

# *The Discussion on Anti-Durin Theory and Its Practical Enlightenment to the Construction of Mainstream Ideology in China*

Jiangtao Wang<sup>1,\*</sup>, Leifeng Wang<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>School of Marxism, Nan Chang Hangkong University, Nanchang Jiangxi, 330063, China

<sup>2</sup>School of Marxism, Jingdezhen Ceramic University, Jingdezhen Jiangxi, 333403, China  
1250616606@qq.com

\*Corresponding author

**Keywords:** Engels, Anti-Duhring, Marxism; Ideology

**Abstract:** In the 1870s, the petty bourgeoisie thinker Duhring published a series of fake socialist works, and launched a comprehensive attack on Marxism, which caused the confusion of the ideology of the Socialist Democratic Party in Germany and destroyed the orthodox position of Marxism. To this end, Engels wrote the Anti-Duhring with the main content of criticizing Duhring's erroneous ideas, which systematically expounded the three components of Marxism and the basic principles of Marxism, successfully consolidated the guiding position of Marxist ideology and defended the leadership of the Party. In the new era, the western trend of thought is surging, and the construction of the mainstream ideology in China is facing multi-directional challenges. Therefore, taking Engels's ideological criticism of The Duhring doctrine as the inspiration is of great significance for unswervingly promoting the construction of the mainstream ideology in China and consolidating the dominant position of the ideology of socialism with Chinese characteristics guided by Marxism.

Attaching importance to ideological work is the traditional advantage of the Party. In the current complicated international and domestic situation and fierce ideological and theoretical struggles, whether we can do ideological work well is a realistic test for our Party.[1] "Anti-Duhring" criticizes the influence of the anti-Marxist ideology led by the Turin doctrine, making Marxism return to the dominant position of ideology, thus helping the Marxist political party to regain the initiative of ideology, consolidating the leading position of the Party, and has important enlightenment for strengthening the mainstream ideology of society.

## **1. Creative Motivation: The Call of Theory and Reality**

In the late 1870s, the Anti-Duhring was published in Leipzig, as the creator Engels said in the opening of the preface: "This work is by no means the result of any 'inner impulse'. Just the opposite." [2] It can be seen that its creation is not come at random, but only after the planned and purposeful consideration of Marx and Engels. The creation of The Anti-Duhring is closely related

to the work of Duhring, the spokesman of the "new socialist theory", and the international communist movement. Timely, Turin wantonly attacked Marxism with his "complete" distorted theory, which shook the leading position of Marxism in the Social Democratic Party of Germany, thus causing the chaotic situation within the Democratic Party. At the same time, the international communist movement developed vigorously, and urgently need the systematic Marxist theory to guide the practice of struggle. Based on the above reasons, Engels began to create this great work.

### **1.1 Direct Cause: Fighting Back at the Theoretical Impact of Durinism**

In 1870, Germany is a thought, academic debate is very active area, many academic factions and theoretical views emerge in endlessly, including represented by Kant of vulgar economics, the petty bourgeoisie of social reformism, etc., one of the biggest influence is the petty bourgeois socialist scientist Duhring. In the mid-1970s, with the further spread of Duhring's thoughts, the influence of Duhring's reactionary theory gradually penetrated into the political field from the ideological field, and from outside the Party to the Social Democratic Party of Germany, and its influence expanded day by day. Duhring described himself as the "leader of the new socialism" and attacked Marxism with his "complete" theoretical system. He by promoting its vulgar materialism as the core of philosophy, on the basis of bourgeois vulgar political economics economic theory and, with emphasis on the social reformist of sociology, declared war on marxism overall structure, and to gain the theoretical, political followers, some German social Democrats also by its delusion and away from the beginner's mind. What is more, some party members even put forward the talk of "reforming Marxism". As the situation became more serious, Marx and Engels gradually realized that they could not sit still and must fight back, so they " began to bite this sour fruit.”[3]

### **1.2 Practical Needs: to Eliminate the Reactionary Ideology within the Party**

The Paris Commune revolution pushed the international communist movement to a new era climax. Marx and Engels followed the general trend of The Times and, on the basis of the summary and absorption of the historical experience of the workers' movement, devoted themselves to theoretical research and political party construction, so as to fight back against the bourgeoisie and opportunistic ideology. In May 1875, the two major German socialist political parties, the All-German Workers' Union and the German Democratic Labor Party were merged, which established the guiding position of Marxism. But the new Social Democratic Party of Germany has a fatal weakness: its ideology and its chaos. On the one hand, it is caused by the chaotic economic and class situation of German society, and on the other hand, it is the faction dispute caused by the merger of the two parties. Although the SPD has established the guiding position of Marxism, it does not mean that Marxism occupies all the ideological seats within the party. On the contrary, many members of the Party came from the petty bourgeoisie, which were at risk of wavering, eroded by various non-Marxist ideologies, especially the reactionary thoughts of the DurSchool. At the same time, Marx and Engels went in exile for a long time and failed to spread their main works widely. Various factors made the SPD full of various non-Marxist ideologies. The Duhring's system theory was more understandable than the Marxist theoretical works, which soon captured a group of "loyal audience" and caused ideological confusion to the German workers' movement. Therefore, it is urgent to criticize Durinism.

### **1.3 Due Justice: Promote the Development of Marxism and Guide the Workers' Movement**

The Paris Workers' uprising pushed the international communist movement into a new stage of development. In general, the western bourgeois revolution has ceased, and the proletariat is about to

usher in a vigorous period of international struggle. At the same time, with the widespread outbreak of the workers' movement, Marxism spread rapidly, and then the working class in European countries established their own political parties, based on Marxism, organized and educated the proletariat, accumulated revolutionary strength, and prepared for the climax of the revolution. But as Lenin said, "The West has entered the stage of 'peace' in the era of reform." [4], Such a gentle era will become a hotbed of opportunism, and "the decadent liberals inside, are trying to revive them in the opportunistic form of socialism". [5] Some of the upper echelons hiding in the workers' movement, such as Bakunin and Duhring flow, destroyed the construction of the proletarian political party by distorting theories and hindered the smooth progress of the international proletarian movement. Therefore, we must systematically elucidate the basic theory of Marxism, especially the basis of Marxist philosophy, so as to eliminate the influence of non-Marxist ideology in the field of ideology. At the same time, it has become an urgent need for the development of Marxist theory to deeply study the new situation in the development stage of capitalism, expose its internal laws, arm the mind of the working class with the scientific world outlook, and guide the workers' movement.

## **2. Observe the Reality: The Challenge of the Mainstream Ideology Construction**

Since the new era, Party and state has attached great importance to ideological security, regarded it as a key link in safeguarding national security, and has made a series of brilliant achievements. However, due to the complexity and variability of ideological issues, especially the new situation of the two overall situations, the contradictions at home and abroad are becoming increasingly prominent, and the security of China's mainstream ideology is still facing threats and challenges.

### **2.1 The Infiltration of Western Ideology has Intensified**

"The history of all societies today is the history of class struggle." [6] Today, the class struggle is reflected in the ideological struggle among the countries. In the new era, the Communist Party of China has written a magnificent Chinese chapter in the history of world socialism, and brought Marxism with strong vitality and vitality in China in the 21st century. But even so, "the dominant nature of The Times of capitalist society has not changed fundamentally." [7] The struggle between socialism and capitalism has never stopped. Therefore, the capitalist world has always regarded the rise of China as a great threat, and continues to increase the ideological infiltration activities of our country. On the one hand, western countries promote their so-called "democratic politics", to compare China's democracy with their own democracy, and to deny the socialist system with Chinese characteristics and deny the leadership of the Communist Party of China. On the other hand, western culture shocks the mainstream ideology of China. In recent years, the United States-led capitalist countries to intensify the aggression of cultural soft power, by making, promote rich ideological literature, video, games, such as information media, will go against the mainstream ideology ideology, value view spread to the masses, to the ideological construction in our country brought security risks.

### **2.2 The Impact of Multiple Network Environment Expands**

The rapid development of Internet information technology in the new era, with its speed and convenience of information flow, has brought opportunities and created an environment for the dissemination of ideology. Cyberspace enables the information dissemination to break through the limitation of time and space, greatly improve the global information and data flow rate, and strengthen the social mobility of various ideologies. The information society is conducive to the

popularization of social mainstream ideology, so as to enhance the influence of mainstream ideology. However, information diversification also brings more challenges to China's mainstream ideology. On the one hand, the improvement of the speed and scope of global information exchange makes the staggered circulation of multiple ideologies in the society, and the people in the network society are vulnerable to the impact of various ideologies, shaking the position of the mainstream socialist ideology in the people's ideological system. On the other hand, network information technology belongs to high-end technology. Since its birth, it has been occupied by western countries. Although China is vigorously trying to carry out scientific and technological innovation, it still cannot reverse the position in the field of information technology in the short term. Therefore, both the application of information technology, and the innovation of the means of social ideological communication, are slightly insufficient. Therefore, it is at a disadvantage in the mainstream ideological transmission, and there are risks and challenges.

### **2.3 The Ideological Trend of Globalization Causes the Endogenous Contradictions in the Construction of Social Mainstream Ideology**

As a historical process of the continuous improvement of the links between regions and countries, globalization is not only the globalization of "hardware" such as economy and trade, but also the globalization of "software" such as politics and culture. As an important factor of globalization, politics and culture will inevitably bring great impact on the construction of the mainstream ideology of socialism with Chinese characteristics. In addition, the "intentional" of the western capitalist world makes a variety of non-Marxist and anti-Marxist thoughts exist in Chinese society, and constantly stimulate the internal social contradictions. This contradiction is reflected in the crisis of confidence of some people in Marxism. The Western forces have tried their best to promote the democratic thought of "freedom, fraternity and equality" to the Chinese people, and compared their so-called superiority with the socialist China with Chinese characteristics under the guidance of Marxism, and ignored the objective facts, exaggerated themselves and degraded China, so as to confuse the public. Under this influence, the masses who are lack of discrimination ability will question Marxism and thus shake the dominant position of Marxism in ideology.

## **3. Value Enlightenment: The Anti-Duhring Refers to the Construction of the Mainstream Ideology in China**

In the face of the new stage of the world communist movement, the great mentor Engels held high the banner of Marxism, fought back at the Turin theory with scientific theory criticism, and eliminated the negative effects of Turin's thought from the field of ideology. At the same time, it advocated the real scientific and revolutionary theory, and Marxism stands firm in the field of ideology. Engels' academic writing against Durinism provides valuable historical experience and practical enlightenment.

### **3.1 Adhere to the Innovation of Marxist Theory, with the Latest Results of the Theoretical Results**

The first of the reasons why the Social Democratic Party of Germany was influenced by the Turin doctrine and the core position of Marxism was shaken is that the Turin took the lead in putting forward a systematic theoretical system. It means that in the 1870s, Marx and Engels did have a series of theoretical works, but not all of them were published, but some of the content was only discovered in the next century. Therefore, at that time, Marx and Engels did not really have a systematic elaboration of the three components of Marxism, so that the broad working class and

some members in the Party were not baptized by Marxism, leading to an opportunity to take advantage of Turin. Therefore, we must attach importance to the systematic summary and innovative development of Marxist scientific principles and to guide practice. Engels once pointed out: "Marx's whole world view is not a doctrine, but a method. It provides not ready dogma, but a starting point for further research and methods for use in such research." [8] To transform the world with the basic principles of Marxism, we must "transfer the historical conditions at that time" [9] It can be seen that the characteristics of Marxism require that we must adhere to the integrity and innovation of Marxism, and adhere to the successful guidance of the latest theory of Marxism to guide the practice. Thought on Socialism with Characteristics for a New Era is the latest theoretical success of the Sinicization of Marxism, and it is a brilliant crystallization condensed on the basis of summarizing the scientific principles of Marxism and the practice of Sinicization. We must adhere to and develop The latest achievement of the Sinicization of Marxism with The Times, shine its theories on reality, and establish a clear banner with the characteristics of The Times for the construction of the mainstream ideology of Chinese society.

### **3.2 Firm in Political Consciousness and Fight against Reactionary Theories**

The theoretical dispute between Engels and Duhring originated from academic opposition and developed into the final duel of political views. It is not difficult to see that philosophy and social sciences, as an important part of the superstructure, have a distinct class stance. Duhring and his followers used the modern myth of justice, freedom, the goddess of equality and fraternity, to replace the basis of socialist materialism. [10] On the surface, this "materialism" is one of Turin's academic views, but in fact, it has been involved in political issues. This vulgar materialism is contrary to Marxism, and finally exposed the dangerous attempt of the petty bourgeois thinkers led by Duhring to move towards the struggle of doctrine with academic conflict. One of Engels' great contributions to this is that, after discovering Duhring's political attempt, he immediately stopped the work at hand and went into the fighting state to fight against Durinism and criticize his wrong views without reservation, thus defending the guiding position of Marxism in politics. For today's socialism with Chinese characteristics, it is of great value to defend the guiding position of Marxism and resolutely fight against reactionary theories. Philosophy and social sciences, as their unique ideological characteristics, must examine academic problems with high vigilance to prevent the spread of political problems. Only in this way, can we quickly and best consolidate the guiding position of Marxism and regulate the development of the mainstream ideology in our country.

### **3.3 Adhering to the Popularization of Marxism and Arming the People with Scientific Theories**

The power of theory lies in guiding the practice to transform the world. Marx once said, "Once a theory is mastered by the masses, it will also become a material force." It can be seen that, as the subject and creator of history, the people hold the ultimate force to promote the development of history. Therefore, only when the theory is combined with the people, can it burst out of practice. Marx and Engels always emphasized the role of the people, always combined with the workers' movement, and summed up experience in the workers' movement, to make such achievements. At the same time, the theory of the masses must pay attention to its popularization. The non-Marxist and anti-Marxist faction represented by Duhring is the use of its own popular academic theories to attract workers and party personages who fail to master Marxism. It can be seen that, on the one hand, we should adhere to the combination of theory and the masses, and on the other hand, we should pay attention to the direction of popularization. Engels's "Anti-Duhring", including the later "Socialism from Empty to Science", known as the "popular reading of scientific socialism", has

obviously begun to pay attention to the popularization of theory, so as to effectively win the support of the working class and then guide the communist movement. The development of Marxist theory and the process of Sinicization are inseparable from the popularization of Marxism. Strictly speaking, the purpose of the sinicization of Marxism is the popularization. Only when the theory of Sinicization is truly understood and mastered by the Chinese people, can it gather a common will in the society, and can it be regarded as a social consciousness recognized by all the people. In addition, to promote the popularization is to give full play to the wisdom and level of the whole country people, so that all the whole country people can participate in this great construction. At the same time, in the common struggle to enhance the identity of the sense of Marxism, to consolidate the position of the social mainstream ideology with Marxism and Chinese Marxism as the core.

The creation of *Anti-Duhring* fully demonstrates Engels' ideological critical thought and highlights the development of Marxist scientific theory. Engels summarized and explained the three components of Marxism, which broke Turin's wishful thinking, promoted the development of Marxism, defended the dominant position of Marxism in the field of ideology, and made the scientific principles deeply rooted in the people's hearts. In the new era, China's ideological construction is still facing severe challenges. We need to draw wisdom from history, study and implement Engels' thought on ideological struggle, and strive to "uphold the truth with a clear stand and firmly refute the fallacies". To resolutely fight against reactionary concepts, defend the dominant position of Marxism in the ideological field, and "build a socialist ideology with strong cohesion and leading force" To provide spiritual impetus for all efforts to build a great modern socialist country and realize the Chinese dream of national rejuvenation.

## Acknowledgment

The phased achievements of the Jiangxi Province Degree and Postgraduate Education and Teaching Reform Research Project "Research on Geochemical Teaching in the Reform and Innovation of Jiangxi Postgraduate Ideological and Political Courses in the New Era" (JXYJG-2021-185); The phased achievements of Jingdezhen Social Science Planning Project "Research on the Localization Path of University Students in the New Era to Inherit the Red Gene" (202223).

## References

- [1] *Selected Works of Marx and Engels (3)* [M]. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1995:343.
- [2] *Selected Works of Marx and Engels (3)* [M]. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1995:344.
- [3] *Selected Works of Lenin (2)* [M]. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2012:306.
- [4] *Selected Works of Lenin (2)* [M]. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2012:307.
- [5] *Selected Works of Marx and Engels (1)* [M]. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2012:400.
- [6] Jin Mingqing. *Thinking on the historical basis and countermeasures of enhancing ideological security consciousness* [J]. *The Contemporary World and Socialism*, 2018 (06): 24-32.
- [7] *Selected Works of Marx and Engels (4)* [M]. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1995:742-743.
- [8] *Selected Works of Marx and Engels (1)* [M]. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1995:248.
- [9] Li Jing. *From Engels writing "Anti-Duhring" to see how to achieve "two maintenance"* [J]. *Marxist Studies*, 2021 (12): 112.
- [10] Yang Quanhai. *The relationship between the sinicization and the popularization of Marxism* [J]. *Guide of Ideological and Political Education*, 2009 (09): 50.