of tens of millions of people and new, socialist views also consolidated.

When Marxists speak of the superstructure, they mean the entirety of its constituent elements—political, legal, aesthetic, and philosophical views and the institutions that correspond to them. The process of forming and consolidating this complex and vast socialist superstructure was by no means completed immediately after the establishment of Soviet power. This process has been ongoing for the past 30 years. Even now, during the transition from socialism to communism, the Communist Party, the Soviet state, and all the progressive figures in socialist society must struggle against the vestiges of capitalism in the consciousness of Soviet people, against the non-socialist attitude toward labor, against the lax attitude toward socialist property among the backward segment of the population, and against the remnants of old customs and bourgeois morality.

This reveals the fact of a certain lag of consciousness behind being, behind the development of conditions of

material life, including the development of the socialist basis.

In characterising the superstructure, Marxism prioritises political, legal, and other views. Institutions—political, legal, and other—emerge from and depend on corresponding political, legal, and other views. This corresponds to the historical course of events.

In the process of social development, as an expression of the needs of society's material development, new, progressive political, legal, and other social views first emerge, followed by institutions corresponding to these views. Initially, on the basis of the contradictions of the capitalist mode of production and the resulting class struggle of the proletariat, as well as on the basis of scientific development, the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the Marxist doctrine of the dictatorship of the proletariat, arose. This idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat, having captured the consciousness of millions of people, became a material force. As a result of the socialist revolution, the dictatorship of the proletariat and its institutions were established in reality.

The superstructure is always created as a result of the conscious activity of people, in contrast to the base, which (before socialism) arose and formed spontaneously.

As is well known, the old, dying superstructure as a whole is destroyed, liquidated during periods of revolution, when spontaneous social development is replaced by the conscious activity of the revolutionary masses.

In place of the old, liquidated superstructure, the revolutionary class consciously creates a new superstructure on the basis of a new, emerging foundation. Individual elements of the new superstructure (new political, legal, and philosophical views, progressive ideas) emerge even before the revolution. But the new superstructure, as a set of political, legal, and other ideas and corresponding political, legal, and other institutions, is created precisely during the

revolution. In his article “Against the Boycott,” V. I. Lenin wrote:

“The high value placed on revolutionary periods in human development stems from Marx’s overall historical views: it is precisely during such periods that the numerous contradictions that slowly accumulate during periods of so-called peaceful development are resolved. It is precisely during such periods that the direct role of different classes in determining the forms of social life manifests itself most forcefully, and the foundations of a political ‘superstructure’ are laid, which then lasts for a long time on the basis of renewed production relations .¹

During the socialist revolution in Russia, as the old, bourgeois relations of production were dismantled, the working class, led by the Communist Party, laid the foundations of a new political superstructure, establishing and strengthening the dictatorship of the proletariat. This new political superstructure, the Soviet state, was the decisive lever in reorganising the old economy and creating a new, socialist economy.

Socialist production relations are the real, solid foundation—the basis of the entire socialist superstructure, i.e., the political, legal, philosophical, artistic views and the corresponding political, legal and other institutions of socialist society.

In popular Marxist literature and educational practice, all forms of social consciousness, including all areas of scientific knowledge, were usually unconditionally attributed to the superstructure. The superstructure was often interpreted too broadly, incorrectly including language. This was a grave error, which led to tragic consequences in the field of linguistics.

All sciences —natural and social—have in common that they are called upon to provide us with, and indeed do

¹ V. I. Lenin. Works, vol. 13, p. 229. 4th ed.

provide, objective truth, independent of man and humanity. Both natural and social sciences are called upon to discover laws that reflect processes that occur independently of human will. This is the first point. Secondly, the development of science proceeds from ignorance to knowledge, from less complete truth to more complete, from relative truth to absolute truth. Here, there is a continuity, a connection, in the development of all sciences. Each generation of scientists stands on the shoulders of their predecessors. This pattern is inherent equally in all fields of knowledge. Because of this, all science—both natural and social science—has a special relationship to the base and superstructure, distinct from other forms of social consciousness. But in establishing this commonality, we must not lose sight of the differences between the natural and social sciences.

The difference in the subject matter of research also determines the difference in the nature of the social sciences and natural science, their different attitudes toward production, toward the base, toward the superstructure, toward classes. V. I. Lenin wrote that if geometric laws affected class interests, they would be contested. If they did... But these axioms, as well as many laws of nature—mechanical, physical, and chemical laws—usually do not directly affect class interests, and to that extent they can serve different modes of production that are contrary to their goals. The situation is different with the social sciences. Here, the very subject of research—property relations, questions of labor, wages, questions of the state, law, etc.—directly affects class interests.

The social sciences are the theoretical expression of the interests of a given class, the expression and justification of its political ideology. For example, bourgeois political economy, bourgeois “sociology,” and theories of state and law express the political ideology of the bourgeoisie. They grow on the soil of the capitalist base and, as such, are an integral part of the bourgeois superstructure that rises above

it. They belong to this superstructure not because they contain scientific knowledge of objective economic and other social laws; no, bourgeois political economy, sociology, and the theory of the state do not know these objective laws. They belong to the superstructure or relate to it because they express the political, legal, and philosophical views of the bourgeoisie.

Working-class ideologists Marx and Engels subjected bourgeois political economy, bourgeois idealist sociology, and bourgeois political and legal theories to devastating criticism. In their place and in opposition to them, they created proletarian political economy, dialectical and historical materialism.

Political economy, like every social science, is partisan from beginning to end, for it touches upon the most fundamental, vital interests of the contending classes. “In the field of political economy,” wrote Marx in the preface to *Capital*, “free scientific research encounters not only the same enemies as it does in other fields. The peculiar character of the material with which political economy deals calls into the arena of the struggle against free scientific research the most violent, the basest, and the most disgusting passions of the human soul—it calls forth the furies of private interest. Thus, the High Church of England would sooner forgive attacks on 38 of the 39 articles of its creed than attacks on $\frac{1}{39}$ of its monetary income. In our day, atheism itself is a *culpa levis* (a small sin) compared to the criticism of traditional property relations”¹.

Marx writes that bourgeois political economy could remain scientific in many areas only as long as the class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie remained latent and manifested itself only sporadically. But as soon as the proletariat’s class struggle, both practical and theoretical, began to assume increasingly pronounced and threatening forms for bourgeois economics, “the death knell

¹ K. Marx. *Capital*, Vol. I , p. 8. Gospolitsdat. 1949.

struck for scientific bourgeois economics. From now on, it was no longer a question of whether this or that theorem was correct or incorrect, but rather of whether it was useful or harmful to capital, convenient or inconvenient, consistent with police considerations or not. Disinterested research gave way to the battles of hired hacks, and impartial scientific research was replaced by biased, obsequious apologetics .²

Not a single word of bourgeois professors of political economy, Lenin writes, can be believed “once the discussion turns to the general theory of political economy. For the latter is as much a *party* science in modern society as *epistemology* . In general, professors of economics are nothing but learned salesmen of the capitalist class, and professors of philosophy are learned salesmen of the theologians. “³

What Marx and Lenin said about bourgeois political economy applies entirely to all bourgeois “sociology,” historiography, and legal “sciences,” all of which are pseudonyms. Bourgeois social “science” grows out of the capitalist foundation. It was brought into being by it, it serves it, it defends it.

Referring to bourgeois social science, V. I. Lenin wrote: “...there can be no ‘impartial’ social science in a society built on class struggle. One way or another, *all* official and liberal science defends wage slavery, and Marxism has declared merciless war on this slavery. Expecting impartial science in a society of wage slavery is as foolishly naive as expecting impartiality from factory owners on the question of whether workers’ wages should be increased by reducing capital’s profits. “⁴

² Ibid., p. 13.

³ V. I. Lenin. Works, vol. 14, p. 328.

Genuine social science—Marxism—was created by Marx and Engels and further developed by Lenin and Stalin. Marxism represents the scientific expression of the fundamental questions of the working class, its scientific political ideology. This partisan science was born as a rejection of the capitalist base and its superstructure. Under socialism, Marxist political, legal, aesthetic, and philosophical views constitute the socialist superstructure over the socialist base; they reflect it and serve to further strengthen and develop this base. Marxism arose as a result of the development of science, including philosophy, over the preceding period. It derived its rational core from the political economy of the “classics” (elements of the labor theory of value), from the teachings of Hegel—the rational core of his dialectics, and so forth. Bourgeois social “science,” that is, the various bourgeois social and political theories designed to defend and serve the capitalist base, are also eliminated along with the liquidation of the latter.

As for specialised bourgeois economic and historical research, Marxism takes from them only the rich accumulated factual material, rooting out bourgeois pseudoscientific theories hostile to Marxism. The discovery and application of economic and sociological laws affecting class interests encounters fierce resistance from reactionary forces. The standard-bearers for the discovery and application of objective laws of social development are the advanced classes.

Social sciences are weapons in the class struggle. They cannot be neutral toward classes and class struggle. As the embodiment and justification of political and legal views, as well as class ideology, social sciences serve as a superstructure.

The situation is different with the study of nature—natural science. Natural science, as a reflection of nature, a comprehension of its forces and laws, arose from the needs

⁴ Ibid., vol. 19, p. 3.

of producing material goods, from the needs of technological development, from the necessity of subordinating the elemental forces of nature to society.

Characterising the connection between natural sciences and production, Engels writes:

“It is necessary to study *the sequential development* of individual branches of natural science.—First, *astronomy*—already because of the seasons—is absolutely necessary for pastoral and agricultural peoples. Astronomy can develop only with the help of *mathematics*. Consequently, it was necessary to take up the latter. Then, at a certain stage of the development of agriculture and in certain countries (raising water for irrigation in Egypt), and especially with the emergence of cities, large buildings, and the development of crafts, *mechanics also developed*. Soon it also became necessary for *shipping and warfare affairs*. And it requires the help of mathematics and thus determines its development. Thus, from the very beginning, the emergence and development of sciences is determined by production”¹.

This was the case in the ancient world. The decline and fall of slave society was accompanied by a decline in culture and science. The first centuries of feudalism were marked by the persecution of scientific thought, with the undivided dominance of religious obscurantism, theology, and scholasticism. But after the dark night of the Middle Ages, science was reborn with renewed vigour, and we owe this miracle, once again, to production, writes Engels.

All of Toricelli’s hydrostatics arose from the practical needs of regulating mountain streams in Italy (Lombardy), from the needs of hydraulic structures.

The true development of knowledge about electricity began only after its practical use for industrial purposes was achieved. The need for technological advancement drives the development of natural science and the engineering sciences directly related to production.

¹ K. Marx and F. Engels. Works, Vol. XIV , p. 438.

Thus, one of the features of the natural sciences, as a body of knowledge about the laws of nature, about the physical, chemical and other properties of things, is that, unlike the superstructure, they are connected with production, with the process of production, not only through the base, but also directly.

All modern large-scale industry, in both capitalist and socialist societies, unlike medieval crafts, is based on the conscious application of natural science and scientific data. Without the application and utilisation of science, modern large-scale industry could not exist for even a single day. This is especially true for such industries as mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, chemical production, military production, coal mining, oil production, and others.

Social sciences and the understanding of the laws of social development enable the working class, as the advanced class of society, to consciously influence the course of social development to achieve victory in the socialist revolution, and after the socialist revolution, to build socialism and communism. Natural science, reflecting the laws of nature, enables society to harness the elemental forces of nature—the power of wind, heat, steam, and electricity—and to utilise atomic energy and the mechanical, physical, and chemical properties of matter.

Natural science, including mechanics, physics, chemistry, and agrobiolgy, synthesises humanity's wealth of practical, industrial experience. Marx called science the universal spiritual product of social development or the product of general historical development in its abstract summary. While the artisan's and peasant's practical, industrial experience is extremely limited, primitive, and routine, embodied in production skills, habits, and customs passed down from generation to generation, from father to son, science concentrates and scientifically synthesises the best achievements of all human experience.

The distinctive feature of advanced science, based on theoretical thinking, is that it not only generalises

humanity's past experience but also, based on this experience, charts new paths in the development of both science itself and technology and productive forces in general. The discovery of steam power, electricity, and subatomic energy, the discovery of new chemical elements, new deposits of ores, minerals, and their useful physical and chemical properties—all this demonstrates the strength and power of advanced science and its role in the development of productive forces.

Characterising the development of capitalist production, Marx wrote: “Hand in hand with this centralisation, or the expropriation of many capitalists by a few, the cooperative form of the labor process develops on an ever broader, larger scale, and the conscious technical application of science develops...”¹

In the era of monopoly capitalism, monopolies restrict and directly hinder the development and application of science and scientific inventions unless this leads to the enrichment of capitalists. But even in the era of imperialism, large-scale production cannot exist without the application and utilisation of scientific data in industry and agriculture. Increasing the production of surplus value also depends on the development of science and technology. The development of labor productivity, Marx writes, occurs alongside the progress of science and technology.

The role and scope of science are especially great under socialism and the transition to communism. Here, the entire society—from material production and the economic base to the superstructure—is created and developed based on the conscious application and utilisation of all scientific achievements and the laws of natural and social development.

The peculiarity of the superstructure is that it serves society with specific ideas and creates corresponding institutions for it. The natural sciences also generate ideas

¹ K. Marx. Capital, vol. 1, p. 766.

and theories, understanding and formulating laws and principles that reflect the actual, real relationships and connections of things and phenomena. But the application of natural science, applied engineering—mechanics, mechanical engineering, physics, chemistry, soil science, agrobiological— and other sciences to production yields not only ideas and theoretical principles, but also new types of machines, new types of products, new plant varieties, and new breeds of animals. Geologists explore, identify, and discover new riches in the subsoil, deposits of ores, minerals, and rare metals, and put them to the service of humanity. Every advance in chemistry, writes Marx, increases the number of useful substances and the number of useful applications of already known substances.

Soviet scientists and engineers, using the latest advances in modern science and pushing it forward, created hundreds of new types of machines, toolkits, and turbines; Soviet chemists invented new types of raw materials (plastics) and substitutes not found in nature.

Modern chemistry has succeeded in converting solid fuels (coal) into liquids, and hundreds of useful products are produced from petroleum. Humanity owes this achievement to advanced science.

The great Michurin and his outstanding student and follower, Academician T. D. Lysenko, along with thousands of other scientists, developed agro-biological science, developing and continuing to develop new plant varieties, achieving increased crop yields. Soviet soil scientists, developing cutting-edge science, are working to improve soil fertility. The transition from capitalism to socialism means the greatest possible rapprochement between science and industry. Leading Soviet scientists are fighting against the separation of science from production and practice, and are advocating for the maximum and comprehensive connection between science and industry.

The gap between science and production is unnatural. By applying the laws of natural science to large-scale industry

and, to some extent, to agriculture in the interests of intensifying the exploitation of the working class, capitalism, by virtue of its antagonistic nature and the deepening opposition between mental and physical labor under capitalism, widens the gap between workers—the primary productive force of society—and science.

Only socialism and communism overcome this gap by establishing a close alliance between science and labor, raising the cultural and technical level of all workers.

The development of production and the productive forces of socialist society and the development of natural science have much in common: both lead to the subordination of the elemental forces of nature to the interests of social development, to the conversion of these forces to the service of society. In the antagonistic social formation of capitalism, production functions as the production of surplus value, while science and natural science serve capital, increasing the production of surplus value.

Under socialism, where the antagonism and opposition between mental and physical labor is destroyed, the unity of science and production is especially evident.

In this direct connection between the natural sciences and technology, with production, the difference between these branches of science and the ideological superstructure that serves the base and is connected with production only indirectly, through the base, is revealed.

Natural science and its laws can serve equally both capitalist and socialist production, the goals of exploiting workers, ensuring profits for capitalists and the cause of increasing the material well-being of workers, meeting their constantly growing material and cultural needs, the cause of destruction in the hands of imperialist aggressors and the cause of creative, socialist labor in the hands of Soviet people.

Pasteur's great discovery in our country serves the cause of fighting diseases and epidemics, but in the hands of

American imperialists, who are preparing bacteriological warfare, it serves the cause of exterminating thousands and millions of people.

Euclidean geometry, developed in a slave society, served and continues to serve both capitalist and socialist production equally. In this regard, the natural sciences are somewhat reminiscent of technology and machines. Under capitalism, the natural sciences, like machines, confront workers as a hostile force, a force in the hands of capital. Marx argues that capitalism reduces the division of mental and physical labor to hostile oppositions: “Just as in nature itself head and hand belong to the same organism, so in the process of labor mental and physical labor are united. Subsequently, they are separated and reach a hostile opposition.”¹ Large-scale industry separates science, as an independent potential for production, from labor and forces it to serve capital. Thus, Marx characterises science as one of the forces of production, one of its potentials, which only due to the antagonistic nature of the capitalist mode of production emerges as an independent, hostile force opposing the worker.

Capital opposes machines, technology, scientific inventions, and science to the working class as a force of enslavement, as a tool of exploitation and domination.

Science, by its very nature, is called upon to alleviate the labor and living conditions of millions of people, to increase their power over nature and its elemental forces; it is called upon to broaden people’s intellectual horizons. Under capitalism, however, science in the hands of the bourgeoisie has become a force of enslavement, exploitation, and destruction.

“Humanity as a whole,” writes Marx, “is acquiring ever greater power over nature, while the individual becomes the slave of other men or of his own baseness. It seems that even

¹ K. Marx. Capital, vol. 1, p. 511.

the pure light of science cannot shine except against the dark background of ignorance... This antagonism between modern industry and science, on the one hand, and poverty and decline, on the other, this antagonism between the productive forces and the social relations of our era is a tangible, overwhelming, and undeniable fact.”¹

The greatest discoveries in the field of natural science should serve the cause of creation, the development of productive forces, and the maximum increase in the wealth of the entire society, of all humanity.

Under capitalism, the great discoveries of human genius serve the cause of destruction and annihilation. Science—the greatest cultural achievement—under capitalism has become a means of destroying all the achievements of world culture. The reactionary, imperialist camp, led by the United States of America, threatens nations with the atomic bomb. Humanity and peace-loving nations are called upon to curb the warmongers and create social relations in which the highest achievements of human genius, the great scientific discoveries, will serve only the people and the task of producing material goods for peaceful purposes.

Only under socialism does science become a service to society, to the entire people. Only in a socialist society does the process of eliminating the opposition between mental and physical labor occur. Here, the pure light of science shines against the backdrop of the progressive cultural and technical advancement of tens of millions of people.

Under socialism, based on socialist production relations, the forces of nature are subordinated to the rule of free people. The great prediction of the founders of Marxism is coming true: only when people become masters of their own social relations will they truly become masters of nature.

Based on the latest advances in science and technology, more and more giant hydroelectric power stations are being

¹ K. Marx, F. Engels. Selected Works, vol. 1, p. 318 .

built in the USSR, supplying industry and agriculture with cheap electricity.

Science, a prisoner and slave of capital, was liberated from its shackles and fetters under socialism and became, for the first time, a free and powerful force, reunited with physical labor. Consequently, the role of science under socialism has grown enormously and will grow even further. Science in the USSR is increasingly being integrated into all spheres of production, into all aspects of public life in socialist society.

The future of socialist industry lies in the transformation of factories and plants into gigantic scientific laboratories, where millions of workers in communist society, having risen to the level of engineers and technicians, relying on the latest achievements of science and technology, will operate gigantic systems of highly productive machines, creating an abundance of material goods and simultaneously blazing new trails in the development of science and technology. We are already witnessing numerous shoots of communism today. There will be even more tomorrow.

But it's not just socialist factories, plants, collective farms, and state farms that will be transformed. Physics, chemical, biological, and other laboratories, in turn, will be transformed into gigantic socialist enterprises, equipped with sophisticated machines, where an army of scientists will work, wringing ever new secrets from nature, discovering ever new patterns.

Soviet scientists are successfully solving the task set by the Party—to catch up with and surpass scientific achievements abroad in the near future, and to take first place in the world in all branches of scientific knowledge.

The successful solution by Soviet scientists, in the shortest historical time, of the most complex tasks set before them by the Party and the Soviet government testifies to the growing power of Soviet science, and to the fact that only socialism creates the most favourable conditions for the development of science.

In bourgeois society, where the productive apparatus is only partially utilised, where factories and plants are closed, cultivated areas are reduced, and crops are destroyed, capitalists are interested in the development of science and the creation of new, more productive machines and machine tools only insofar as this promises profit. Conversely, if new technology does not promise greater profits, capitalism opposes new technology and favours a transition to manual labor. Above all, the interests of capitalists in profit-making serve as the source and stimulus for the development of science in bourgeois countries.

In capitalist countries, the development of science is currently determined by the fundamental economic law of modern capitalism. The main features and demands of this law are to ensure maximum capitalist profits through the exploitation, ruin, and impoverishment of the majority of the population of a given country; through the enslavement and systematic plunder of the peoples of other countries, especially backward ones; and, finally, through wars and the militarisation of the national economy, used to ensure maximum profits.

Under socialism, boundless opportunities have been created for the comprehensive development of science and the growth of productive forces. In a socialist society, science serves the people. It is inextricably linked with the people; the entire nation has a stake in its development. Therefore, not only professional scientists but also millions of workers and collective farmers participate in the advancement of science.

The development of science under socialism, like all social development, is subject to the fundamental economic law of socialism, the essential features and requirements of which are to ensure maximum satisfaction of the constantly growing material and cultural needs of the whole society through the continuous growth and improvement of socialist production on the basis of the highest technology.

Natural science, insofar as it provides knowledge of the objective laws of nature, independent of man and humanity, contains nothing class- or party-based. In terms of Euclidean geometry, the laws discovered by Lomonosov and Mendeleev are devoid of any class-based meaning.

But in science, in addition to objective laws, objective truths tested and proven by practice, there is also a theoretical interpretation of the laws, general theoretical philosophical conclusions from them—in a word, there are also philosophical, ideological foundations of science. These general theoretical, philosophical conclusions, like the interpretation of the laws, directly express the worldview of classes and can be materialistic, scientific, i.e., true, but they can also be idealistic, metaphysical, i.e., anti-scientific.

Progressive, genuine science has always been materialistic, fundamentally hostile to idealism and religion. The dominant scientific trend in modern bourgeois society, due to the decay of capitalism, is reactionary, based on reactionary philosophical and idealistic foundations. The bourgeoisie and its learned lackeys introduce mysticism and idealism into science.

It is well known that such a remarkable discovery in physics as the electron has served and continues to serve as one of countless proofs of the boundlessness of human knowledge. This discovery again and again confirms the correctness and validity of dialectical materialism. In contrast, bourgeois reactionary physicists, based on philosophical idealism—Machism—have, in order to please the clergy, drawn from this great scientific discovery antiscientific, idealistic conclusions about the subjectivity of knowledge, the absence of objective laws, the “disappearance of matter,” and so on. Bourgeois reactionary physicists also interpret Einstein’s theory of relativity in an idealistic manner, stooping to priestly assertions about the finiteness of the universe, the free will of the electron, and so on.

V. I. Lenin, analysing the crisis of physics in bourgeois society, wrote:

“In a word, today’s ‘physical’ idealism, just like yesterday’s ‘physiological’ idealism, signifies only that one school of natural scientists in one branch of science has slid into a reactionary philosophy, failing to rise directly and at once from metaphysical materialism to dialectical materialism. Contemporary physics is taking and will take this step, but it is moving toward the only true method and the only true philosophy of natural science not directly, but in sigsags, not consciously, but spontaneously, not clearly seeing its ‘ultimate goal,’ but approaching it gropingly, unsteadily, sometimes even backwards. Contemporary physics is in labor. It is giving birth to dialectical materialism. The birth is painful. In addition to a living and viable being, it inevitably produces some dead products, some waste, destined for the sewer. “These dregs include all physical idealism, all empirio-critical philosophy, together with empirio-symbolism, empiriomonism, etc., etc.”¹.

At the same time, V. I. Lenin emphasised that the crisis in physics is not only a consequence of the growth of science and the breakdown of old concepts, but also a crisis caused by the decay of capitalism and the pernicious impact on science of the reactionary, idealistic philosophy that dominates capitalist society.

While the working class and socialist society may utilise the specialised discoveries in physics and chemistry made by bourgeois scientists, they do so by rejecting and cutting out everything alien, reactionary, idealistic, and metaphysical that bourgeois scientists introduce into science. “ *Not a single* word of these professors, capable of producing the most valuable work in the specialised fields of chemistry, history, and physics, *can be trusted* when it comes to philosophy,”² wrote V. I. Lenin.

¹ V. I. Lenin. Works, vol. 14, p. 299.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 327-328.

As we see, Marxism teaches us to distinguish in bourgeois science and, in particular, in bourgeois natural science, special knowledge, verified and proven by practice, as true, objective knowledge about the actual, real laws of nature, from the philosophical-idealistic foundations of science.

There is no inherent connection between genuine science and its discoveries, on the one hand, and idealism, on the other—they are antipodes. Only bourgeois reactionaries and obscurantists attempt to establish an inherent connection between scientific discoveries, for example, in physics, and idealistic ravings. Genuine science has always been and always will be intrinsically linked only to materialism: by its very nature, it can only be materialistic.

Not only the social sciences but also the natural sciences, due to their philosophical and ideological foundations, bear a class and partisan character in a class society. Modern physics, chemistry, physiology, biology, and even such an exact science as mathematics are therefore the arena of fierce struggle—a struggle between advanced science and its representatives and reactionary science and its representatives, a struggle between materialism and idealism, and dialectics and metaphysics. This struggle ultimately reflects the struggle of classes.

The struggle of Soviet Michurinist biologists led by T. D. Lysenko against the Mendelians and Morganists, the struggle of I. P. Pavlov's followers against reactionary, idealistic trends in physiology, the struggle of Soviet physicists against the idealistic waverings of some of our physicists, the struggle against the idealistic theory of "resonance" in chemistry—all this is a struggle against the influence of reactionary bourgeois ideology, for our Soviet, socialist ideology, for advanced science.

Only dialectical materialism represents a reliable, solid, and true philosophical foundation for modern natural science. Only this single scientific philosophy points to the

true paths for scientific development. This is demonstrated by the outstanding discoveries of Soviet physicists, biologists, microbiologists, and physiologists. These discoveries repeatedly confirm the great truth of the limitlessness of human knowledge.

The Communist Party, which inspires Soviet scientists to bold revolutionary feats in science, teaches that advanced Soviet science should not isolate itself from the people, but serve the people.

Advanced Soviet science, having recognised the importance of established scientific traditions, skillfully utilises them for the advancement of science. At the same time, following the example of scientific luminaries Marx and Engels, Lenin and Stalin, Soviet scientists are not slaves to established traditions. They boldly break with old traditions, assumptions, formulas, and propositions, and blaze new trails in science. This is also evidenced by the outstanding discoveries of Soviet scientists in physics, biology, and agrobiolgy.

What conclusion can be drawn about science as a form of social consciousness?

Natural science arises from the needs of the development of production, practice, and technology. It develops in connection with the development of production, is linked to it, and directly influences its development. This science can equally serve both capitalist and socialist production. It is not destroyed or liquidated with the disappearance of the old foundation and the emergence of a new foundation. Therefore, we must combat the simplifiers and vulgarisers who believe that Euclidean geometry, mechanics, and mechanical engineering are supposedly class-based, that in place of slave-owning and feudal geometry, we must create our own, proletarian geometry, and in place of bourgeois physics, a proletarian physics. This is the thinking and proposal of the Machian Bogdanov and the Proletkultists, who rejected objective truth and believed that truth is merely organised and harmonised social

experience. And since, they say, the experiences of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat are different, then truth and science are different for them.

The Machians and Proletkultists were the enemies of socialism. The Communist Party waged a merciless and irreconcilable struggle against them. We no longer have Machians and Proletkultists, but the vulgarisers and Talmudists, the dogmatists and simplifiers, have not yet disappeared. Our Party's struggle on the ideological front is directed against them.

The question we've examined of science, its relationship to production, to the base and superstructure, and its role in social life, is of great theoretical and practical importance. The correct theoretical solution to the question of the nature of science's connections to production, to the base and superstructure, determines the attitude toward the historical legacy of science. This attitude may be anarchic, nihilistic, Bogdanov-Proletkult, or Leninist-Stalinist, or communist.

Socialist society accepts, inherits, preserves, and further develops all of humanity's great scientific achievements. But every science, including natural science, has a philosophical and ideological foundation, a theoretical interpretation of laws, and the conclusions drawn from them. This theoretical and philosophical foundation can be progressive and materialistic, or reactionary and idealistic. This aspect of science is super-structural in nature and is class-based.

Soviet science accepts Newton's law of universal gravitation, rejecting his absurd assertion of a divine impulse. Soviet science defends Darwin's theory from obscurantists, American and English reactionaries, and clericalism, but it also rejects any elements of Darwinism that were imported from bourgeois ideology (elements of Malthusianism, etc.).

Modern Morganist-Mendelian biological theories are not science, but pseudoscience, the idealistic and metaphysical speculations of bourgeois obscurantists. Soviet science rejects these speculations and "theories" as pseudoscientific

nonsense that leads scientific thought into the swamp of mysticism and hinders the development of productive forces in agriculture.

The power of Michurin's discoveries lies in their relevance to practice, production, and the development of productive forces. The Weismann-Morgan-Mendelian theory, however, is as sterile as a nun dedicated to God.

An irreconcilable struggle against bourgeois reactionary, idealistic and metaphysical theories and influences is the duty and urgent task of Soviet scientists.

* * *

Let's consider the question of aesthetic, or artistic, views, art, and literature. First of all, are the concepts of "artistic views" and "art" identical? Of course, they are not entirely identical, nor do they completely coincide. Artistic views are embodied and expressed primarily in art, but artistic views exist in the consciousness of millions of people. Artistic views also represent a certain attitude toward art itself, toward works of art, certain views on beauty, on art's relationship to reality, and on its role in social life. Born of a particular economic system, artistic views constitute a superstructure above this system. They are instilled in the people by works of art, by works of literature, by literary criticism, and by aesthetic theories.

Aesthetic views are, to varying degrees, inherent to everyone, to every nation. But not everyone creates works of art. Of course, aesthetic views, aesthetic ideas, and principles prevailing in a given society find their fullest expression and embodiment in works of art and literature. And in this sense, art and literature, as the embodiment and expression of the aesthetic views prevailing in a given society, are a superstructure.

Artistic views, aesthetic ideas, theories, and principles that emerge from a given economic base exert a guiding influence on the development of art and literature in a given

society. Aesthetic, or artistic, views can be progressive or reactionary, realistic or formalistic. They can be cheerful and life-affirming, like the views of socialist realism prevalent in the USSR, or decadent and pernicious, as in the USA and other capitalist countries.

The aesthetic views prevalent in contemporary bourgeois society are reactionary, decadent, and anti-realistic, viewing art as a means of spiritually enslaving workers, a means of educating them into obedient slaves. These “aesthetic” bourgeois views are anti-popular and misanthropic.

Contemporary bourgeois art is pseudo-art. It is a vehicle of imperialist reaction and aims to destroy the will of workers to fight capitalism, demoralise them, and distract them from the pressing, urgent tasks of the revolutionary struggle for socialism, for peace, and for genuine democracy.

The preaching of reactionary, anti-democratic, anti-scientific ideas and superstitions, contempt for man, for life, the declaration of existence as an accident, the incitement of soological instincts, the preaching of predatory war, cosmopolitanism, individualism—this is the content of degenerating modern bourgeois “art,” including literature.

Classical realistic art of the 19th century—the art of critical realism—provided knowledge of the truth of life and educated the reader or viewer in the spirit of humanism and high moral principles. The banner of modern bourgeois “art” is amoralism. Classical, realistic art was a champion of reason, science, and enlightenment. Modern bourgeois art is an apology for irrationalism, the “subconscious,” and the instinctive. A fashionable trend in bourgeois “art”—surrealism—believes that the more meaningless a work is, the greater its “merit.”

This bourgeois “art” is an expression and reflection of the capitalist base and its superstructure. The meaninglessness and ugliness of capitalism corresponds to a meaningless, ugly, degenerating “art” and literature.

In Tsarist Russia, decadent, reactionary aesthetic views were widespread, which found their expression in the

reactionary, decadent, anti-realistic “art” of the Formalists, Cubists, Symbolists, and Acmeists.

Along with the liquidation of the capitalist basis in our country and its replacement with a socialist basis, aesthetic and artistic views have also radically changed.

Bourgeois, decadent views, decadent, ideologically uninspired music and painting—all of this (with the exception of a few vestiges in this area that still need to be combated) has vanished without a trace, sunk into oblivion. In their place, the aesthetic views of socialist realism have taken hold and become widespread, finding their expression and embodiment in works of Soviet art and literature.

Soviet socialist art and literature express the most advanced ideas of modern times, the ideas of socialism and communism. Born from the foundations of socialism, Soviet art and literature reflect it and serve to strengthen and develop it. They constitute an integral element or part of the socialist superstructure.

Soviet socialist art and literature represent the direct opposite of all modern bourgeois literature and art,

Thus, we see that art, as the expression and embodiment of the historically determined artistic views of the ruling class, views generated by this basis, belong to the superstructure.

But the superstructure is short-lived, lasting only a single era. With its liquidation, with the destruction of the historically defined foundation, the superstructure it generated is liquidated and disappears. The reactionary, decadent aesthetic views prevalent in bourgeois society and expressed in reactionary bourgeois art, born of a rotten capitalist foundation, will disappear along with that foundation, just as the aesthetic views of feudal-serfdom, expressed in the works of Bulgarin, Kukolnik, Grech, and their ilk, vanished. But the great classical, realistic art created in the previous era not only did not disappear along with the foundation of feudal-serfdom from which it arose, but, on the contrary, this great art found true life, becoming

the property of the broadest masses for the first time only under socialism.

The art of the Renaissance, the art of Pushkin and Lermontov, Gogol, Tolstoy, Repin, Surikov, Glinka, and Tchaikovsky, is not only not being liquidated, not disappearing with the liquidation of the old foundations from which it arose. On the contrary, after the socialist revolution, these great works became the true treasure of millions for the first time, continuing to provide us with the greatest aesthetic pleasure. In a certain sense, the greatest works of classical Russian art of the 19th century still represent an unrivalled artistic standard, particularly in music, painting, and, to some extent, in literature (Pushkin, Tolstoy).

In his article “L. N. Tolstoy,” V. I. Lenin wrote that under Tsarist Russia, Leo Tolstoy was known only to a tiny minority of the population. “To make his great works truly accessible to all requires a struggle—a struggle against a social system that has condemned millions and tens of millions to ignorance, oppression, hard labor, and poverty. A socialist revolution is needed.”¹

This great foresight of V. I. Lenin found its real embodiment in the victory of the proletarian revolution in Russia.

What Vladimir Ilyich said about Tolstoy’s work applies equally to all great Russian literature, to all great Russian classical art, as well as to the great works of art of the peoples of the USSR, to the treasures of all world classical art, the art of Shakespeare and Balsac, Beethoven and Biset, Chopin and Lisst, Goethe and Heine. Only the socialist revolution and the socialist system provided tens and hundreds of millions of working people with the broadest possible access to the great and immortal treasures of classical art and placed art at the service of the people.

¹ V. I. Lenin. Works, vol. 16, p. 293.

How can we explain that with the liquidation, with the destruction, with the disappearance of the old basis and the superstructure corresponding to it in the USSR, all the old, obsolete views and institutions were destroyed and liquidated, including the old, bourgeois and pre-bourgeois aesthetic views, and replaced by new, socialist aesthetic, artistic views, while the great works of classical and world art not only did not disappear, but acquired a new life, became the property of the broadest masses and play an enormous role in Soviet public life?

This is explained primarily by the fact that, for example, although classical Russian literature and art of the first half and mid-19th century arose within the feudal-serfdom economic system, they did not serve it. On the contrary, great Russian classical literature and art were imbued with an anti-serfdom, critical-revolutionary spirit. They did not serve to strengthen the feudal-serfdom system, but rather armed the fighters against it.

The works of Pushkin and Lermontov, Glinka and Surikov expressed the same social forces as the Decembrist movement. In philosophy, these views were represented by Radishchev and Hersen.

Russian classical literature and art, like the materialistic philosophy of Radishchev, Hersen, and later Belinsky, Chernyshevsky, and Dobrolyubov, which grew out of a feudal-serfdom foundation, or more precisely, on the soil of the conflict between new, developing productive forces and obsolete feudal production relations, did not represent a superstructure serving the feudal base, but were a phenomenon of the super-structural order, paving the way for a new society that was replacing the feudal-serfdom system.

The superstructure over the feudal-serfdom base was the art of Grech, Bulgarin, Kukolnik and similar defenders of serfdom.

How can such different phenomena in ideology, literature, and art emerge from the same foundation? This is

because the feudal-serfdom foundation, like the capitalist foundation, is founded on the antagonism of opposing classes. Therefore, opposing currents arise within the ideological sphere, both defending this foundation and directed against it, undermining it. This occurs when new productive forces come into conflict with obsolete production relations. On this foundation, progressive art and literature emerge, representing and expressing new, advanced social forces.

“On the basis of the conflict between the new productive forces and the old relations of production, on the basis of the new economic needs of society, new social ideas arise, new ideas organise and mobilise the masses, the masses unite into a new political army, create a new revolutionary power and use it to abolish by force the old order in the sphere of production relations and establish a new order”¹.

What has been said here about the conditions for the emergence of advanced social ideas also applies to aesthetic views and ideas that find expression in art and literature.

It was precisely on the basis of the conflict between the new productive forces and the dying feudal-serf relations that the progressive, highly ideological Russian classical literature and art of the 19th century arose, imbued with the spirit of service to the homeland and the people.

The secret to the flourishing of Russian classical literature and art in the 19th century lay in the profound contradictions of feudal society, the conflict between productive forces and the dying feudal-serfdom relations, and the profound socioeconomic and political contradictions of Tsarist Russia. Russian literature and art of the 19th century were spurred by the needs of the country’s material development and were called upon to help resolve pressing political issues and pressing economic, social, and political contradictions. Such was the work of Pushkin and Lermontov,

¹ History of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks). Brief Course, p. 125.

Gogol and Turgenev, Nekrasov and Saltykov-Shchedrin, Surikov and Repin, Glinka and Tchaikovsky.

The most important characteristic of realistic art is that it represents a specific form of objective, true cognition of reality—cognition through artistic images. This connects art with genuine science. This is the enduring significance of great, advanced, realistic art.

Engels even wrote that he learned more about French history from Balsac's "The Human Comedy" than from all the historians combined who wrote about the same period. And this despite Balsac's reactionary political views, despite his legitimism. The power of realism was evident here. What Engels said about Balsac can also be applied to the work of Shakespeare, to great Russian art and literature.

Russian realistic art and literature were a truthful mirror of the old life, a reflection of its contradictions, an artistic expression of historical tasks, the aspirations of the advanced anti-serfdom forces, and at the same time the hopes and thoughts of the broadest masses of the people.

One of the most important features of great progressive art and literature, born in turning points in world history and the history of peoples, is its national character, its close connection with folk art.

The genius Gorky said that great art is always connected to the creativity of the people, drawing inspiration from them, taking their images, motifs, melodies, tales, and so on. The great images of Prometheus, Don Quixote, Faust, and others were created by popular imagination long before Aeschylus, Cervantes, and Goethe. "Individual genius has never produced a single generalisation that was not rooted in folk creativity, nor a single world type that did not previously exist in folk tales and legends."¹ This connection with folk art explains the vitality of classical art and literature. They therefore outlive their eras, live on, and will live as long as the peoples whose thoughts, feelings, aspirations, and

¹ M. Gorky. Literary critical articles, p. 27. GIHL . 1937.

dreams are expressed in them. Merciless and merciless time, which consigns to oblivion and destruction all that is superficial, insignificant, moribund, and reactionary, is powerless against the great works of the human spirit, thought, and artistic imagination.

Glinka's "Ruslan and Lyudmila" and "Ivan Susanin" grew out of a feudal, serf-based foundation, yet they are as beautiful today as they were when they were written. The magnificent, magical, and enchanting overture to "Ruslan and Lyudmila" still calls to heroism, bravery, and valour, awakening the highest emotions and spiritual impulses. And "Ivan Susanin" evokes deep, powerful feelings of love for the Motherland, love for the Russian people, and a sense of patriotism.

"Ivan Susanin," "Ruslan and Lyudmila," and other classical musical works are perceived and experienced by Soviet listeners, of course, quite differently than they were when they were created. The same can be said of the great works of Pushkin, Lermontov, Surikov, Repin, and Tolstoy. This different perception of great works of art and literature of the past by Soviet people is conditioned by the new conditions of social material life, the new ideology dominant in Soviet society, and the new aesthetic views that took hold in the USSR.

Thanks to Lenin's genius, who revealed the essence of Tolstoy's artistic creativity, Soviet people understand the works of this powerful artist more deeply than Tolstoy himself did. This applies to all great classical art.

We speak of the Russian nation as the nation of Lenin and Plekhanov, Glinka and Tchaikovsky, Surikov and Repin. These luminaries of Russian science, art, and literature embody the genius of the Russian nation, the Russian people. Their works express the progressive national characteristics of the Russian people. The same can be said of the great classical art of other nations.

V. I. Lenin said that within every nation there are two cultures: progressive and reactionary. "There are two nations

in every modern nation...” Lenin wrote in 1913. “There are two national cultures within every national culture. There is the Great Russian culture of the Purishkeviches, Guchkovs, and Struves, but there is also a Great Russian culture characterised by the names of Chernyshevsky and Plekhanov. There are the same *two cultures* in Ukrainianism, as in Germany, France, and England...”¹.

Great classical art, imbued with the ideas of nationality, democracy, hatred of serfdom and tsarism, belongs primarily to the democratic culture of the past.

The art of Pushkin and Glinka, Gogol and Tolstoy, Mussorgsky and Tchaikovsky, Surikov and Repin—this is a tremendous cultural legacy, rightfully ours, saved from destruction and oblivion, and for the first time becoming the property of the people. Yes, only socialism and the forces of socialism are now the true defenders and guardians of the great treasures of world art from destruction by capitalist barbarians.

Marxism-Leninism teaches that in creating a socialist culture it is necessary to preserve all the best from the advanced culture of the past, to learn from the great representatives of the advanced art of the past in music and painting, in literature and drama and other fields, in order to surpass them in artistic mastery.

Thus, art that expresses and embodies artistic views is a super-structural phenomenon. The art of the ruling class is part of the superstructure of a given base. With the liquidation and destruction of the dying base, the artistic views that grew out of it are liquidated and disappear. This is not at all contradicted by the fact that great classical, realistic art, which provides artistic insight into a particular era, not only does not disappear, but, on the contrary, becomes the property of the broadest masses. But under new conditions, this art of the past is perceived in a new way, playing a different social role than in previous formations.

¹ V. I. Lenin. Works, vol. 20, p. 16.

Thus, the “contradiction” is resolved between the fact that great art and literature are undoubtedly phenomena of a super-structural order, and the fact that, unlike reactionary art and literature, they not only are not liquidated or disappear, but, on the contrary, continue to live long after the disappearance of those conditions that brought them to life.

Classical Russian literature, Russian classical and realistic art, painting, sculpture, and music reflect in their artistic images the history of the Russian people, their heroic past, the history of the struggle for national independence, and the history of the struggle against feudal and capitalist oppression. Therefore, classical, progressive, realistic art, despite the elimination of its moribund foundation and its superstructure, survives even in the context of the new, victorious socialist society.

The development of Soviet society confirmed the Marxist teaching that with the demise of capitalism, humanity’s prehistory ends and its true history begins—that is, conscious, planned social development based on recognised and consciously applied objective laws. The development of Soviet society proceeds without economic catastrophes, without class conflicts, without anarchy of production and without the destruction of already created social wealth, including social productive forces.

The destruction of the antagonistic capitalist basis built on the exploitation of man by man, the establishment of a complete correspondence between modern productive forces and socialist production relations, and the presence of a socialist superstructure have led to the fact that socialist development is carried out without explosions, but gradually, systematically, on the initiative and under the leadership of the socialist state and the Communist Party.

This new type of development, this new historical pattern, was already revealed during the implementation of the greatest socialist revolution in the agriculture of the USSR, although at the same time the antagonistic

contradictions between the working class and the toiling peasantry, on the one hand, and the kulaks, on the other, were still being resolved.

The revolution in agriculture was accomplished in the struggle against the most numerous capitalist class—the kulaks. After the elimination of this last class hostile to socialism, after the victory of the socialist mode of production throughout the entire Soviet economy, hostile class forces within socialist society that had opposed the progressive development of society disappeared. The victory of socialism marked the entry of the USSR into a new historical period of development—the completion of the construction of socialism and the gradual transition from socialism to communism.

The remaining hostile elements and inert forces are not capable of offering serious resistance to society in its gradual transition to communism.

The transition from socialism to communism is a development within a single socio-economic formation, the communist one, from its first, or lower, phase to its higher one. This transition occurs on the basis of a single economic foundation, i.e., socialist production relations, through the overcoming of non-antagonistic contradictions between growing productive forces and somewhat lagging production relations. It occurs through the struggle against hostile elements and the remnants of defeated classes and groups, through the further development and deepening of the moral and political unity of Soviet society, through the development of fraternal cooperation and friendship among peoples and life-giving Soviet patriotism, with the extremely active role of the socialist superstructure. This transition is accomplished not through the liquidation of the existing power, but, on the contrary, through the organising, mobilising, and guiding role of Soviet power, the socialist state, based on its further strengthening and consolidation. This transition is associated with the development of the dominant socialist ideology—socialist political, legal,

aesthetic and philosophical views—and with the struggle to completely overcome the remnants of capitalism in the consciousness of Soviet people.

In the past, social development in antagonistic formations meant growing antagonism on all fronts—economic, social, political, and spiritual. The development of capitalism means a deepening of the gulf separating rich from poor, exploiters from exploited, city from village, and mental labor from physical labor.

The development of socialist society also occurs through the overcoming of contradictions, the overcoming of growth difficulties, the struggle of the new and developing against the old and dying, and the victory of the new over the old. But this birth and overcoming of contradictions, this struggle between the old and the new, is of a fundamentally different nature.

If the development of the capitalist mode of production signifies a deepening and intensification of the conflict between modern productive forces and capitalist relations of production, and all the ensuing antagonistic contradictions and oppositions, a revolution leading to the destruction and liquidation of the capitalist base and its superstructure, then the further development of the socialist mode of production signifies the overcoming of the emerging contradictions between the productive forces and socialist relations of production. Given the correct policies of the socialist state, these contradictions cannot develop into a conflict between growing productive forces and developing socialist relations of production. This development leads to the complete overcoming of the still existing essential differences between town and country, between people engaged in mental and physical labor, and to an even greater development of fraternal cooperation and friendship among peoples. This new type of development flows from the non-antagonistic character of the socialist base and the special role of the socialist superstructure. The socialist superstructure, and above all the socialist state and the Communist Party, are

capable of promptly resolving and do resolve emerging contradictions within the mode of production, as these contradictions are not antagonistic. Thus, the development of socialist society and the transition from socialism to communism signify the growth of social unity across all dimensions. Private property—the foundation of the slave, feudal, and capitalist systems—disunited people, placing them, and continues to do so under capitalism, in a competitive relationship, a struggle of “all against all.” In a socialist society developing toward communism, public property, which forms the foundation of the socialist system, unites, binds, and binds together tens of millions of people.

If, in antagonistic formations, antagonistic contradictions and class struggle constituted the primary, decisive driving force of societal development, then under socialism and the gradual transition from socialism to communism, the unity and complete conformity of productive forces and production relations, the moral and political unity, fraternal friendship, cooperation, and mutual assistance of peoples that have grown on this foundation, and ardent Soviet patriotism, emerge as new, unprecedented driving forces of development. And these driving forces of development are immeasurably more powerful than those that operated and continue to operate under capitalism. The driving forces of development in socialist society ensure its accelerated advance toward communism.

The transition of socialist society to the next, higher stage of development of communism, a transition that is currently taking place in our country, is the achievement of an unprecedented economic, social and cultural flourishing of the new formation, the most complete revelation of its internal potential.

The great inspirer, organiser, and leader of this irresistible movement of millions toward communism is the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Its wise leadership awakens the energy of millions, spurring them to creativity, heroism, and unparalleled feats. It reveals new patterns of

developing socialist society and demonstrates how to utilise the laws of social development in the interests of communism, including the law of the decisive role of the base over the superstructure, and how to utilise the active role of the superstructure in the struggle for communism.

TO THE READERS

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