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THE ROLE OF WORDS IN THE WORLD'S FORMATION VIEW OF THE SOVIET YOUTH (ON THE EXAMPLE OF THE NEWSPAPER «FOR THE BOLSHEVIK PEDAGOGUES» OF THE ODESA PEDAGOGICAL INSTITUTE)

Identification is an original form of emotional connection with an object or a person. Language is social and important for the formation of the idea of self-identification in society. It is a component of social relations and knowledge that gives rise to complex discursive practices. The article deals about the study and analysis of how words and phrases used in the Soviet press influenced the human character and shaped the worldview. The article considers the methods of human control by the Soviet authorities, which used a significant arsenal of methods of agitation, propaganda, and party guidelines. The paper shows how a person emotionally identifies himself/herself with others, and starts believing in utopian promises with the help of attachment to a leader who became a symbolic father. It was characterized by the transition from individualistic interests to the principles of collectivism. The well-known practice of general supervision carried out in the USSR took place in all spheres, including the private correspondence. Thus, a person had no right to think differently from the guidelines «above,» like about a happy childhood, adulthood, and free thought.

Authorities were characterized by schizophrenic distrust and a desire to control people in everything: not only spiritually, but also physically. In the press and literature, one can often find appeals to young people to join the army and defend the borders with all their might. Thus reckless courage was brought up in people. In the context of a global experiment on humans, no risk seemed excessive. Sometimes the boundaries of science and fiction could be blurred. The Soviet government could keep different peoples and nations around it through cultural expansion, a sense of constant fear within the state (anyone but me), and hatred to «external enemies». The state conducted an incredible political campaign, the results of which influence modern people (the new generation) today.

Keywords: USSR, Bolshevik government, Soviet press, propaganda, language, manipulation, spiritual leader, NKVD, Red Army, Komsomol.

Communication, writing, and reading are an integral part of everyday life, where language is the key tool for expression and communication. Words crystallize the ideas that shape our beliefs, guide our behavior, and ultimately create our world. Their power arises from our emotional reactions when we read, speak, or hear them. All you have to do is to say the word «fire» during a barbecue, or at work, or in a crowded theater, and you will get three completely different but powerful emotional reactions. Thus, with the help of specific words, you can build associative feelings in a person.

Linguists consider language as a cultural, social, and psychological phenomenon.

The following stories represent some of the ways linguists study many aspects of language, including its semantics and syntax, phonetics and phonology, and social, psychological, and computational aspects. Along with the theories, examples of the use of some verbal turns in practice are given. Simonetta Resta's study¹ states that language plays a vital role in shaping «social and domestic reality», creating a framework for consistency. Languages are systems of categories and rules based on fundamental principles

¹ Resta, S. (2012). Words and social change. The impact of power and ideology on the language of Economics and Law. *Open Edition Journals*. <<https://journals.openedition.org/asp/2760>> (2021, March, 25).

and assumptions about the world. For instance, Benjamin Whorf¹ calls these assumptions science and metaphysics immersed in life, which then give rise to an «ideology» defined as «a systematized set of ideas organized from a certain point of view».

Language forms an ideology that points to the concept of the world. These concepts are manifested in law, non-economic activities, science, art, and political ideologies.

The economic struggle for power is linked to other prevailing ideologies in order to gain hegemony, which represents leadership and power in the economic, political, cultural spheres of society; this is achieved not by subjugating the classes, but by winning their support, educating the youth according to concepts that are beneficial to the government. According to Antonio Gramsci², this concept implies the manifestation of individual and collective life in a society where certain ideologies become naturalized or automatic. Therefore, they become, as Norman Fairclough suggests³, «universal». Language becomes a tool of management and communication, language forms allow you to convey and distort meaning. According to Joseph Stalin himself, «the press is the only tool by which the party speaks its language to the working class every day, every hour»⁴. The role of the Soviet press is quite influential. Its task was to have a full impact on the population and to form in it the necessary worldviews for the government. At the union, republican, regional, district, and institutional levels, the press transmitted the same messages. Consider in more detail how the government influenced the minds of the people and formed the necessary messages through the press. We will pay attention to the examples based on the newspaper «For the Bolshevik Pedagogues» issued during 1937. The following expression conveys the main purpose of the Soviet press, even at the local level: «The workers of the Soviet Union, reworking the faces of our homeland according to Stalin's plan, are reworking themselves. They have become more cultured...»⁵. Such phrases had a significant influence on the general mood of the working population.

Quite often utopian statements can be found in the newspaper, such as: «All the peoples of the Soviet Union study the Stalin Constitution and the report of its creator, Comrade Stalin, with great pleasure and love»⁶. Have you ever enjoyed (with great pleasure) studying legal documents or reports? However, such phrases settled in the minds of people that Joseph Stalin is a «creator», «comrade» and «intelligent man», who independently compiled important documents. This style of writing has influenced many citizens who find themselves in prisons and camps writing letters to the «leader» explaining that they accidentally happened to be here. People sincerely believed that Stalin did not know what was happening in the country.

It even came to where the newspaper published the following quotes from Stalin about the new constitution. In his text, he compared the Bolsheviks to the heroes of Greek mythology: «I think the Bolsheviks remind us of the hero of Greek mythology. They, like Antaeus, are strong in keeping in touch with their mother with the masses who gave birth to, nurtured, and raised them. And as long as they keep in touch with their mother, with the people, they have every chance of remaining victorious»⁷.

The newspaper constantly contains such phrases as: «fraternal people», «fraternal country», etc. For example, in an article on the Bulgarian countryside in Ukraine, the author added: «The social and national oppression of tsarist Russia lay a heavy yoke on the necks of the Bulgarian working peasants who lived in «poor savagery». However, the fraternal peoples helped»⁸. Authors of newspaper articles often wrote that tsarist Russia oppressed and harassed various nationalities, but (according to their version) Lenin freed everyone (think you still hear these narratives from some people). Should also mention that in the newspaper there were often quotes or entire articles in Russian when the newspaper was published in Ukrainian. The Russian language was always written like «great Russian language», as well as the Russian people.

For example, in the article «The Constitution of the Free Ukrainian People» you can find the following phrases: «... The Ukrainian people in alliance with the great Russian people and other fraternal folks of the USSR under the invincible flag of the Lenin-Stalin party, under the ingenious leadership of the

¹ Whorf, B. L. (1956). Language, thought, and reality: selected writings of Benjamin Lee Whorf. *Technology Press of MIT*, 21.

² Gramsci, A. (1971). *Selection from the Prison Notebooks*. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 235.

³ Fairclough, N. (1989). «Language and Ideology». *English Language Research Journal*, 9-27.

⁴ За більшовицькі педкадри (1937, травень, 05). *День більшовитської преси*, 1.

⁵ За більшовицькі педкадри (1937, лютий). *Всесоюзний перепис Населення*, 1.

⁶ За більшовицькі педкадри (1937, лютий). *Чи знає про них КСМ комітет*, 1.

⁷ За більшовицькі педкадри (1937, квітень, 05). *Прикінцеве слово товариша Сталіна на пленумі ЦК ВКП(б) 5 березня 1937 (закінчення)*, 3

⁸ За більшовицькі педкадри (1937, січень, 21). *1905 рік і болгарське село на Україні*, 2.

prominent leader of the peoples of Comrade Stalin»¹. This phrase uses various turns that not only evoke association with friendly folks but also the inferiority complex of the Ukrainian people through such verbal pairs «brotherly peoples», «invincible party flag», «ingenious leadership of a great comrade leader». In articles, there are often used utopian phrases such as «Soviet Ukraine celebrates its sunny socialist life, from the lips of every worker of socialist Ukraine comes a fervent gratitude to the one who provided this joyful life, the great beloved Stalin»².

While Ukraine was under the Soviet state, the authorities relentlessly instilled the idea that the Ukrainian people were liberated and inseparable from the Russians. «The glorious path of struggle was taken by the workers of Ukraine in the name of conquering the majestic and beautiful that is now written with golden letters in the Constitution. Through the blood of its best sons and daughters, in an inseparable alliance with the Russian people, under the leadership of the Lenin-Stalin party, the Ukrainian people won and defended their will, their true independence, their prosperous republic»³. These passages use clericalism, as well as speculative phrases about the inseparability of peoples in one country, i.e. attempts to blur the boundaries between two languages, nations, and social orientation.

The front page of the newspaper, dedicated to May 1 mentioned the war in Spain, «Brother greetings to the courageous people of heroic Spain»⁴. In the welcome article to the May 1 holiday, there is a constant shift in the facts that in the Soviet Union, everyone is happy and there are no unemployed and dissatisfied people⁵. In addition, the idea of enemies continuing, which constantly hinders the development of the state. For example, Mykhailo Hrushevsky and Symon Petliura are described as bourgeois-nationalist gentlemen who wanted to turn Ukraine into a colony of capitalist states, and the western part of Ukraine suffers from poverty and dominance of «fascist Poland». «Paw in paw with bloodthirsty, fascist predators, a gang of Trotskyist scrapers, on the direct orders of their "Führer" Trotsky-Bloody, killed and poisoned workers and their children... With a bomb and a revolver, they crept to the heart of the country, to its leaders»⁶. We should note that in the passage the leaders are described as the heart of the country, i.e. as a vital organ, and «evil enemies» were compared to animals. Even in the poem to the first of May, the author mentions how everything is good in the country of the Soviets and bad in other states:

«But how much blood they shed
Abroad on this day.
There is no talk about freedom
There is a fierce battle going on»⁷.

And, of course, it all ends with the words that the Soviet «proletarian» is already rising to «defend» the state from «fascism,» «the will of the people is fulfilled. 8 fascist spies were shot»⁸. The desire for power and domination over other folks was justified as a «higher principle», and the individual must be dissolved in a higher power. The slogans used in the Soviet state essentially gave illusory power to the almighty group.

There are often used such phrases in the articles, like «faithful sons of our homeland». The key idea in the texts tells about contact danger, that everyone else constantly wants to attack the Soviet Union and prevent it from building socialism. «They wanted to take away from the Soviet working people a bright, joyful life»⁹.

At the same time, the building of the NKVD's reputation as an institution that passes just sentences begins, and the army, in general, is described as the most important entity in the state: This is how the NKVD was formed, which is a state body that searches for spies: «Our country is strong... millions of working-class workers and peasants, led by a large party of Lenin-Stalin, are on guard. Spies of fascism will not hide from the watchful eye and a reliable guard – the NKVD»¹⁰.

In the press, one can often see the use of words that refer to family, to relatives with paramilitary bodies. The upbringing of the new Soviet youth took place in such a way that relatives are not parents and relatives because tomorrow they may turn out to be traitors, but the Soviet country and the army are eternal.

¹ За більшовицькі педкадри (1937, лютий, 05). *Конституція вільного українського народу*, 1.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ За більшовицькі педкадри (1937, травень, 01). *Хай живе Перше травня*, 1.

⁵ За більшовицькі педкадри (1937, травень, 01). *Перше травня*, 1.

⁶ За більшовицькі педкадри (1937, лютий, 05). *Справедлива кара*, 1.

⁷ За більшовицькі педкадри (1937, травень, 03). *Дружба*, 3.

⁸ За більшовицькі педкадри (1937, травень, 24). *Волю народу виконано*, 1.

⁹ За більшовицькі педкадри (1937, травень, 24). *Мітинг гніву й ненависті*, 1.

¹⁰ Ibid.

«The destruction of this gang means only the further strengthening of our dear, native Red Army, saving the lives of millions of workers and peasants»¹. The army was idealized, and the populace was forced to the ideas of invincibility and kinship with it: «The Soviet people and the Red Army are invincible»². It came to the corporality of the symbol of the army: «The Red Army is the flesh from flesh, the blood from the blood of the people... Its strength, its power protects our people like the apple of an eye, and it is ready to give everything necessary to further strengthen their army»³.

In the article «The Heroic Army of the Heroic People» one can find such expressions as «... the army is imbued with the spirit of proletarian internationalism and fraternal solidarity of workers of all races and nations». They created our Army as an army firmly united and cemented by the unity of interests and goals, high political consciousness, and devotion to the cause of the revolution»⁴. Young people were often mobilized for action⁵. It was offered either to allocate its own funds for the army or serve there voluntarily: «It is the duty of every student to master military skills, strengthen the defense capabilities of the socialist country»⁶. The USSR was described, not as a country, but as a fraternal union of people. «Surrounded by the love and care of the peoples of the USSR and the workers of all countries, formidable for the aggressors, the invincible workers 'and peasants' Red Army guards the peace, guards the homeland of socialism»⁷.

Along with descriptions of the activities of the Red Army, the newspaper often published poems that formed a sense of devotion and willingness to sacrifice their lives. The general sacrifice is a common thread in many literary works of this time. «... Comrade Stalin said that in the past, we did not and could not have a homeland. But now we have overthrown capitalism and our government is workers', we have a homeland and we will fight for its independence»⁸. The press constantly hints that sacrificing one's own life in the name of the party and Stalin is OK. For example, in the verse «Stalin» there are the following phrases:

«You gave us a happy life,
How cheerful we all are,
And how many, how many such benches
In the blind's country...
As we should go in battle, we will go again
As soon as the time comes»⁹.

The Bolshevik Party itself was reduced to the most important role. The role of the all-controlling, omniscient body. «The party teaches that criticism and self-criticism, ruthless criticism, criticism of the person are the tools by which we check people, educate personnel, identify enemies, direct the activities of each person and each organization in one direction – the channel of socialism-communism»¹⁰. Words of victory and success were used to describe the party's activities. «The Bolshevik Party wins by exposing mistakes, establishing their causes, analyzing the situation that gave rise to them, carefully considering and correcting them»¹¹. The ways meant repressive persecution of citizens, compliance with the rules on arrests and executions. Admiring the «achievements» of the party, the authors wrote: «A party that hides the truth from the people, a party that is afraid of criticism, is not a party, but a gang of deceivers of the people, traitors to the people»¹². Ironically, such words exposed the principal activities of the Bolsheviks, who lied to the people about the universal friendship of folks, and those who had a different opinion became traitors. In fact, the party persecuted those who disagreed with it, persecuted their relatives and family members. The «majestic» party killed people just for the sake of statistics to imitate violent activity. In this part you can find such words about communist education, «There is nothing more honorable than to educate the younger generation in the spirit of Soviet patriotism, love, and devotion to the great Soviet homeland, imbued with the pathos of socialist construction and in the spirit of hatred for the enemies of the people»¹³.

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid.

³ За більшовицькі педкадри (1937, червень, 30). *Позика зміцнення оборони СРСР*, 3.

⁴ За більшовицькі педкадри (1937, лютий, 17). *Героїчна армія героїчного народу*, 1.

⁵ За більшовицькі педкадри (1937, травень, 01). *Готуємо обороноздатну молодь*, 2.

⁶ За більшовицькі педкадри (1937, травень, 05). *Молодь – у військові школи*, 2.

⁷ За більшовицькі педкадри (1937, травень, 01). *Перше травня*, 1.

⁸ За більшовицькі педкадри (1937, травень, 05). *Захист батьківщини*, 2.

⁹ За більшовицькі педкадри (1937, травень, 05). *Сталін*, 1.

¹⁰ За більшовицькі педкадри (1937, травень, 08). *День більшовицької преси*, 1.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ За більшовицькі педкадри (1937, червень, 30). *Ми вже радянські педагоги*, 1.

Despite the fact that the Soviet Union was formed in 1921, the rulers often traced its history to ancient times¹. And creators who lived and worked in the USSR were added to their list of merits. For example, in a newspaper where the issue was dedicated to Taras Shevchenko's birthday, the authors came to conclusions that Shevchenko had common ideas with the Bolsheviks: «The poet's rapid ideological and creative development reflected the growth of revolutionary peasant movements and his cooperation with Russian revolutionary democracy. In his early works (1833-1842s) Shevchenko was significantly influenced by bourgeois-landlord literature. Here he idealized the past history of Ukraine with its hetmans and Cossack officers»². However, in the article dedicated to the centenary of Alexander Pushkin, the authors often manipulate. For example, they noted that critical thinking, new styles of fine art, «painting, sculpture and theater, illustrations to texts of Pushkin's book and artistic portraits of Pushkin in verse and new themes by Pushkin were all focused forever on the works of the poet who founded Russian literature. He brought new combinations in our language»³. In this sentence, literature is called «our», which builds a vision of kinship, involvement. Although the article is written in Ukrainian, the titles of Pushkin's works are given in Russian.

Due to the fact that the newspaper «For the Bolshevik Pedagogues» is an educational publication, it often provides statistics on compliance. And the term «socialist competition» is used in the description of didactic⁴, which is constantly poorly deployed and lags behind the requirements because the enemies of the people hinder them. Thus, the report for June 1 mentions the following points: «I must say frankly that in the first year of restructuring its work the institute has done very little... Unsuccessful attempts to replenish the staff of the Faculty of History (we blame Professors Gren and Reizhevsky, who are an enemy of the soviet people, etc.). They caused significant damage and had a very negative impact on the armament of graduates-historians with knowledge and historical sciences... Significant shortcomings were in the organization of independent work of students. Consultations and faculty examination commissions should carry out their work at a high level, avoid tricky questions, give a strict assessment of the knowledge, do not show liberalism in assessments»⁵. In this passage, there are such phrases as: «equipping students with knowledge», «the struggle for language literacy», «to give a strict assessment of knowledge», «do not show liberalism». They are clearly militating a simple situation with education, pointing out the shortcomings of the curriculum in the role of a teacher who was accused of malicious activity for failure to implement the plan. As you can see the words of hatred and intolerance can often be found in Soviet newspapers. For example, in the article «Rally of Anger and Hate» there are the following phrases: «We as students, professors, teachers, administrative and technical staff of the Pedagogical Institute, together with all workers of the Great Soviet Union are deeply outraged by the actions of a handful of miserable scoundrels, vile traitors of the socialist homeland, fascist traitors as Yakir, Tukhachevsky, Uborevich, Cork, Eidemann, Primakov, Putnia»⁶. This passage uses a tautology to enhance the effect of «vile scoundrels», there is the word «homeland», which imposes the idea of the kinship of people of the USSR. Ukrainian-speaking students were often ridiculed for their grammar. The newspaper often printed their letters and mentioned how uneducated they are. Thus the idea of the illiterate Ukrainian people was formed. In response, the idea that the Russian language is the language of intelligent people, the «language of science» gained popularity⁷.

Literary meetings were also held in educational institutions, and authors didn't discuss the literature but condemned other people. «Prof. Tsyganenko made a report on the enemies of the people in the literature of Averbach, Kirshov, Afinogenov, Yasensky, etc. Students Broitman, Berinevich, Lyubashevsky in their speeches disgrace the enemies of the people of Averbach and K... Their supporters wrote pornographic poems... In their speeches, students condemned the actions of Zhuk, Bogutsky and Lyzhan, who do anything but study and tarnish the name of a Soviet student»⁸.

In the work of Olga Marlin⁹ «Group psychology in the totalitarian system: a psychoanalytic view», there is an analysis of how the substitution of concepts works in totalitarian states. Her scientific analysis

¹ Дмитриев, С. С., Тихомиров, М. Н. (1948). *История СССР с древнейших времен до 1961 года*. Москва. ОГИЗ, 411.

² За більшовицькі педкадри (1937, березень, 09). *Шевченко, Т. Г.*, 4.

³ За більшовицькі педкадри (1937, травень, 07). *Літературний ювілей*, 4

⁴ За більшовицькі педкадри (1937, травень, 24). *До виборів нового місцевому*, 1

⁵ За більшовицькі педкадри (1937, травень, 24). *Завдання держекзаменів*, 1

⁶ За більшовицькі педкадри (1937, травень, 24). *Мітинг гніву й ненависті*, 1.

⁷ За більшовицькі педкадри (1937, травень, 24). *«Не порадившись» з граматиною*, 2.

⁸ За більшовицькі педкадри (1937, травень, 24). *Вижити богемщину з побуту студента*, 2.

⁹ Marlin, O. (1990). *Group psychology in the totalitarian system: A psychoanalytic view*.

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is based on previous research by three psychoanalysts: Sigmund Freud, Wilfred Bion, and Erich Fromm. Freud¹, whose work was banned in the Soviet state, wrote that if a group connection replaced religion, and the socialist movement seemed to do so successfully, then there would be the same intolerance of outsiders as in the War of Religion era when intolerance was actively promoted and people were called to combat others. Thus, such sentiments were perfectly manifested in the formation of the image of the Stalin-NKVD-Red Army trinity, which was elevated to the highest level of holiness.

Here is a striking example of the substitution of concepts from children's textbooks. For example, in one problem you can find the following phrases: «Firewood is not taken to the forest. You can't throw words out of a song. The patient is breathing hard. We will build a new world»². And here are more examples of phrases taught to children in schools: «Rivers bring significant benefits to man». «The working class will fight to the end». «I start work early in the morning». «Lenin is the world-famous leader of the proletariat». «A book is a person's best friend». «The Cultural Revolution is a necessary condition for building socialism». «In a communist society, everyone will get everything they need»³. In each exercise of the textbook, new labor achievements are proclaimed, but nearby, as a rule, there is a mention of the forces interfering with creation.

Freud argued that «love relationships are the essence of the group mind». Such relations can be formed through two groups: the Church and the Army. According to him, both groups hold together the illusion that the leader loves all individuals in the group equally, he plays the role of deputy father. Such connections form a lack of individual freedom in groups. During his reign, Stalin was elevated to the position of a semi-religious leader like an omniscient, perfect, kind symbolic father of his people, often called «our light», «our good father», «our sun», «our savior». At the same time, there are messages that self-sacrifice is the most important «most sacred» duty: «... Now the Workers 'and Peasants' Red Army is equipped with advanced military equipment, all Red Army soldiers are great Soviet patriots, patriots of our native great socialist homeland. Being a hero in our country is a sacred duty of every young citizen, every member of the Komsomol»⁴.

Melanie Klein researched the theory of child development⁵. According to her work, the first years of childhood resemble a paranoid-schizoid position where fear is seen as an expression of the primary anxiety of fragmentation (destruction). Denial, projection, and projective identification are protective responses that predominate in the paranoid schizophrenic position. Later, a depressed position is achieved, which is associated with integral objects. At this stage, anxiety about the harm of the subject and guilt prevails. Klein considers these mechanisms and defenses to be part of normal development, as well as the basis of later psychotic illnesses or regressions. Bion argues that the more the group is disturbed, the more important for its dynamics is the activation of psychotic (child) anxiety and protection from it. He believes groups are particularly prone to the activation of primitive mechanisms described by Klein as characteristic of paranoid-schizophrenic and depressive positions. The researcher calls these behaviors and feelings in groups «basic instincts». The central concept of Bion is that each society is divided into two groups: «working group» and «group of basic instinct»⁶. The basic instincts include different emotional states of groups, originating from irrational, unconscious aspects of personality, and present to varying degrees in all groups. The primary instincts are 1) dependence, 2) battle and flight, and 3) procreation. If these basic assumptions prevail in the group, its values change and it does not learn or adapt to reality.

On the other hand, the «working group» is analogous to the functions of the conscious ego, and it deals with reality. The working group constantly tests its findings through scientific experiments, seeks knowledge, learns from experience, and constantly asks questions about how best to achieve its goal. It is clearly aware of passing time and progress in learning and development. Thus, Bion argues that the overall goal of the core group is to achieve security through the protection of its members by one person. A leader is idealized and made a kind of God who cares for his children. These symbols can be easily traced in the Soviet press. In turn, in the 1970s, Rioch conducted research on two groups proposed by Bion. According to Rioch⁷, the main group is formed to save themselves, and this can only be done by fighting

¹ Freud, S. (1959). *Group psychology and the analysis of the ego*. New York: Norton, 30.

² Бахударов, С. (1930). *Русский язык. Пособие для заочной подготовки в комвузы и для самообразования*. Ленинград-Москва, 69.

³ Ibid, 11.

⁴ За більшовицькі педкадри (1937, травень, 05). *Захист батьківщини*, 2.

⁵ Klein, M. (1977). *Envy and gratitude and other works, 1946-1963*. New York: Dell, 122-142.

⁶ Bion, W. R. (1959). *Experience in groups*. New York: Ballantine, 139-189.

⁷ Rioch, M. J. (1975). *The work of Wilfred Bion on groups*. *Group relations reader*, 21-33.

someone or something or running away from someone or something. The action is needed for both struggle and escape. An individual is of secondary importance to preserve a group. A leader who is considered appropriate for this type of group is one who can mobilize a group to attack or lead it in flight. In such a society, the idea is easily formed, the leader needs a group because he can recognize the danger and enemies. Such a leader usually has paranoid traits, so he can find the enemy, even if none of them are obvious. He must worry about keeping the group; if he cannot do so, he will be ignored. This type of behavior is very typical for the Soviet state.

The communist totalitarian system took control of the mentality of the main ideologies and prevailed in the society. Many of the processes described by Bion as typical of the basic assumption mentality of primitive, impulsive feelings and actions were characteristic of the system and its ideology; for example, dogmatic thinking, clichéd slogans, a fantasy about omnipotent leaders and dependence on them, lack of realistic criticism, calls to struggle, the use of battle phrases in everyday life. Based on Bion's research, Soviet society belonged to a «group of instincts» that led itself to a state of emotional regression, agreeing with the slogans that were instilled daily. To some extent, this is like an abusive relationship in which a person does not feel happy and satisfied, but because the other one is told the opposite and dominants it starts to be reality.

In one study¹ scientists have studied critical vision in children. The researchers showed the children objects and asked what color and shape they were. However, together with children, adults took part in the study, and their task was to say the opposite. At the end of the study, the children fully agreed with what the adults said, giving up their previous words. The infantilization of Soviet society took place in the same way. The reality was one, and in the media and books were different, so people decided not to struggle.

In such a society there is a constant struggle to find enemies. The split continues between a «good» member of the group (or system) and a «bad» outsider (with different views) who was seen as the enemy. Because there was an understanding that if you don't have a life that is talked about in newspapers and on the radio, then someone next to you is interfering with it. In this paranoid worldview, people were not individuals with the right to think and speak independently, everything was decided for them. Thus, different political, religious, or artistic opinions were treated as immoral, dangerous, or criminal.

Erich Fromm also studied the influence of the totalitarian state on the formation of society. He integrated Freud's theory with Karl Marx's dialectical theory of history and social criticism. According to Fromm, man is not so much a being of instincts as a being of culture, that is, a man who is creating himself in history.² According to the researcher, the main problem why a person allows the existence of totalitarianism in the state is to avoid intolerable loneliness and isolation. To do this, a person agrees to create a certain framework of orientation or devotion. Such behavior is manifested in religion and political institutions.

In the work «Escape from Freedom»³ Fromm concludes that modern man has become freer, but also lonely and isolated, oppressed by impersonal forces. The key question is whether people will give up their integrity and freedom in order to feel a kinship with others in the symbiotic key on which they relied before the development of their individuality. If a person does not choose «positive freedom», he/she eliminates the loneliness, transferring all responsibility to the state or politicians. Such irrational methods of destructive personality are quite common in totalitarian states.

Thus, if a person discovers cultural patterns that satisfy masochistic aspirations (for example, submission to a «leader» in a fascist or totalitarian ideology), he/she gains illusory security by uniting with others who share the feelings. It is important to mention that Fromm notes that even if people with an authoritarian nature revolt, their desire for subordination remains present, consciously or unconsciously. That is why they can change so easily and suddenly from extreme radicalism to extreme authoritarianism, where the predominance of subordination to a higher power and the belief that life is not determined by their own desires and interests, and the family as an institution functions as a specific psychological agent in society. The learning process is another mechanism by which the character of children is formed, so it is easier to lay the right messages. When educating in kindergarten and school, the main theses on the supremacy of the interests of the nation or political system are taught; these interests have always been emphasized as if by individual choice.

The key ideas of the Soviet state were the clinical need to control everything and everyone. These ideas were transmitted through language. People lived under pressure to accept the norms and values of state

¹ Мухина, В. (2010). Мы все конформисты. *Сноб*. <<https://snob.ru/selected/entry/15051/>> (2021, March, 25).

² Fromm, E. (1941). *Escape from freedom*. *New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston*, 177.

³ *Ibid*, 186-279.

ideology. In all social groups, starting from school, they could not express different opinions or seriously question what they were being taught. In the press and on the radio promoted community (as opposed to reciprocity), and in the public sphere, there was a split, a simplified view of the world (good inside against unwelcome outside).

This social experience nurtured intolerance, domination over others. On the other hand, subordination to the authorities and the group was also required. Because people were embarrassed and punished in groups for different views and inconsistencies, they often felt humiliated and helpless or isolated as outcasts. These experiences heightened fear of others and feelings of shame and guilt. Thus, the cultural experience contributed to further characteristics that supported the basis of the regime. Of course, in the Soviet Union, there have always been people who did not succumb to ideology and who formed their own views; however, several generations were deeply impressed by the dynamics of the system in which they grew up.

The family was part of the system and traditionally passed on the centers and attitudes of the authorities. The use of force and corporal punishment, as well as increased shame and guilt to ensure obedience, was common in the upbringing of children and youth. When it was necessary to choose between fragile beauty and brute force, the «citizen of the new world» preferred force.

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