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LANGUAGE "LOCKDOWN" AS A MEAN OF TOTALITARIAN MANIPULATIONS

This article explores the role of language and ideology in Soviet philosophy and education. The author argues that the Soviet regime deliberately used philosophy as a tool for manipulation, with the aim of creating a common understanding that Marxism and Leninism are the only true doctrines of philosophy. The course of philosophy was mandatory at all levels of education and was fully standardized, with a focus on scientific grounds that only Marxist philosophy was valid. The article also highlights the role of language in the Soviet language lockdown policy, where the Russian language was prioritized as the primary language of education and science, suppressing national languages and cultures of member countries. Furthermore, translations of key philosophical texts were selectively done, presenting only those texts that did not touch upon political or religious issues. The article concludes that the oppressive language and ideology practices in Soviet philosophy had a significant impact on the intellectual and cultural development of the Soviet Union and its member countries.

Keywords: *Ukrainian philosophy of Soviet period, language lockdown, oppressive ideology, Marxist philosophy, manipulation, philosophical translations, German idealism.*

Introduction. The totalitarian regime in the former USSR, which has been partially inherited by the Russian Federation, utilized various means of manipulation, including strict adherence to political correctness in all shared information. All sources of information available to Soviet citizens, such as newspapers, magazines, academic journals, general and scientific literature, were carefully vetted and kept in line with the ideological agenda. The majority of western radio stations were blocked, and a blacklist of so-called "ideologically harmful" literature was in place. Keeping people as ignorant as possible, especially in terms of foreign languages, was one of the internal measures, in addition to the external ones mentioned above. This measure aimed to deprive people of any possibilities of critical thinking and processing of information from western open sources in case they somehow managed to access them. All these measures were considered effective strategies of informational lockdown.

In this paper, we focus on the strategy of the so-called "language lockdown" that has been widely used by totalitarian regimes all over the world, including the Soviet and Russian regimes. Unfortunately, this strategy has led to informational isolation, the elimination of translation traditions, professional incapability and limitations in national languages, and the effects of which are still being experienced in the current context of Ukraine and other ex-Soviet countries, particularly in the fields of science and education.

Methodology and Sources. Methodology used in this article is primarily qualitative in nature. The author conducted a literature review of historical documents and texts related to Soviet philosophy and education, with a focus on understanding the role of language and ideology in shaping these systems. Methodology used in this article is based on a critical analysis of historical and textual data, with a focus on understanding the ways in which language and ideology were used to shape philosophical and educational systems in the Soviet Union.

Author used a variety of sources, including primary sources such as Soviet-era documents and publications, as well as secondary sources such as historical analyses and scholarly articles. The author used a variety of research methods, such as content analysis, discourse analysis, and critical analysis, to interpret and analyze the data collected from these sources.

Author also used a comparative approach to analyze the similarities and differences between Soviet philosophy

and education and other philosophical and educational systems, such as German idealism.

The Manipulation of Foreign Language Learning and Philosophy in Soviet Education. The learning of foreign languages, particularly English, in the Soviet education system was organized in a way that made it difficult for students to use it in practical situations. There were mandatory courses in foreign languages, mainly English and German, at all levels of education. However, the quality of teaching and learning materials was extremely low, along with the motivation of students.

The only motivated students were those studying international affairs, as they had prospective career opportunities in foreign diplomatic missions. Their proficiency in foreign languages enabled them to comprehend information directly from international sources. As a result, the KGB closely supervised them, and often recruited them as secret agents. One such case was described in detail in the recent autobiographical book written by Sergey Zhirnov, a former KGB agent and present-day political scientist and journalist (Zhirnov, 2016).

Students in non-international majors were mostly demotivated because they had no need for foreign languages in their future careers. Therefore, the Soviet regime and its ideology were able to obtain full control of public opinions and partially control private opinions as well by coercing the vast majority of people to use exclusively "politically correct" Russian-speaking sources of information, thereby forming a language lockdown.

In the fields of arts and social sciences, a language lockdown was used to create a common matrix of Marxist oppressive ideological interpretations, which were promoted as exclusively true and correct. It was an obvious manipulation of information and facts because there was no chance to fact-check original sources.

Since the author of this paper mainly deals with the field of philosophy and its history, the following cases represent the influence of oppressive language and ideological practices on those fields.

The teaching of philosophy and all its subfields in the former Soviet Union was deliberately used by the regime as an instrument of sophisticated manipulation. The general course of philosophy was mandatory in all possible majors at all higher educational institutions, fully standardized and aimed at forming a strong and commonly held understanding that Marxism and Leninism were the only and ultimately true doctrines of philosophy. This

evaluation was justified by referring to the scientific grounds on which only Marxist philosophy among the others was fully standing. In fact, studying philosophy at the university had nothing to do with broadening horizons or perspectives of understanding different phenomena, developing critical and independent thinking. The course of philosophy, along with its "satellites," namely "scientific atheism," "scientific communism," "history of the communist party," etc., had the sole purpose of preparing the minds of people for further total manipulation by creating common and ideologically correct attitudes, values, and ways of thinking. The perfect expression of such manipulative role given to philosophy by Soviet ideology leaders was given by Professor Merab Mamardashvili, the prominent Georgian philosopher of the Soviet period. In one of his famous interviews, Mamardashvili claimed that the Soviet philosophy university course never had anything in common with the nature of philosophy. "I am sure that those who introduced the teaching of philosophy in non-philosophical faculties pursued an entirely different task from that given by philosophy itself. They simply intended to create a common discipline (but not in the scientific sense a discipline) of thought and conviction in certain members of society. And people knew that they were not teaching philosophy at all; their task was different: to create some common way of thinking." (Mamardashvili, 1992). This common way of thinking was also full of linguistic manipulations and manipulations with translations of key texts and terms.

Oppressive language policies in philosophical translations. Forcing the use of the Russian language was also one of the oppressive ideological strategies of Soviet totalitarianism that still persists in the Russian Federation. It was always aimed at suppressing the national languages and cultures of member countries (formerly Soviet republics and currently members of the Russian Federation). If we look at the situation in Soviet Ukraine, for instance, we would see that Ukrainian translations of the works of Marx, Engels, and Lenin were available, but texts by other philosophers were only available in Russian. This was a way to prioritize Russian as the primary and dominant language of education and science and make all other national languages secondary and of little importance. This practice marginalized the use and development of national languages and limited access to knowledge and resources for those who are not fluent in Russian.

Translations of key philosophical texts were being done with a certain restrictive strategy in mind as well. For instance, key texts of German idealists of 18th and 19th centuries (Immanuel Kant, Gottlieb Fichte, Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel) were translated into Russian selectively to present for the Soviet readers only those texts that were not touching upon discussive political and religious matters. (Tytarenko & Rudenko, 2018) Full Soviet collection of texts by Immanuel Kant, for instance, did not include his "Opus postumum" – the late text, discussing and revising some controversial matters. For the first time this text was published in Russian only in the year of 2000 along with other unpublished texts. The other example would be the first Russian bilingual (German-Russian) publication of selected Kant's texts that comprised of 4 volumes. Such publication, giving the readers an opportunity to check the original text while working with the translation, became possible only in 1993, after the collapse of Soviet Union and its language lockdown policy. When it comes to translations of philosophical texts in general and Kant's texts into national

languages of the member countries of the Soviet Union, the situation was much worse, not to say catastrophic.

Texts by F.J. Fichte had not been translated at all during Soviet times. His ideas and writings were banned because of so-called "radical subjective-idealistic character" of his philosophy. Audience, interested in his philosophy could get information only through approved by the ministry of education textbooks, containing sharp and prejudiced criticism. Access to the original texts could only be granted to some researchers after obtaining a special permit from government and after signing a non-disclosure agreement. Anatoly Loy Ukrainian philosopher who witnessed and experienced the pressure of restrictive soviet policies himself, gave a detailed description of the absurd complexity of the multi-step procedure of getting access to the books kept in so-called "special depositories" of soviet libraries. "The procedure for obtaining officially available content was the following: as soon as Kopnin created an information department, we started receiving a quarterly issue of the bulletin "New Arrivals of Foreign Literature in the Libraries of the Soviet Union". After that, I, or ..., any other interested specialist, chose any monograph they needed from those that came to us, looked at which library it was kept in. Then we had to order the book using the interlibrary database, and it was sent to us for one month. ... There were certain books that simply could not be sent to you. For example, "The Problem of Legitimation of Late Capitalism" (Legitimationsprobleme im Spätkapitalismus) by Habermas. If you ordered it, you would have been told that it is in the special depository. Then you had to obtain a certificate from the workplace, signed by the head of the institution where you work, that you are "reliable" and you can be trusted. And then you had to go to Moscow and work with the book in the place where it was kept". (Loy and others, 2021). "Criticism of bourgeois philosophy" was the solid branch or research and the only available and permitted lenses through which it was possible to look and evaluate the heritage of such thinkers as Fichte. Rare attempts of the reviewing and commenting on his ideas by Ukrainian philosophers of soviet period were deliberately made in a way to eliminate any possible suspicions of sympathy or support of such "idealistic thinkers" from the author's end. A perfect example of a monograph of such a kind is "Lenin's analysis of German classical philosophy" written by Mykhailo Bulatov in the 70's. As it can be perfectly seen in this case, even the title of the book had to clearly represent the author's ideological perspective.

Works written by the other prominent representative of German idealism Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling were much better presented to the soviet audience. However, the same oppressive and restrictive policies were applied, namely no translations into national languages, careful selection of texts for the published collection and an ideologically "guiding" introductory article. For the soviet edition only, those writings had been selected which had relation to the Schelling's natural philosophy. This part of his philosophy was promoted by the ideologists as the only consistent one and worth attention as a stage on the way to a dialectical and materialistic interpretation of nature. His writings on religion and other related topics were not included into two volumes of soviet edition (Schelling, 1987–1989). German original comprehensive collection of Schelling's writings edited by K. F. A. Schelling and published between 1856 and 1861, if compared to a mentioned soviet one, comprised of 14 volumes. The Ukrainian translations of Schelling's writings unfortunately

have not been done yet. The effect of the manipulative policies described above is one of the reasons for that.

Writings by Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel were probably the most represented among the other German Idealists of 18 and 19 centuries for the soviet audience. Such accessibility was granted by a famous claim made by Lenin and then repeated numerously by other soviet Marxists that German Idealism and particularly Hegel's philosophy was one of the tree foundational pillars of Marxism. First Russian translations of major Hegel's texts had been published in the second half of 19th century. However, the systematic translation and publishing project took off in late 1920th. Between 1929 and 1940, 12 of 14 volumes of selected Hegel's writings had been published and remaining 2 in 1956 and 1958. Since the number of published copies of this 14-volume edition was small and by 1970th became a bibliographical rarity it was decided to review and reprint some of the texts as a part of Soviet publishing project "Philosophical heritage". This edition comprised of 10 volumes and included most of the texts of the preceding 14-volume edition. The remaining texts including "Philosophy of History", Lectures on History of philosophy were also republished but after the collapse of Soviet Union. The "Philosophical heritage" edition perfectly shows that "language lockdown" and "political correctness" policies had been in place and working since every volume has an introductory article aiming at directing the reader's interpretation to the only acceptable Marxism-Leninism line. Fact that during Soviet period there were no translations of Hegel's writings into national languages of Soviet republics perfectly proves USSR's totalitarian oppressive and destructive policy towards the national languages. Ukrainian translations of Hegel's texts, for instance, launched only in 2000th (Kozlovskiy, V., Davidenko and others, 2020, 2021) when Ukraine has become independent and liberated from oppression of its national language.

Discussion. The same methods of manipulation is currently being revived in Russia. After February the 24th, and following unprecedented sanctions implied on Russian Federation the matter of informational isolation of the society has been prioritized. One of the strategies, proposed by the representative of Russian occupation administration in Crimea, that is now being discussed in Russian political circles is the prohibition of learning English in schools and higher educational institutions along with a ban for Bologna system. (Majumdar, 2022) This is seen as a long-term solution that will eventually deprive the population of the possibility to get information from the primary sources and make them more susceptible to the manipulations through politically correct interpretations made by the leaders of propaganda. In late 2022 another language-restricting law has been enacted, officially prohibiting the use of foreign words that have equivalents in Russian. (Peter McLaren-Kennedy, 2022)

Leaving the Bologna process will have the same effect on education and science making them isolated and controlled by the political regime as it was back in the darkest hours of former USSR. Another threatening step towards intimidation and control of the intellectual elites has been made before the war back in 2012 and following years. We mean the set of enacted freedom restricting laws, namely the law on "educational activity" (2021) and on "foreign agents" (2012). Those facts and practices, in our opinion, are the striking examples of the heavy oppressiveness of Russian power and ideology towards the intellectuals whose freedoms and critical thinking considered as a real threat.

The greatest repercussion of such a long-term oppression is that translation traditions into many national languages were lost and the development of academic and professional vectors of languages was substantially slowed down.

Another striking example of tragic success of the Soviet destructive policy towards national languages comes from the experience in the field of professional interpretation and language facilitation in the USA, Canada, United Kingdom and other English-speaking countries. After the collapse of Soviet Union numerous representatives of different ex-soviet nationalities decided to immigrate looking for a better life in developed countries. Most of the immigrants have limited proficiency in languages of destination countries. In the USA, Canada, UK and other countries, that for centuries have been dealing with vast immigrant communities, there is a large demand for over-the-phone interpretation and language facilitation services for LEPs (Limited English Proficient), who otherwise would have no means of communication with different authorities and service providers. Based on the reports of numerous interpreters whose language pairs are English-Russian and English-Ukrainian and our own 4 years of experience in this field we can outline some warning observations. Most of the LEPs from such ex-soviet countries as Ukraine, Moldova, Latvia, Lithuania, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan choose Russian as their main language for communication with healthcare providers, insurance companies' representatives, social workers, finance officers and immigration officers. They ask for the Russian interpreters even when their own proficiency in Russian is also very limited. At first it was very hard to determine a reason for such language choice. Upon analysis of numerous interpreted conversations between LEPs and English-speaking service providers for the last 3 years (2019–2023) we came to a conclusion that LEPs prefer Russian because their national languages either lack in professional terminology or the LEPs are not familiar with it because their education at all levels had been conducted in Russian only for many decades of the soviet rule. Some ex-soviet nationalities preserved their national language only for casual communication, but there also are nationalities whose languages had been completely terminated. With the outbreak of displacement and immigration from Ukraine due to the full-scale Russian military invasion in February 2023 the demand for Ukrainian OPI and VRI (video remote interpretation) interpreters has significantly increased. Many Ukrainian refugees, asylees, parolees, etc., become really happy when they hear that there is a possibility to use the services of Ukrainian interpreters, however many of them still use Russian terms for professional communication or ask for a Russian interpreter for the very same reasons as the representatives of other ex-soviet nations.

After the collapse of Soviet Union, all its former member countries, including Ukraine, must address this tragic consequence, revive the translation traditions, and develop their national languages.

In the context of Ukraine, annihilation of Ukrainian language and culture and restoration of language and informational lockdown is one of the obvious aims of current Russian military aggression against Ukraine. As Ukrainians we must and will stand for our identity and independence. Victory is our only option!

Conclusions. Based on the presented research it can be concluded that the Soviet regime in the former Soviet Union had a controlled system for teaching foreign languages, particularly English and German. The quality of

teaching and learning materials was low, and most students lacked motivation, except for those pursuing international affairs specialties for career opportunities in foreign diplomatic missions. The regime used language lockdown policy to obtain full control of public and private opinions by coercing people to use exclusively "politically correct" Russian speaking sources of information. In the fields of arts and social sciences, such language lockdown was used to create a common matrix of Marxist oppressive ideological interpretations promoted as exclusively true and correct, which was an obvious manipulation of information and facts. In the field of philosophy, the general course of philosophy was fully standardized and aimed at forming a strong and commonly held understanding that Marxism and Leninism are the only and ultimately true doctrines of philosophy. The course of philosophy had the only purpose of preparing the minds of people for further total manipulation by creating the common and ideologically correct attitudes, values, and ways of thinking, which was expressed by Professor Merab Mamardashvili, a prominent Georgian philosopher of the Soviet period. Soviet regime used language and philosophy as tools of control and manipulation to maintain its power over the people.

In addition, we have shown how oppressive language policies were implemented in Soviet Union to prioritize the Russian language as the primary language of education and science and to make other national languages secondary. Translations of key philosophical texts were done selectively, and only those texts that did not touch upon political and religious matters were presented to the Soviet readers. Texts by F. J. Fichte were banned altogether because of the claimed "radical subjective-idealistic character" of his philosophy. Access to the original texts could only be granted to some researchers after obtaining a special permit from the government and signing a non-disclosure agreement. The situation with translations of philosophical texts into national languages of the member countries of the Soviet Union was much worse. The translations of Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling's writings were better presented to the Soviet audience, but no translations into national languages were allowed, and only those writings related to his natural philosophy were included in the Soviet edition. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's writings were translated selectively, and only those texts that were approved by the Soviet authorities were made available to the readers.

Finally, we outlined that it is concerning to hear about the potential prohibition of learning English in Russian schools and higher educational institutions, as well as the enacted law prohibiting the use of foreign words that have equivalents in Russian. Such legislative measures implemented recently in Russian Federation may lead to a further isolation of the population and limit access to information and knowledge from primary sources, as well as hinder the development of academic and professional vectors of languages. The loss of translation traditions into many national languages and the slow development of academic and professional vectors of languages are also concerning consequences of long-term totalitarian oppression.

The current Russian military aggression against Ukraine, which aims to annihilate Ukrainian language and culture and restore language and informational lockdown, is a concerning development. It is important for Ukrainians to stand for their identity and independence in the face of such aggression.

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МОВНИЙ "ЛОКДАУН" ЯК ІНСТРУМЕНТ ТОТАЛІТАРИСТСЬКИХ МАНІПУЛЯЦІЙ

Досліджено роль мови та ідеології в радянській філософії та освіті. Підтверджено, що радянський режим навмисно використовував філософію як інструмент маніпулювання з метою створення загального розуміння того, що марксизм і лєнінізм є єдиними істинними філософськими доктринами. Курс філософії був обов'язковим на всіх рівнях освіти і повністю стандартизованим, поширюючи думку, що тільки марксистська філософія має справжнє наукове підґрунтя. Підкреслено роль мови в політиці радянського мовного "локдауну", де російська мова була позиціонувалася як основна мова освіти та науки, пригнічуючи національні мови та культури країн-членів. Крім того, переклади ключових філософських текстів були вибірконими, представляючи лише ті тексти, які не стосувалися політичних або релігійних питань. Зроблено висновок, що репресивні мовні та ідеологічні праці в радянській філософії мали значний вплив на інтелектуальний і культурний розвиток Радянського Союзу та його країн-членів.

Ключові слова: українська філософія радянського періоду, мовний "локдаун", репресивна ідеологія, марксистська філософія, маніпулювання, філософські переклади, німецький ідеалізм.