

IDEOLOGY WITHIN  
THE TIME-SPACE DIMENSIONS  
OF SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Social consciousness is the most comprehensive historically differentiated and dynamic relatively independent spiritual system. It performs its function both with regard to social being and to the life and consciousness of the individual members of society. As a many-sided, heterogeneous and complex system social consciousness should be analyzed from various points of view. Varied approaches and methods are employed in its study, heterogeneous criteria, close-ups and cross sections are used in investigating its content.

Social consciousness emerges, develops and is structuralized historically, *first and foremost*, as a system of various types of *group* subsystems. These are totalities of views, feelings, experiences, notions, knowledge, traditions, norms, convictions, etc. which are formed, assimilated and affirmed in the individual micro- and macro-social communities on the basis of respective common collective interests. In the class societies the role of the class (Party, political, juridical etc.) consciousness holds, in the final count, decisive significance. Consequently, social conscious-

ness is not and cannot be a mechanical sum total of an unlimited number of individual consciousnesses. They, themselves, participate in social consciousness, *first and foremost*, as concrete, historically obtained and structuralized group types of consciousness. Social consciousness is underlied by the spiritual complexes of the various communities which are at different levels of development and of diverse quality.

The group subsystems do not exhaust the system of social consciousness. Along with the *type* and the *kind* of common interest rooted in the social group and the respective group consciousness, social consciousness is built also with a view to the character of knowledge itself, to some aspects or other of the reflected objective reality, to the diverse and varying specialized needs, to the increasingly complicated social life. The *functionally specialized* subsystems of social consciousness develop alongside and in organic unity and interaction with the *group* subsystems. They embody the needs of knowledge and of labour productivity, of the developing human relationships and types of behaviour regulation, of art and beauty, of the general and specialized spiritual culture.

A number of terms are used in the literature in an endeavour to construct a scientific classification of spiritual subsystems, as for instance kinds, spheres, forms, types, states, etc. We shall dwell on two basic terms: forms and spheres of social consciousness.

The *forms* of social consciousness have a rich, versatile and highly functionally structuralized content. They are such subsystems of social consciousness which take shape on the basis of what is common in the reflected *object* of reality, given the respective specialized methods and *means* of reflection, subordinated to a definite *social function* characterizing the specific *role* played by each individual form. We accept as a preliminary basis the established seven forms: political consciousness, law and legal consciousness, moral consciousness, artistic consciousness, religious consciousness, scientific consciousness and philosophical consciousness.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Attempts are made in the literature at substantiating the existence also of other forms, such as: economic consciousness, legal consciousness as differentiated from law, mass consciousness, social psyche etc.

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The *spheres* of social consciousness are considerably broader and more comprehensive subsystems of social consciousness with a comparatively uncomplicated inner structure. Their differentiation is based on different criteria: the general degree of penetration of consciousness in objective reality, the nature of the attained reflection in terms of depth and comprehensiveness, directness and mediateness, the attitude of knowledge itself to social practice with a view to the respective needs, interests and values etc.

On the basis of these criteria we refer to four spheres: mass-empirical and theoretical, on the one hand, and cognitive and evaluating on the other. The theoretical sphere of social consciousness encompasses the results of the institutionally differentiated and professionally specialized intellectual work in their totality. In fact, all its forms are to be found at this 'floor' of the structure of social consciousness. They are all commonly characterized by the generalizing, mediative and systematizing role of thinking in assimilating the notions and knowledge obtained from social practice. Here the content of thinking is formed, organized and structuralized in a way which makes it qualitatively different from that of the mass empirical level.

In their real unity all these subsystems of the social consciousness—group types, forms and spheres—represent the foundation, the territory, 'the atmosphere'—in one word 'the space' by which and in which society lives its spiritual life in general and *ideology* performs its social function in particular.

For the purposes of the present analysis we shall only touch upon some basic characteristics of ideology which hold direct and immediate significance.

*First.* The time of emergence of ideology as a real phenomenon of society's spiritual life refers to the distant epoch of the appearance of private ownership, classes and the state. In the presence of a new antagonistic type of interests, the old primary and elementary regulation of human behaviour through moral norms and traditions, which was characteristic of the primitive society, proved functionally insufficient. The class and economic interests, the political activities and the respective new forms of social thinking such as political ideology and law came into being.

*Second.* In functional aspect, ideology is associated with the

reflection, the expression and the defence of a given kind of macrosocial interests among which the interests of the main classes hold decisive importance. In this way ideological thinking has always been oriented to the practical upholding of the respective interests through fixing them into a given system of values and the corresponding value-regulated system of principles, norms, solutions and appraisals of appropriate behaviour.

*Third.* Ideological thinking tends to be an extensive area of the *theoretical* level (sphere, 'floor') of social consciousness. To begin with, the very concept of 'theory' is used here in the broadest sense of the word. It is a question of the mediative reflection of facts and phenomena in life in general, of their intellectual grasping, appraisal, rationalization, interpretation, systematization. It is a question of the phenomenon of '*la pensée pensable*.' Ideological forms such as political ideology and law, philosophy and religion, have as a common characteristic feature—though in varying degrees and ways—the theoretical systematization of the respective mental material.

Naturally, ideological thinking does not exhaust the composition of the theoretical level of ideological thinking. The extensive field of the natural sciences plus mathematics and the technical sciences has an indisputable theoretical character without demonstrating, in principle, the symptoms which are characteristic of ideology.

*Fourth.* It is necessary to define more accurately the concepts of 'ideology' and 'ideological form' as well as the different degree of ideologicity of some of them.

Our starting point will be Engels' ideas expounded in his 1890 letter to Schmidt, in which he reveals the different place of the individual forms of social consciousness with a view to their 'distance' from the economic basis. In immediate closeness to the economic relations stand political ideology, law and morality or to use his expression "the political, juridical and moral reflections." The impact of economy on the remaining forms of social consciousness (Engels takes philosophy as an example) is effected through the prism of these three ideological forms. Consequently, philosophy and science, art and religion take up a different, 'more distant' place in the system of social consciousness.

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The very fact of emphasizing the exceptionally close, so to say immediate, connection of three ideological forms with economy prompts significant inferences. The economic problems are manifested in the practice of social life through the respective needs, interests, values. The direct functional purpose of these forms of social consciousness which stand 'closest' to economy, is to serve, firstly, as an ideological reflection (description) of the respective social needs and interests and, secondly, to give the respective instruction (prescription) about appropriate behaviour, i.e. to regulate those behaviour acts through which the respective interests are upheld, defended and realized. Here we are *at the very core* of ideology. Its most typical, most profound manifestation is political consciousness which functions in conformity with the definite concrete situation both independently and in closest interaction with law, legal consciousness and moral consciousness. The definite place of those three ideological forms in the 'spiritual space' is explained by the fact that they are direct exponents—in their primary and basic functional purpose—of the social (class, group etc.) interests. This is exactly the reason for these ideological forms to fulfil, above all, the role of *behaviour regulators*.

Social practice, however, shows that these three forms do not exhaust the factual content of the ideological life of the various societies. Participating in it, too, are the other ideological forms of social consciousness taking a different place in the system of social consciousness, i.e. standing at a greater 'distance' from the economic basis. Philosophy and sociology, art and religion complement the motley and diverse picture of the ideological area of social consciousness which is hardly susceptible to uniform generalization. Their being ideational structures of a theoretical character, on the one hand, their simultaneous presence in the cognitive and value spheres, on the other, reveals the objective intricacy and difficulty of the overall range of problems, the actual conditionality and relativity of the differentiation of the cognitive and value consciousness.

As a matter of fact the ideological forms operate in three basic functional directions: behaviourist-regulative, cognitive and emotional-imaginal. The overall ideological character of the first one is indisputable. Here ideology manifests itself as such in its

proper and real social role. The presence of a varying degree of ideologicity in the other two directions cannot be a question of metaphysical scholasticism but of a concrete analysis of a given socio-historical situation and of the content of the corresponding concrete ideological products. In them the behaviourist-regulative aspect does not have the character of a first and direct functional purpose but of an inference, consequence, a greater or lesser indirect impact and meaning.

The above-said suggests certain conclusions of a more general character. Being a system of ideological forms, ideology functions as an expedient theoretical consciousness, i.e. as a mentally mediated and systematized reflection of the practical socio-class relations, needs and interests. In an organizational and structural aspect it is outlined as an extensive *area* of the system of social consciousness encompassing all ideological forms and covering several of its spheres. Ideology, in its overall wide-angle volume, is a factual expression of the *practical purposefulness* of the entire system of social consciousness taken in its versatility and organic unity of a spiritual social phenomenon. Thus every theoretically constructed ideological system usually proceeds from definite basic ideological and philosophical stipulations and from some more concrete socio-historical, etc., knowledge 'taken' from the cognitive sphere. Yet, its basic meaning is to be found in the value sphere where, on the basis of the analysis of the respective social needs and interests with the help of the various ideological forms, the ideological process of formation of corresponding spiritual values—specific for every individual ideological form—is taking place. With their help steps are taken towards the practically indicated process of value orientation and, then, to the even more concrete daily mass behaviour regulation. In this way the progress of ideological thinking starts at the height of the great theoretical abstractions and, via the value sphere, heads towards social practice whose immediate intellectual reflection is the sphere of the mass-empirical consciousness. In this way the ideological products become facts of mass psyche, i.e. motives, intentions and personal convictions and, hence, multiple and varied concrete decisions for action of the workforces and the individuals.

The *transition* from 'pure' philosophical and socio-scientific knowledge towards social practice takes place via ideology. In

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this way socio-scientific work is organically linked with the value content of the results obtained from research and with their logically ensuing regulative-practical significance. *The transition from social knowledge to value orientation and hence to the respective behaviour regulation is actually the ideological law of the theoretical consciousness, the main content of the ideological process itself.*

Ideology taken as a unity of the various ideological forms and socio-group types of consciousness performs its role in the corresponding social dynamics. The main and the most general forms and ways of the coexistence and functioning of the various ideological subsystems are 'social time' and 'social space'.

The use of the categories 'time' and 'space' in reference to social problems has a definite heuristic importance. As far as the study of the individual concrete problems of the particular sciences is concerned the use of time (the historical approach) and of space (the geographical approach) does not raise any doubts of principle. Their joint use along with the methodology of the modern socio-scientific investigations gives and will continue to give the expected positive results.

Of more particular interest is the application of the time-space characteristics to the overall general theoretical, interdisciplinary, that is, philosophical study, of society as well as of such basic social institutions as, for instance, social being and consciousness, production, science, ideology, politics, art, etc. The actual complexity of such objects of scientific study shows the objective inadequacy of the particular methods of the individual strictly specialized scientific subjects. Without in the least belittling their importance, here the global philosophic-sociological approach turns out to be useful and necessary.

Its application is a means of going in detail into the time-space dimensions of social consciousness in general, and of ideology in particular. Moreover we are not interested in time and space in general, but in 'social time' and 'social space'.

By the concept of *social time* we mean, above all, its most general ontological characteristics: consecutiveness in the occurrence of the phenomena and processes, irreversibility of the respective changes, objectivity, universality. Applied to social life these traits give the most general social and philosophical

characterization of the *history* of mankind. Time, that is to say historical, characteristics of ideology pose a number of important and complex problems even when they are treated from a general descriptive viewpoint.

Naturally, no one refers to ideological thinking in the conditions of the primitive society when social consciousness was relatively elementary and unbroken. In fact it was exhausted with the components of the mass-empirical consciousness. As far as the development of ideology in the subsequent historical periods is concerned the problems are varied and complex. Standing out in the first place is the very duration and consecutiveness of the changes of the individual ideological systems, in the process of cooperation, interpenetration and struggle between them. If we set the time limits of the concept 'period' within the framework of a given social and economic formation we shall see that different ideological systems or conceptions have different duration. Some religious conceptions for instance transcend as a rule the borders of the historical period in which they emerged. On the contrary, a number of political theories turn out to be tied up mainly with the corresponding society in which a given author worked. Thus for instance the social life of Christianity, Buddhism, Mohammedanism lasts much longer than the political conceptions of Plato and Aristotle, of Machiavelli and Montesquieu. On the other hand, some elements of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* (as for instance his remarkable theses about friendship) have lost none of their topicality down through the centuries whereas his other social views (economic, political, etc.) have become irretrievably outdated.

In the course of the time, i.e. historical functioning of ideology, the law of continuity has played an exceedingly important regulative role. Through it the main historical process and factors exercise their influence on the spiritual phenomena as they take place. The law of continuity itself is a logical continuation of a different, more general, law-governed regularity—of the law of relative autonomy of the ideological forms, of the spiritual phenomena in general. It is the evolution of these phenomena in time, i.e. in history, that reveals their *relative* autonomy. With regard to time, the deeper the dividing line between one historical epoch and the next one, i.e. the more compelling the new needs



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of radical changes in social life, the greater that autonomy will be. Along with this, historical materialism underlines the significance of the internal specificity of the various ideological forms. That specificity manifests itself not only in their different relative weight (significance) in social life. It is naturally manifested in the very content and structure of a given ideological form, in its inherent functional purpose, in its characteristic ability to effect an autonomy in its own development in a varying degree and way. That specificity is manifested in the internal 'official appointment' of each of them, in the different 'distance' both from the material social relations and between them, i.e. in their different *localization* in 'spiritual space.'

However, the law of continuity is manifest not simply in the autonomy of ideological forms but in the differing *interaction* between them in time, i.e. in historical respect, an interaction based on that autonomy. This is most vividly seen in the fact that each ideological form serves at the same time as a subsystem of a respective class, party, professional, racial, religious etc., consciousness.

The law of continuity is essentially characterized by the fact that it is the instrument of effecting in a particularly large measure the *connection*, i.e. the duration, transitoriness, interaction, inheritance, rejection, enrichment of the various ideas and ideological complexes, in a word, the development of spiritual life. This overall many-faceted process passes through the triad of the past, the present and the future.

Another general dialectical law manifests itself through the law of continuity—that is the law of the struggle between the new and the old. Its realization in a socio-historical and ideological aspect is, in actual fact, the main form of its general operation and significance. The struggle between the new and the old ideological conceptions does not take place in research laboratories which are insulated from the storms of life. Here, more than in the other subsystems of social consciousness, the vortex of social interests, of political and party passions, of the subjectivism of the individual class position is running high. Naturally, the strategic criterion will be the correspondence of a given ideological position to the requirements of social progress. This is the basis of the struggle against the old conservative and

reactionary view, and of the complex, delicate yet necessary process of critical analysis of the theoretical, scientific and cultural heritage found, of its ideological assessment, sifting and selection.

Not all ontological characteristics of time in general continue in action and hold significance in social time. Thus for instance, the principle of irreversibility of physical time shows a number of digressions and modifications when some value criteria typical of social life intervene in socio-historical time. A case in point is when the steadiness of social progress is violated and the rejected 'old time', the historical situation which 'has become obsolete', is being restored. Those are the periods of restoration of the forces of counter-revolution, of political restoration, of reaction. In the socio-value sense in this case time has indeed 'reversed' or 'has gone back' etc.

The problem of the correlation of physical and social aspects manifest in the general ontological characteristics of time stands out even more vividly in the respective characteristics of *space*. Along with objectivity and universality, the three-dimensionality already as a typical spatial specificity stands out here. It helps to explain the spatial interrelation between the objects and phenomena: this is the order of simultaneously and jointly existing objects which are in a mutually fixed place and distance from one another within the framework of a given system, more general to them. As 'general forms of existence of matter' as well as 'forms of coordination of material objects and phenomena' space and time differ from each other. Space is 'a universal form of coexistence of bodies' while time is 'a universal form of change of phenomena'.<sup>2</sup> Time characteristics reflect continuity, duration, removability and changeability of phenomena; they reveal their dynamics, they are marks of the *processes* in objective reality. Space characteristics reflect mutual location of objects and phenomena in a given structure, their place, distance, closeness and apartness, the different directions and trends of their interactions. In this way the space characteristics reflect the objects and phenomena mainly and above all from their static aspect, in their relative *repose*.

<sup>2</sup> Y. Urmantsev, "Prostranstvo i Vremya," *Filosofskaya Entsiklopediya*, v. 4, Moscow, Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya, 1967, p. 392.

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Transferred to the sphere of social reality these formulations suggest definite conclusions. With 'social time' the dynamism, movement in the time of social phenomena and processes preserves its nature in principle; in the concept of 'history' of mankind physical time, though correspondingly transferred, does not change its main characteristic features. With '*social space*' a qualitative difference is observed. The three-dimensionality of space characteristics is applicable in the sphere of social life only to a very limited extent: that is the role of our notions of physical geographical space in social life. Precisely here physical space manifests itself most directly. But it cannot possibly refer to those basic qualitative characteristics which describe the specificity of social life. With them physical three-dimensionality is cognitively useless and pointless in principle.

Some of the spatial terms can be applied only conventionally and, moreover, with a view to illustrating, making more exact and more precise the study of social problems. The concept of 'space' is used as a methodologically useful and convenient term in the individual scientific subjects. Thus, side by side with physical and geographical space there are geometrical, mathematical, logical, biological, aesthetic, linguistic etc., kinds of space.

The concept of 'social space' should include, in the first place, the foremost material and spiritual subsystems, which are mutually related and, this means too, at a given 'distance' from one another. The basic concept of 'mode of production' unites production relations and productive forces. Their mutual relation is organic, direct and most immediate. However, the relation between the economic and the other social phenomena is not direct. It passes through the decisive knot of the interaction between economy and politics. In its innermost essence politics is a direct and concentrated expression of economy. 'The distance' between economy and politics is 'short.' More precisely, their place in the general system of social relations is one of immediate interaction and hence of 'neighbourhood.' However, the interrelation between economic and spiritual phenomena is complex, mediative, it is relatively 'more distant.' 'The distance' between them corresponds to their differing 'place' in the social system. This 'distance,' however, is also differing from the different subsystems of the very social consciousness. Thus the place

of political ideology, law and morality as component parts of the spiritual subsystem is, as has already been pointed out, in the immediate proximity of economy, whereas the place of philosophy, science and art, for instance, is much 'more distant.' Or: the place of the proletariat in the system of social relations is different before and after the victory of the socialist revolution etc.

One of the scholars who researched the social aspect of the time and space problems is the late American sociologist Pitirim Sorokin. In his monograph *Contemporary Sociological Theories Through the First Quarter of the Twentieth Century* he dwells, among other things, on the school of mechanics of the 16th and 17th centuries. Its representatives, inspired by the potentialities of physics and mechanics, applied the concepts of space, time, gravitation, inertia etc., to the social phenomena as well. Thus they evolved their "Sociometrika," "Psychometrika," "Ethico-metrika," etc. They constructed the concept of *moral or social space* in which the social, moral and political movements are taking place. The author pointed out that in the 'moral space' man's position was strictly fixed similarly to the way in which the geometrical co-ordinates fix the position of the material object in physical space.<sup>3</sup>

Obviously what we have here are well-known and long since surmounted methodological positions. We are interested in Pitirim Sorokin's own treatment of the problem of social space. It is to be found mainly in his works on the questions of socio-cultural causality, time and space, and of social and cultural mobility. These monographs were published in the '20s and have preserved their fresh logic and academic significance to date. Worth mentioning, above all, is the resoluteness with which Sorokin differentiates geometric (physical, topographical etc.) space from social space. He wrote with deep conviction and in bold letters that "GEOMETRIC SPACE DOES NOT LOCATE SOCIOCULTURAL PHENOMENA."<sup>4</sup> In this Sorokin is abso-

<sup>3</sup> Pitirim A. Sorokin, *Contemporary Sociological Theories Through the First Quarter of the Twentieth Century*, USA, 1928, pp. 8, 9.

<sup>4</sup> Pitirim A. Sorokin, *Sociocultural Causality, Space, Time. A Study of Referential Principles of Sociology and Social Science*, Durham, North Carolina, 1943, p. 114.

lutely right.

It is quite a different matter when the author describes the specificity of sociocultural space and of sociocultural phenomena located in it. The position of any phenomenon in social space is determined, according to Sorokin, with the help of three 'planes': meaning, vehicles and human agents.<sup>5</sup> These are the three components of every sociocultural phenomenon as postulated by the author. Naturally, a number of questions and objections to this may arise. Whether indeed the specificity of every social phenomenon as well as of the *socium* in general, is exhausted with the said three components—planes? Obviously the various socio-philosophical systems of our time could have a say and add something. We prefer to elaborate some of Sorokin's views stemming from his conception about the social system.

The author enumerates "all types of meanings" which, according to him exhaust the problem of the 'derivative systems,' 'subsystems' as well as the 'subclasses' he explicitly pointed out. They are the scientific, religious, artistic, ethicojuridical, linguistic, philosophic, socio-economic and political meanings belonging to one of the basic 'five fields' of meaning. They are called by the author "five main systems of co-ordinates: language-science-religion-art-ethics."<sup>6</sup>

It is obvious at first glance that Sorokin puts at the basis of his classifications and of the very concept of 'meaning', above all what was outlined already at the beginning of this paper as forms of social consciousness. He was apparently alien to the modern interpretation of the *system* of forms—or of subsystems in general—to what today is called by historical materialism social consciousness. Otherwise, some of Sorokin's 'meanings' would have naturally dropped out. Then it would have become imperative to resort to the other basic classes of historical materialism such as 'social being,' 'basis and superstructure,' 'mode of production' etc. In other words, giving due credit to the great pioneer's work of Pitirim Sorokin on that extremely interesting and important range of problems examined here, we cannot help pointing to some blanks and failures, above all, of

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 122, 123.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 126, 129.

a methodological and systematizing nature. The target of our criticism would naturally be the 'three planes' of Sorokin's 'sociocultural space.'

Sorokin's social space is, in principle, a system without a central and determining element. But we raise even more resolute objection to the following definition of his: "social space *is* the universe of the human population"<sup>7</sup> (author's italics—L.D.).

The identification of social space with social reality itself, with man's social being is absolutely wrong. The elementary truth was already emphasized, namely that space is not matter but it is a universal form, a way of its existence. In any case the concept of 'social space,' far from being social reality itself, belongs to the sphere and content of the concepts of 'structure' and 'social structure.' If structure is a relatively stable unity of the elements, of their relations and the integrity 'of the object,' if it is the 'invariant aspect of the system'<sup>8</sup> then there is more than enough room here for the space characteristics. In this case space turns out to be an inner aspect of the structure and more particularly an expression of the inner compatibility, location comparability and counterposition of the elements of the structure, inasmuch as they are regarded in their relative static co-existence as such. Therefore social space is not and cannot be the *socium* itself; it is its form of being, i.e. a specific, moreover a basic, aspect of its structure.

This is a problem which has not been sufficiently elucidated in Marxist literature either. Yet, it is precisely the system of the historical materialism which offers the scientific and cognitive 'points of reference' for the elucidation of the time and space characteristics of social phenomena. An example of this are the ideas of the Soviet philosopher and sociologist Konstantin Megrelidze. In a work written during the '30s he formulates a number of valuable theses in connection with the problem under discussion which is not the main object of his research. This is what he wrote: "The individual interests, strivings and behaviour of people, motivated by various reasons, the individual actions, mutual relationships and occurrences, which seemingly

<sup>7</sup> P. A. Sorokin, *Social and Cultural Mobility*, Glencoe, Ill., 1959, pp. 6, 7.

<sup>8</sup> N. Ovchinnikov, "Struktura," *Filosofskaya Entsiklopediya*, v. 5, Moscow, Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya, 1970, p. 140.

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have no direct connection with each other—this entire multitude of individual phenomena scattered *in space and time* is taking place in society and, therefore, in social reality all this intertwines and is focused in *a common field of action*.”<sup>9</sup> (author’s italics—L.D.) In the course of the analysis Megrelidze uses such terms as ‘common field of force,’ ‘common social field,’ ‘common field of relationships and of the confrontation of interests,’ ‘mass of the common interest,’ ‘common foci’ etc.

Standing out in this context is the place and role of the *determining factor* in a given socio-historical situation and socio-scientific range of problems. The Soviet author writes further on: “The structure of that social whole is always determined by the dominating form of ownership...”<sup>10</sup> The very fact of the formation of ‘foci of common interests’ which, on their behalf, serve as a foundation for the various kinds of groups and facilitate the formation of ‘opinion as either concurrent or contradicting’ should be given the corresponding explanation. Megrelidze explicitly points to the forces, levers and factors for these social processes: “The development of the productive forces of society and of the forms of ownership corresponding to it; the distribution of people in the social process of production and exchange are that real basis on which definite groups of interests are shaped. The individuals’ attitude to the means of production and consequently, to the material conditions of life and therefrom, *the definite place* taken by individuals in society, *their position in the system* of social production, distribution and exchange inevitably concentrate the interests of some individuals on one set of tasks and goals, and the interests of others on another set.”<sup>11</sup> (author’s italics—L.D.)

We accept all this as an obvious and normal starting point for every researcher of the theory of social consciousness in general and of the sociology of thinking in particular. We are far from the thought that the above formulations solve all the tasks set. We shall only confine ourselves to outlining the basic complex of problems.

<sup>9</sup> K. Megrelidze, *Osnovniye problemy sotsiologii myshleniya*, Tbilisi, 1973, pp. 382, 383.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 383, 385, 386.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 387.

It is no accident that the problems of social space are given greater attention. To begin with included here is a swarm of questions whose preliminary solution is of direct importance in the elucidation of the more particular problems of *spiritual space*. Secondly, these questions are directly connected with our subject, i.e. with the place and role of ideology in the system of social consciousness envisioned in its time and space aspects. This is so because ideology as a practically purposeful and theoretically systematized consciousness is functionally oriented to the real life of social man taken in its unity and versatility. Consequently the very socio-space aspects of social relations will be the object of ideological impact.

In outlining the main characteristic features of spiritual space the reminder of some fundamental stipulations of historical materialism would do no harm, to say the least: a) social being and social consciousness are the two most general subsystems of the overall social system; b) social being determines social consciousness; c) social consciousness reflects social being; d) in its functioning social consciousness deploys its own relative autonomy which varies in degree and way for its various subdivisions (subsystems); e) social consciousness has a reversing effect on social being and therefrom on the normal and progressive development of the overall social system.

This suggests some initial conclusions. In all cases spiritual space is a part, a subdivision, a subsystem of social space. The former is inconceivable without the latter. The former exists and functions solely in and through the latter. The content of spiritual space mirrors social facts, relationships, dimensions. The spiritual space is a reflection, image, transformation and a peculiar continuation of the socio-space relations and dependences. The dependence of spiritual on social space is one of the parts being dependent on the whole. This dependence could be investigated at least in two main directions: first—along the line of the direct impact and immediate manifestation of the socio-space factors in social life (we mean here the manifestation and role of the material social relations making themselves felt through the physical, territorial, geographical, topographical etc., dimensions of space); the second direction is just the opposite—it is investigation of spiritual phenomena in their utmost relative



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autonomy. It is precisely here that the very construction of the concept of 'spiritual space' can find its main justification.

As far as the first line is concerned there are numerous examples to that effect which for the time being do not create difficulties of principle for our aspect of research: this is, above all, the territorial concentration of the various consummate civilizations in the various continents and regions of the planet. A number of geographical concepts symbolize corresponding cultural systems which survived millennia: India, Egypt, Atlantis (?), Thrace, Greece, Rome, Polynesia, Africa etc. The localization of spiritual output is even more obvious on a national plane. Above all that is the traditional opposition of town to countryside, which is a vivid expression of the contradiction between physical and manual labour inherited from class societies. On a more concrete plane the localization is manifest along the line of the industrial and cultural—and political—centres of big cities where the respective branches of spiritual output are concentrated: the academies, universities, schools, editorial boards, publishing houses, theatres, libraries, museums etc. standing for national or local cultural values, customs and traditions. Thus the notions of the Louvre and Pigalle, the City, Soho and Montparnasse, the Bolshoi Theatre and the Hermitage, Florence and Venice, the Rila Monastery, the Ohrid and the Veliko Turnovo schools, etc., hold the importance of spatially differentiated spiritual centres with a different moral, intellectual and cultural content in historical time.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> The role of the physical aspect in the socio-space range of problems has been examined by many authors. Of interest are the ideas of the French sociologist Georges Gurvitch expounded in his work *Les cadres sociaux de la connaissance*, Paris, P. U. F., 1966. It analyses some time and space aspects of the process of social knowledge. With a view to the role of the subject of knowledge, for instance, Gurvitch points to four kinds of space: *antique*, that is identifying itself with the subject, *egocentric* (determined by the emotionality of the subject), *projectional* (depending on the spatial transfers of the subject), and *prospective* (the most distant from the subject and the nearest to real space). The classification is of certain interest also as regards the form of a given space.

The same work by Gurvitch is translated and published in English. Worth noting here is the introductory essay by Kenneth Tompson (Kenneth Tompson, *Introductory Essay to The Social Frameworks of Knowledge* by G. Gurvitch, Oxford, 1971). He, in turn, bases himself on the well-known book by the Swiss psychologist Piaget (J. Piaget et B. Inhelder, *La représentation de l'espace chez l'enfant*, Paris, P. U. F. 1972). Given the great merit of those works, they do

Along the second line we seek the most precise expression of the relative autonomy of spiritual phenomena. It would be both wrong in principle and dangerous to allow even the slightest tendency of absolutization of that autonomy. That would contradict the real correlation between the material and spiritual phenomena in the social system. In that sense the graphic presentation of 'spiritual space' as an isolated and completely closed sphere is wrong and incorrect in principle. Much more adequate would be the acceptance of a semisphere, the flat part of which will present in the real sense of the word the *real social basis* of the spiritual life of society. We must look beneath that very semisphere for the inner 'spiritual-space' relations and dependences which are sufficient to meet the needs of our research.

As a peculiar part of 'social space,' 'spiritual space' too contains in a dialectically transferred form the influence of the physical (geographical, territorial etc.) factors. But inasmuch as we are looking for the specificity of spiritual space in the above-mentioned second trend, i.e. along the line of the theoretically best possible relative autonomy and conditional purposefulness, here the problem of the presence of these material factors recedes of its own accord. We depart from them by way of theoretical abstraction and concentrate our attention on the relationships, dependences and interactions characteristic of spiritual phenomena. We denote through the various subsystems ('forms,' 'spheres,' 'levels,' 'types' etc.) of social consciousness not only the main components but also their location in the expanses of 'social space' as well as the distances, counterpositions and inter-relations marking them, the direction of actions and interactions etc.

From the viewpoint of the intellectual practice of social man it is a question here of mental (ideal) dependences of the kind of cognition, truthfulness, logicity, causal dependence, argumentation, provability, value, purposefulness, conscience, conscientiousness, responsibility etc. In their innermost essence these mental relationships and dependences are a reflection of objectively feasible relations, dependences and cause and effect

not study the *social* problems in their depth and specificity. The analysis follows the psychological, physical, geographic, stereognostic, etc., lines.

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relations from the external natural and social environment. But as components of spiritual space their own content is synthesized, summarized and concentrated to the very high degree of abstraction which is demanded from the 'official' ideal being of the corresponding subsystems of social consciousness. Standing out here, above all, is the role of the macro-structures of the social spiritual output fixed in given spiritual-space co-ordinates. The concrete symptoms and properties of the individual phenomena are transformed into generalized ideal reflections and lose, to a considerable extent, their initial characteristics of concrete phenomena with definite physical time-space dimensions. Consequently, *in that aspect*, spiritual space is a system of physically *non-spatial*, i.e. *ideally* conditioned and substantiated cause and effect relations and dependences between spiritual phenomena. The root of their real objectivization and authenticity, of their intellectual, cognitive and logical authority is to be found always and in all cases in social practice. Yet *the form* and way of their functioning as components of 'spiritual space' is a theoretical abstraction of the common, the basic and the stable in the inner mentally embraced inter-relations of those spiritual processes and phenomena.

Naturally, the very concept of 'space' is used here in the figurative, metaphorical sense. It serves as a purposeful theoretical expression of the structural, i.e. *statical* aspect of the very system of social consciousness. With its help we are making efforts to picture more graphically the factual relationships between the elements of that system mainly from the point of view of a mutual location and simultaneous co-existence, which is a direct consequence of their own functional purpose. In this way the concept of spiritual space appears to be a condition, a basis and prerequisite for a more thorough and precise elucidation of the factual *dynamism* of spiritual processes, in social time and space. This deployment is accompanied by the already mentioned abstraction from the respective physico-space (geographical, topographical, territorial etc.) facts, factors and considerations. A classically lucid example are the logical and mathematical dependences. Though reflections of the objective reality in the final count, their supreme degree of universality and abstraction pre-determines the solution of the problems of

logical, mathematical and geometrical space in principle, irrespective of some or other concrete physico-space considerations.

Naturally, by far not all components of spiritual space possess the degree of abstraction characteristic of logical and mathematical thinking. Space characteristics with a respective lesser degree of universality could develop in the spheres of the sociological, psychological, pedagogical and other sciences. At the present stage of our knowledge spiritual space—both as a concept and method—preserves its heuristic significance above all in the field of the theoretical studies and generalizations of the large social objects. For instance, pending here is the task of constructing a contemporary common philosophical and sociological theory of social consciousness. This is the most direct manifestation of its positive and necessary role for intensifying our knowledge in that extremely difficult field, i.e. the basic relationships and objective laws of spiritual processes. The factual interactions which we can demonstrate via a modern model of spiritual space, will also be of considerable interest from the viewpoint of the evolvement of such contemporary scientific approaches as the systematic, the structural, functional, cybernetic, etc.

All this holds direct significance for such a profoundly contradictory and contested sector of the system of social consciousness as ideology. Its time-space characteristics in general, its 'location' in spiritual space in particular, the study of the concrete relations and dependences both 'inside' the very ideological 'subspace' and 'outside' it are not only of considerable scientific interest but also involve investigation difficulties. This is due in principle to the specificity of ideological thinking. As a *practically oriented* systematized social consciousness it combines in itself the general and abstract socio-philosophical initial conceptions with the concrete sociological structures of given socio-historical and political situations.

It is an eloquent fact that the space characteristics of ideology were already used at the beginning of this paper. The very structure of social consciousness reveals with a logical necessity objective space coordinates. They are present in no minor way in the structure of ideology itself, in the inter-relations of the various types of ideological forms. Their 'distance' from the

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economic basis of society depends on their functional weight and pre-determines corresponding dependences in their own 'coexistence' and in 'the distances' between themselves. This fact speaks volumes about the deep and organic link between socio-space characteristics and the very specificity of social phenomena revealing in a convincing way their own essential and methodological significance.

When elucidating the organizational and structural aspects of ideology we dwell on the term 'area' in the system of social consciousness. The preference for that term was dictated by the fact that the concept 'sphere' has already been used in the literature to designate another subsystem of social consciousness. In this way the highly significant fact is underlined, namely that the ideological *area* is more wide-embracing than the individual spheres and includes some of them: it is a question of the ideological part of the cognitive sphere and the overall value sphere (taken also as components of the theoretical level of social consciousness). We can add here the 'top' of the mass-empirical sphere which can be considered ideologized, i.e. where and inasmuch as the ideological formulations 'introduced from above' have already been mastered by the corresponding sections of the classes and the masses.<sup>13</sup> In this way the preliminary basis is taking shape for the further study of inner composition and structure of ideology as such, of the individual ideological forms, of the various socio-class types of ideology, of the inner structural-spatial location and relationships of some ideological elements.

An attempt at illustrating some inner structural aspects of ideology is witnessed by the recently published work by the Israeli politologist Martin Seliger, *Ideology and Politics*. In it the author speaks of the two-dimensionality of ideology, though meaning by this something else in comparison with the above mentioned theses of Pitirim Sorokin. Seliger holds that "ideology applied in action inevitably bifurcates into two dimensions". The first one is that of "fundamental principles, which determine the final goals and the grand vistas in which they will be realized, and which are set above the second dimension." The latter is called by the author 'operative ideology,' i.e. the one which

<sup>13</sup> Today at this final stage of the realization of ideology the term 'manipulated consciousness' is current in research works in the West.

underlies policies and justifies them. The process of bifurcation of ideology is considered the result of its meeting with day-to-day politics. The 'purity' of prescriptions based on the commitment to essentially moral principles and goals "is likely to become endangered by the requirements of political action"; herefrom the two 'dimensions' of ideology.<sup>14</sup>

In quantitative respect these dimensions according to Seliger have one and the same composition. However, the internal disposition of the individual components is different in each of the two dimensions. It is a question, above all, of the following elements of ideology: description, analysis, moral and technical prescriptions, instruments (i.e. ways and means of implementation) and rejections. The technical prescriptions include norms of expedience, prudence and efficiency.

The author's thesis is more or less clear. The extent of originality lies namely in the formalistic-structural aspect. It is not the first time that we come across the view that the role of the moral principle is foremost on the level of the fundamental and leading argumentation; and that on the practical level, that of day-to-day politics, the considerations of interest and expediency, of practical benefit, equanimity and prudence should take the upper hand. It is a question, in our view, of a more peculiar way of setting forth a moralizing conception about politics and ideology.

We could imagine Seliger's structural ideas in a spatial aspect from the way he repeatedly uses such terms.<sup>15</sup> At first glance his vision of ideology is made up of two 'floors': 'operative dimensions' being on the first floor and 'fundamental dimensions' being on the second. However, the author actually takes into consideration still another, third 'floor.' This is political philosophy whose difference from ideology the author analyses in detail. This is done in the chapter entitled "Meta-ideological Principles and the Ideological Composite." According to Seliger the two-dimensionality of ideological argumentation can also be found in the structure of political philosophy. Nevertheless, political philosophy should be judged to occupy "a dimension altogether above ideology." "The difference between political philosophy and

<sup>14</sup> Martin Seliger, *Ideology and Politics*, London, 1976, pp. 108, 109.

<sup>15</sup> M. Seliger, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

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ideology stems from the fact that political philosophies do not serve political action directly, at any rate not nearly to the same degree as do ideologies.” Very suitable is the quotation by Apter: Ideology is “an abstraction that is less abstract than the abstractions contained within it.”<sup>16</sup> Actually the three ‘floors’ are called by the following terms: meta-ideological principles (or philosophical metafundamentals), fundamentals and operative ideology.<sup>17</sup>

Martin Seliger’s work is an eloquent testimony to the way in which some scholars in the West have, in recent years, “besieged and attacked” ideological problems. Whereas there are some acceptable theses in individual postulates, the absence, in the basic strategic postulates, of a materialistic approach to social history and system in general, of the Marxist philosophical and sociological conception about social consciousness in particular, is most conspicuous. It is to be seen in the very definition of ideology given by the author. Ideology is defined as a belief system “designed to serve on a relatively permanent basis a group of people.”<sup>18</sup> Incidentally, a ‘group of people’ could be a family, the micro-social groupings of relations, friends etc. Naturally, the actual socio-class basis of ideology is not at all mentioned. Therefore we get the familiar methodological picture: the glaring absence of the determining inter-relation between economy and politics as regards the spiritual factors; within spiritual space itself, instead of the leading role of political ideology there is traditional idealism and formalism.

Through its time and space dimensions ideology demonstrates its exceptionally strong social dynamism. This is explained by its own nature as the socially most active area of the general system of social consciousness. The very crossing of social time with social space gives us an idea of the basic outlines of a given historical epoch, setting or situation. The general system of time and space coordinates serves as a natural social screen for projecting the very development of the real ideological process. On this basis the space characteristics of this process, limited

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 114, 115.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 113.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 120.

and fixed within the given span of historical time, assume particular importance.

The basic functional tasks of ideological thinking as a social phenomenon also predetermine its 'spiritual-space' dimensions. The difference in the objective specificity and in the corresponding functional orientation of the various ideological forms explains their different place in 'spiritual space.'

The importance of the localization of the ideological forms in spiritual space is particularly vivid in the process of its intersection with their action in time. Thus for instance, various ideological forms have had the lead in the different historical periods within the framework of a given common ideological system: in antiquity, philosophy was the generally acknowledged 'mother' of human knowledge; under feudalism it was religion, but already as a 'stepmother' of knowledge; under capitalism the leading part was played by political and juridical ideology; under socialism science, and above all social science is added. Each of these ideological subsystems fulfills a strategically centralizing, coordinating and leading function in respect of the other ideological forms within the tie-limited 'spiritual space'.

Varied, complex and even unique ideological interactions manifest themselves in the different historical periods and situations. However, in *every* historical period, political ideology and law will, as a rule, perceive and reflect the concrete needs and the changes in the economic relations directly and in a straightforward way, immediately and in a concentrated manner. Their place in 'spiritual space,' their concrete role in the given ideological 'subspace' also reveals their function of being the first ideological interpreters, supporters or attorneys for the new economic and political interests. In *every* historical epoch the law of the relative autonomy will manifest itself in proportion to the distance separating one or another ideological form from the material social relations.

In this way the complex ideological processes of social consciousness overtaking or lagging behind social being are taking place not only in time, i.e. in history, but also in the 'social' and 'spiritual space.' It is a question of processes of the functioning of the varied and different in type (i.e. group and functionally specialized) subsystems of social consciousness and ones



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which take place within the 'spiritual space' which is structured as many-sided, 'multi-level' and of various directions. Their complex interaction both between themselves and with the material factors 'located' on the broader foundation of the overall 'social space' shows graphically the place, role and function of ideology in the overall social system. That place, that role and function hold a great contemporary significance. Today in the conditions of the universally significant socio-political and scientific and technological revolutions, ideology goes beyond its own 'territory.' In conformity with their varying functions, the individual ideological forms ever more often 'violate' the outdated 'boundaries' inherited from the past, ever more imperatively invade the expanses not only of mass individual psyche but also of natural science and technological 'space' traditionally considered as examples of ideological 'incorruptibility and chastity.' In this law-governed fact the time and space characteristics of the ideological forms manifest their important, functionally necessary and versatile action as well as their cognitive meaning.

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