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The Grey Eighties

After 1948, so-called Marxism-Leninism began to be almost exclusively identified with the theory of both the socialist revolution and the socialist economy and used as an ideological support in the fight for political power. Significantly, economists (and scientists generally) were, analogically to the National Front of political parties, labelled the “theoretical front”. Economics became, rather than a science based on objective arguments, a religion in which the terms faith and betrayal would be used in its deliberations. Economic pseudo-innovations were partly based on ignorance of world economic development or on the deliberate overlooking thereof and partly on the emptiness of the socialist political economy in its substance. This shift of economy was accompanied by the loss of prestige, professional autonomy and social position of economists.

The 1960s - the era of Prague Spring - are usually considered an era when economy could shake the shackles of ideological clichés. Then the Party purges followed during the grey seventies and eighties. In this paper I would like to challenge the narrative of the underdeveloped level of Czechoslovak economics on the eve of Velvet Revolution. In this paper I will analyze the development of economic theory, not only in the official academia’s platform but also in dissent and in the underground circles in 1980’s.